

A STUDY IN PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY: THE 2004 SÃO TOMÉ & PRÍNCIPE NATIONAL FORUM

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Photo: Josh Chaffin

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Executive Summary

In June and July of 2004, 56 public meetings were held throughout the African island nation of São Tomé & Príncipe, culminating in a three-day session with citizen delegates and government officials. This “National Forum of Reconciliation” was undertaken to comply with the political settlement of a 2003 coup attempt. While two previous Forums were widely perceived as having failed, it was hoped that a more participatory structure could help resolve some of the country’s political rifts.

Participants in the 2004 forum were educated on the issue of future petroleum revenues, and information was gathered about their development priorities and preferences. At the end of the Forum policy recommendations were made to the government. Despite these successes, it was unclear from the Forum's inception if the process would be sustainable. Although the President of São Tomé & Príncipe called for implementation of the Forum's recommendations, there was no indication how this would be accomplished. In addition, no committee was established to follow-up on the Forum although this was one of the recommendations of the process.

The major lesson drawn from the 2004 Forum is that the people of São Tomé & Príncipe are willing to engage in constructive dialogue on issues of political importance facing the country. But in this case, there was a disconnect between the participatory process and the drafting of the recommendations. Unless forums of this kind are more carefully designed, they can lose political legitimacy and easily stall once it comes to implementation phase. The development preferences collected during the Forum, however, provide valuable information and should be distributed to the people of São Tomé & Príncipe and incorporated into the country’s Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

Future Forums could be used to increase the level of government accountability in the country, but for this to occur they should be mainstreamed into the political process rather than being used sporadically to resolve short term crises. If the objective is to diffuse or resolve a national crisis, a National Forum may not always be the best solution. If there is consensus around holding a Forum, it should include broad consultation and have a specific outcome, like a referendum. If the objective is to build community participation through education, dialogue or information gathering, the National Forum process should be regularized. Political issues could be discussed before elections and development goals could be met with on-going participation in budgeting and decision-making. Results of any survey associated with the process should be published in a timely manner after the event. Finally, for the goals of the Forum to be sustainable there must be local support for the entire process.

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Executive Summary | 2 |
| Introduction..... | 4 |
| Acknowledgements..... | 5 |
| 1. São Tomé & Príncipe – Context & Background | 6 |
| 1.1. Political Background..... | 6 |
| 1.2. Development Context | 8 |
| 1.2.1. Potential Oil Resources..... | 8 |
| 1.2.2. Foreign Aid and Donor Dependence | 8 |
| 2. National Forum Process..... | 11 |
| 2.1. Forum Planning and Design..... | 11 |
| 2.2. Implementation of the Forum | 13 |
| 2.2.1. Community Meetings..... | 13 |
| 2.2.2. Participatory Success | 16 |
| 2.2.3. Meetings in the Capital | 18 |
| 2.2.4. Drafting of the Recommendations | 18 |
| 2.3. Analysis and Critiques of the Forum Process..... | 19 |
| 2.3.1. Management Problems..... | 19 |
| 2.3.2. Design Problems | 21 |
| 2.3.2.1. Confusion of Purpose: Divergent Goals | 21 |
| 2.3.2.2. Lack of Participation in Process Design | 22 |
| 2.3.2.3. Disconnect between the Regional Meetings and the Recommendations..... | 22 |
| Summary | 23 |
| 3. National Forum Follow-Up..... | 24 |
| 3.1. Key Findings..... | 24 |
| 3.1.2. Reluctance of UNDP to Move Forward Without Government Support... | 25 |
| 3.1.3. Inability to Disseminate Results | 25 |
| 3.1.4. Exclusion of Civil Society in the Follow-up Process | 25 |
| 3.2. Stalled Implementation: Potential causes | 26 |
| 3.2.1. Failure to Address Underlying Political Disputes | 26 |
| 3.2.2. Uncertainty of Recommendation’ legal validity..... | 26 |
| 3.2.3. Design of recommendations that were impossible to implement | 27 |
| 4. STP National Forum – Looking Ahead | 28 |
| 4.1. Incorporate the People’s Development Priorities into the PRSP Strategy | 28 |
| 4.2. Publicly Announce Questionnaire Results and Distribute to Government Ministries. | 30 |
| 5. Lessons Learned for Future National Consultative Processes..... | 31 |
| 5.1. National Forums Can Have Several Purposes | 31 |
| 5.2. Create a Match between the Purpose and the Process | 32 |
| 5.3. Ensure the Legitimacy, Sustainability and Accountability of the Process. | 35 |
| 6. Conclusion | 36 |
| Appendix A: Summary of the Results of the Questionnaires (in Portuguese). | 37 |
| Appendix B : Press Release for the Launch of the Questionnaire Results | 52 |

Introduction

This report comes out of the Applied Workshop in Development course of the Economic and Political Development (EPD) program at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA). It centers on the execution of a national reconciliation forum in São Tomé & Príncipe in 2004 facilitated by an advisory group from Columbia University's Earth Institute, of which three of the authors of this report volunteered logistical and technical support. However, we wish to draw a distinction between the Advisory Group which played a role in realizing the National Forum, and the EPD Workshop Team analyzing the Forum follow-up process for this report. The findings in this paper are the fruit of a year-long workshop and are attributed directly to the EPD Workshop Team.

This paper analyzes the objectives, process, and results of the historic 2004 National Forum in São Tomé & Príncipe, an exercise in participatory democracy that was meant to diffuse the political problems that led to a coup attempt in July 2003. The paper begins with a discussion of the historical and political context in which the event took place. It follows with discussion of the mechanics of the process through the design and realization. The President of São Tomé & Príncipe called for the implementation of the Forum's recommendations and the creation of a Follow-up task-force, but no such committee has been established. We seek to explain this lack of follow-up work in the nine months since the Forum ended. Finally, for the sake of any future such efforts, we offer a set of "lessons learned" from the 2004 Forum in comparison with experiences of participatory democracy processes in other countries.

Objectives of of the EPD workshop

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- **Analyze process and results of the Forum**
 - **Identify the causes for the stalled implementation of the Forum recommendations**
 - **Make recommendations on how to best use the Forum results**
 - **Identify lessons learned for future participatory processes**
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1. São Tomé & Príncipe – Context & Background

1.1. Political Background

São Tomé & Príncipe, the second smallest nation in Africa, gained its independence from Portugal in 1975 after nearly 500 years of colonial rule. After independence, the Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé & Príncipe (MLSTP)² became the sole party in the country, instituting a decade of socialist economic policies. In 1985, suffering economic deterioration and facing pressures from popular opposition and Western donors, the ruling party introduced widespread political and economic reforms. The 1990s marked the country's transition to democracy. A democratic constitution was established and the first multi-party legislative election was held in January 1991.

Since then, São Tomé & Príncipe has held regular, peaceful elections. Recent political life, however, has been marred by administrative deadlocks and power struggles between the president and successive governments, party infighting and corruption. Since the democratic transition in 1991, the country has had eleven different governments.

Fradique de Menezes, a successful cocoa exporter, was elected president in July 2001 with the backing of former president Miguel Trovoada and a new party, the Movimento Democrático das Forças da Mudança (MDFM). During the first two years of the President's term in office there were five different governments, contributing to a climate of political instability in the country.

This instability comes at an inopportune moment in São Tomé & Príncipe's history. Potentially large oil reserves were recently identified in the country's territorial waters, raising concerns that São Tomé & Príncipe would suffer from the "natural resource curse," which has brought disaster to many other developing countries. In 2001, São Tomé & Príncipe established a Joint Development Zone (JDZ) with Nigeria to exploit the reserves found in deep waters between the two countries.

Early legislative elections were held in March 2002 but no single party won a majority: the MLSTP-PSD and the MDFM-PCD coalition won an almost equal number of seats, and a third party allied to former President Trovoada won the remainder.³ In

²The party is now known as the MLSTP-PSD. The party grew out of a post-World War II nationalist movement among the *forros*, the local creole population, and in 1972 the party was formed under the leadership of Manuel Pinto da Costa. After the military coup in Portugal in April 1974 until the democratic transition in 1990, it was the sole ruling party in the country.

³ The Executive, the National Assembly and the Judiciary are dominated by four main parties:

- The MLSTP-PSD, Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé & Príncipe, the mainly leftist, ruling party in the National Assembly from 1994-present.
- The ADI, Acção Democrática Independente, a centrist party established in 1992 by supporters of the former President Miguel Trovoada.
- The PCD, Partido de Convergência Democrática, a conservative party borne from the "Reflection Group," a think-tank established in December of 1989. The PCD formally became a party in November 1990 and was the ruling party in the National Assembly from 1991-1994.
- The MDFM, Movimento Democrático das Forças de Mudança, a centrist party established in 2001 by supporters of President Fradique de Menezes.

September 2002, President de Menezes dismissed the prime minister, Gabriel Costa, and his government following a dispute over military promotions and appointed a new government led by Maria das Neves of the MLSTP-PSD party. The appointment of a new Prime Minister, however, did not settle the political wrangling. The President was engaged in an ongoing struggle with the parliament over constitutional reforms aiming to strip him of many of his powers.

As political tensions continued to rise, a group of citizens wrote an open letter to the President claiming he had not done enough to address the development needs of the population and rioting broke out in the capital in April. On July 16, 2003, the armed forces led a coup and arrested the Prime Minister, the cabinet and other high-level officials while President Menezes was in Nigeria. The government takeover was immediately condemned by Nigeria, South Africa, Portugal, France, the United States, the United Kingdom and the African Union (AU).⁴

The coup garnered international attention because of the specter of the country's potential oil wealth; the prospect of windfall revenues has raised the political stakes. For African countries, the coup "was also an opportunity to apply Article 4 of the Constitutive Act of the AU, which forbids seizure of power by extra-constitutional means."⁵ Following increased pressure from the international community, the coup leaders agreed to a settlement that would restore constitutional order. President de Menezes returned to the country and most of his cabinet was restored to power.

After international mediation, a Memorandum of Understanding was drafted and unanimously ratified by the re-instated National Assembly. One of the stipulations of the agreement was the "realization of a National Forum to listen to political parties and civil society."⁶

Before 2003, the country had suffered several coup d'état attempts; the first soon after independence in 1978, another in 1988, and most recently in 1995, when rebels detained President Trovoada (1991-2001).⁷ In 1995, constitutional order was restored after one week of negotiations mediated by Angolan delegates.

National Forums were also held in 1997 and 1998. Both forums attempted to resolve political differences through dialogue but neither was perceived as a success. Planners of the 2004 National Forum noted that since the event was occurring after a coup attempt, the atmosphere in the country at the time was characterized by social tensions, deep public distrust of government officials, and high expectations about the prospects of oil.⁸

São Tomé & Príncipe, Political Parties, Coalitions and Movements,
http://saotome-principe.tripod.com/political_parties.html

⁴ For a complete report detailing the 2003 coup see Siebert, Gerhard, "Coup d'état in São Tomé & Príncipe: Domestic causes, the role of oil and former "buffalo" battalion soldiers," African Security Analysis Programme Occasional Paper, Institute for Security Studies, October 10, 2003, 2.

⁵ Siebert, "Coup d'état in São Tomé," 2003, 3, 8-9.

⁶ Memorandum of Understanding, July 2003.

⁷ Timeline: São Tomé & Príncipe, BBC

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1465408.stm

⁸ From a preparatory presentation for the National Forum presented by a São Tomean member of the original planning committee.

1.2. Development Context

The islands of São Tomé & Príncipe were first discovered and claimed by Portugal in the late 15th century. An economy dominated by sugar plantations gave way to coffee and cocoa plantations in the late 19th century, all relying on the use of slave labor.⁹ When the slave trade ended, the Portuguese attempted to develop several export crops (sugar, coffee, oil palm, cocoa), none of which were economically sustainable. Today, the only significant export is cocoa although output has steadily declined. From 1992 to 2000, sweeping agricultural reforms imposed by the World Bank called for the dismantling of large plantations. The reform is generally considered to have failed, since additional investments were not made to support the new small land owners.¹⁰ In 2002, the country's GDP is approximately US\$61.6 million and per capita income US\$44.61¹¹ Services represent around 63% of the GDP while agriculture remains strong (20% of GDP). Industry is still the weakest sector with 18% of the economy; it consists of light construction, textiles, soap, beer; fish processing timber. The main trade partners are Portugal, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Canada, The Philipines, Italy and Canada.¹²

1.2.1. Potential Oil Resources

Early estimates claim there could be billions of barrels of exploitable oil off the shores of São Tomé & Príncipe. According to the joint development treaty signed with Nigeria, all revenues will be divided, with Nigeria receiving a 60% share. JDZ authorities opened the bidding process on nine separate blocks in 2003. If oil is found in commercial quantities, drilling should start within the next 6 to 12 months and production could start in 2008.¹³

1.2.2. Foreign Aid and Donor Dependence

Currently, the government of São Tomé & Príncipe receives the bulk of its revenues from foreign aid. More than 50 percent of São Tomé & Príncipe's national budget comes from international contributions and loans (see Figure 1). In per capita terms, the country receives around 8 times more foreign aid than the average Sub-Sahara

⁹ "São Tomé & Príncipe," The World Fact Book,

<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/tp.html>

¹⁰ "Toward a Consensus Plan of Action for São Tomé e Príncipe," Jeffrey Sachs, William Masters, Vijay Modi, Awash Teklehaimanot and the Columbia University Advisory Project, Center on Globalization and Sustainable Development, The Earth Institute at Columbia University, Draft – Revised April 20, 2005
<http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/Development%20Planning/TowardsConsensusPlanOfAction.doc>

¹¹ 2002 data from The Earth Institute. 2003 estimate for values with purchasing power parity: US\$214 million and per capita income about US\$ \$1,200. CIA fact book.

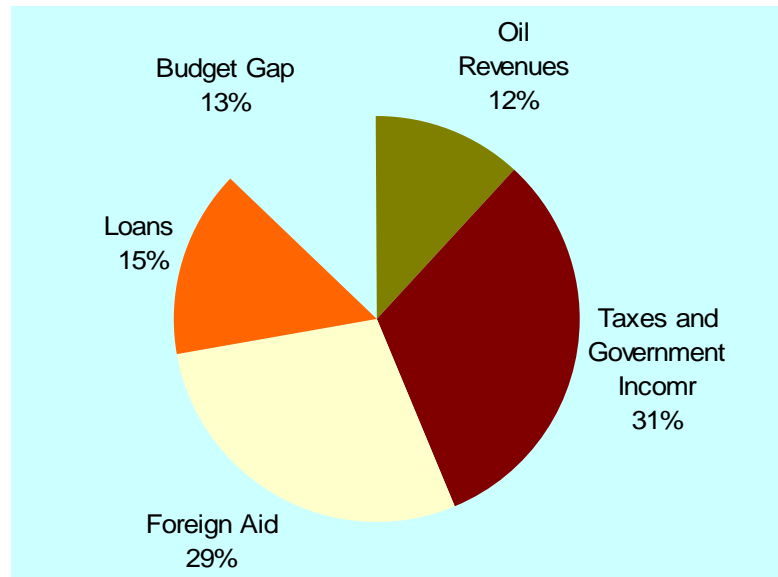
<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/tp.html>

¹² 2003 estimate. CIA fact book. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/tp.html>

¹³ "Sao Tome nets \$49 mm from signature of first oil exploration deal," *Alexander's Gas and Oil Connections, Company News: Africa*, volume 10, issue #4 - Thursday, February 24, 2005
<http://www.gasandoil.com/goc/company/cna50868.htm>

African country (excluding South Africa and Nigeria), and 7 times more than its neighbor Gabon.¹⁴

Fig 1: Government budget funding



Source: National Forum Bulletin (and errata), 2004

The amount of São Tomé & Príncipe's total external debt in 2002 was \$293.1 million, or 5 times its GDP that year.¹⁵ The majority of the funds came from the World Bank and the African Development Bank. In December of 2000, the World Bank Group's International Development Association (IDA) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreed to support a debt reduction package for the country under the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.¹⁶ Funds from HIPC are mainly used in projects related to education and infrastructure to fight poverty.

According to one government Minister,¹⁷ the high levels of external debt and aid dependence affects governance in the country, as authorities are at times compelled to focus on the priorities of the international community at the expense of local needs. In

¹⁴ Data from 1997. Foreign aid refers to total net Official Development Aid (ODA). <http://www.worldbank.org/data/countrydata/adi/adi.html#06>. Data from 1997. Foreign aid refers to total net Official Development Aid (ODA).

¹⁵ "Background Note: São Tome e Príncipe," US Department of State, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5434.htm>

¹⁶ "São Tomé & Príncipe to Receive US\$200 Million in Debt-Service Relief: The IMF and World Bank Support Debt Relief for São Tome and Principe Under the Enhanced HIPC Initiative," World Bank, December 20, 2000. <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/AFRICAEXT/SAOTOMEEXTN/0,.contentMDK:20014991~menuPK:382771~pagePK:141137~piPK:141127~theSitePK:382765,00.html>

¹⁷ Interview in São Tome & Principe, July 2004.

theory, government accountability is also reduced, since operations are not dependent on tax revenue from the population.¹⁸

Despite the preponderance of aid and debt financing for government projects, the use of aid and debt is poorly coordinated. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) seems to be one of the most comprehensive development plans in the country. Drafted in 2002 it covers issues relating to public administration reform, promotion of good governance, economic and distributive growth, human resources development, improved access to public services, education, and health.

In 2004, the United Nations Development Program proposed the creation of a “Poverty Observatory,” an inter-ministerial task force to monitor and implement the PRSP, but this body has yet to be constituted, although a director has been named.¹⁹ One current project of the UNDP is to take stock of all the existing aid projects of the country in an effort to improve donor and recipient coordination.²⁰

With both the local knowledge and the technical resources, UNDP could play a central role to ensure efficiency and transparency of development in STP. However, like the government, UNDP has a reputation for bureaucratic inefficiencies, which can lead to delayed implementation of development projects.²¹ Significantly, UNDP business in the country is conducted in French, which limits the participation of locals in the development process in a country of Portuguese speakers.

Summary

The political crisis that led to the coup in São Tomé & Príncipe emerged out of a unique confluence of economic and political factors: a relatively recent transition to democracy from one-party rule occurring in the context of an economy highly dependent on international aid. The coup signaled deep political rifts in the society but in keeping with São Tomé & Príncipe’s preference for peaceful settlement of disputes, the 2004 National Forum, as called for by the Memorandum of Understanding, was meant to bring members of the political society together with the population to discuss the most pressing problems facing the country.

¹⁸ Terry Karl in *Paradox of Plenty: Oil Booms and Petro-States* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997) argues governments that do not rely mainly on tax revenues for their finances build institutions and bureaucracies that are less connected to their constituencies, less capable of governing and less accountable. Karl’s discussion focuses on natural resource revenues not foreign aid but can still be applied in this context.

¹⁹ “Projecto de Despacho N. __ 2004,” Document from the Office of the Presidency.

²⁰ Meeting at the UNDP, March 25, 2004, São Tomé & Príncipe.

²¹ Interviews in São Tomé & Príncipe, March 2005.

2. National Forum Process

2.1. Forum Planning and Design

The Memorandum of Understanding that ended the political crisis of July 2003 was hastily compiled and unanimously approved by the National Assembly. It called for the return of the President, the restoration of constitutional order, and mechanisms for monitoring of the agreement and of national problems in general. A National Forum was slated to be held within three months. The Memorandum also created a 13-member “Monitoring Commission of the Agreement of July 23, 2003,” consisting of three members of the armed forces, three members of the National Assembly, one special representative each of the head of state, the CPLP, the AU, the Nigerian president, the US and South Africa.²²

In the Fall of 2003, a few months after the coup, President Fradique de Menezes requested that Columbia University’s Earth Institute provide support to STP on a range of advisory projects including oil revenue management legislation, public investments in the country²³ and the implementation of the National Forum.

The Earth Institute’s Advisory Team circulated its proposals for possible Forum designs in São Tome & Príncipe and with the UNDP office in the country. One of the ideas behind the proposal was to make the process more participatory since previous Forums had been criticized for lacking a more consultative element.²⁴

In January, former WTO official and presidential candidate Carlos Tiny was appointed Head of the National Forum Executive Committee after which he suggested a broadly consultative design for the preparatory planning phase of the Forum and for the Forum itself. Political tensions began to arise in February, when a member of the parliament reportedly circulated a letter criticizing the idea of the Forum, but the planning process continued to move forward. During this early planning phase in February, one Santomean contributor to the early design stressed his view that that the Forum recommendations should not be binding, voicing the concern that no body should be created that could possibly assume the role of a sovereign institution with monitoring or jurisdictional authority.²⁵ Many questions about the role of the Forum would be remained unanswered. In this initial planning phase, for example, it was not determined whether there would be a set of recommendations submitted to the National Assembly after the Forum and if those recommendations should be binding.

In mid-March, Carlos Tiny stepped aside as Head of the National Forum Executive Committee and in April the Columbia University Advisory Team circulated a proposed design for the National Forum that had been developed over the previous months in consultation with São Tomeans and the UNDP. The proposal suggested a series of public meetings around the country where national leaders would present a

²² Siebert, “Coup d’etat in São Tomé & Príncipe,” 2003, 10, notes.

²³The Earth Institute’s São Tomé & Príncipe Advisory Project website:

http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/index_stp.htm

²⁴ Meeting at the UNDP, Mach 25, 2004.

²⁵ Preparatory Documents for the National Forum, Power Point Presentation, April 2004.

factual information bulletin about the country's oil situation, and would ask participants to complete a questionnaire eliciting their preferences and priorities for public investment.²⁶ The questionnaire results would then be aggregated and presented at national-level meetings, providing a common foundation on which political leaders could base their arguments.

The proposed scale of the Forum was ambitious in scope – calling for a Forum large enough so that “every adult citizen of São Tomé & Príncipe would have an opportunity to attend at least one such meeting.”²⁷ According to the proposal, the purpose of the Forum would be to facilitate communication between government officials and the people of São Tomé & Príncipe about the future management of oil revenue.

President de Menezes issued a decree on April 21 constituting a national commission of government officials, civil society, unions, and religious organizations to do the preparatory work for the Forum.²⁸ The decree named nine members of the Executive Secretariat of the Forum and appointed the Seventh Day Adventist minister Rev. José Manuel Dias Marques as its head, to replace Carlos Tiny.²⁹ The 58-member National Commission was dissolved before the Forum began, however, due to disagreements over payment and most of the planning responsibilities were transferred over to the Executive Secretariat.

After the preparatory consultations in the capital, the National Commission released rules and regulations for the Forum, outlining its goals and methodology as envisioned by the Santomeans involved. According to the document, the purpose of the Forum was to facilitate meetings between the politicians of the country and civil society to find consensual solutions to the most pressing issues hampering development in the country.

The stated objectives were:

- a) Promotion through dialogue of tolerance and mutual respect, of a climate of understanding between national political actors, and of a better comprehension of Santomean society.
- b) Establishment of a climate of understanding between the organs of government.
- c) Identification of the principal problems obstructing the country's economic and social development
- d) Creation of favorable conditions for good governance

²⁶ “Summary of Proposal for a National Forum,” April 26, 2004. STP Advisory Project Website: http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/National%20Forum/early_planning/Summary%20of%20Proposal%20for%20a%20National%20Forum.doc

²⁷ *Ibid*

²⁸ Decreto Presidencial No 18, 2004, <http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/National%20Forum/Decreto%20Presidencial.pdf>, April 21, 2004.

²⁹ In addition to José Manuel Dias Marques, the Executive Secretariat included Alberto Paulino, Army Major Alfredo Marçal Lima, the president's chief diplomatic advisor Carlos Gustavo dos Anjos, former Justice Minister Justino Veiga, union leader Manuel Costa Carlos, Maria do Carmo Silveira, a deputy, and Zeferino dos Prazeres.

- e) Definition of national development priorities and adoption of goals to be implemented in the short, medium and long term
- f) Creation of mechanisms to reestablish the authority of the State.³⁰

These listed objectives are identical to the goals put forward in the proposal for the 1998 Forum.³¹

In May 2004 the Executive Secretariat decided the Forum would take place in two main stages: first a series of 56 open-access public meetings in all parts of the country, then three days of thematic sessions in the capital with delegates chosen from the first stage of meetings, followed by closing sessions with the president and other members of the government.³² It was also decided that, during the 56 public meetings, moderators and facilitators would distribute an informational bulletin about the issue of pending oil revenues and administer a questionnaire eliciting people's development preferences.

2.2. Implementation of the Forum

2.2.1. Community Meetings

The Forum's Executive Secretariat presented an initial calendar of 56 community meetings in early June with the location selection reflecting the population distribution in the six districts of São Tomé & Príncipe.³³

The selection process of the Moderators and Facilitators was the cause of some dispute between the Forum's Executive Secretariat, the UNDP and Columbia, with Columbia researchers advocating that National Commission members should visit the communities to promote more direct contact between political leaders and the citizenry. The UNDP insisted that the moderators and facilitators have previous experience in conducting meetings and filling questionnaires, which meant that only those Forum Committee members fitting these criteria would be involved, and the others would come from the ranks of the country's NGOs. When the National Commission was disbanded, the facilitator teams were compromised exclusively of NGO representatives and employees of national statistics office.

The Executive Secretariat, in consultation with the UNDP, selected 27 Facilitators and 3 alternates to administer the 56 community meetings. The 9 most qualified

³⁰“Regulamento do Forum Nacional,” Comissão Nacional Preparatória do Forum Nacional, July 2004.

<http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/documents/NationalForumRulesAndRegulations.pdf>

³¹ “Regulamento do Forum de Unidade para a Reconstrução Nacional,” March 1998, Artigo 2 (Objetivos).

<http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/National%20Forum/1997%20Forum-Terms%20of%20Reference.PDF>

³²“Organigrama dos Trabalhos,” Comissão Preparatoria do Forum.

<http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/National%20Forum/Organigrama%20dos%20Trabalhos.pdf>

³³ The participatory design of the Forum proposed by Columbia called for 100 to 200 individual meetings, but members of the Executive Committee wanted to hold fewer. The number of 56 was chosen as a compromise.

Facilitators were selected as the Moderators. Each team consisted of one Moderator and two Facilitators.

Moderators were assigned the responsibility of leading Forum meetings, presenting the bulletin to the public, filling out meeting summaries and fulfilling the administrative duties for each Moderator/Facilitator team. The main duty of the Facilitators was administering the questionnaires.

Great care was taken to randomize the assignments of the Moderators and Facilitators to meetings every day, to allow Columbia University researchers to measure the influence of facilitators on questionnaire responses after the Forum. Moderators and Facilitators were randomized separately to lessen the chance that the same Moderator/Facilitator team would be repeated in future Forum meetings. To reduce any potential bias or undue influence in communities, Moderators and Facilitators were presented their location schedules only one or two days ahead of their assignments.

Moderator/Facilitator training took place in two formal day-long sessions, in informal consultations and in a series of four test meetings.³⁴

For logistical reasons, the start date of the Forum was moved back one week. The majority of the Forum meetings took place between June 17 and June 21. All eight meetings in the Autonomous Region of Príncipe took place on June 24.

Moderators and Facilitators reported that most meetings ran smoothly, with some minor complications. Two meetings were postponed because of miscommunication with the publicity team and another was canceled after local youth mistook the Forum meeting for a political rally. Each of these three meetings was rescheduled to July 1.

Every day the Moderators and Facilitators met at the Forum offices for a morning debriefing where they received their assignments and meeting materials. These morning meetings were invaluable for correcting logistical mistakes from the previous day.

³⁴The first training session consisted of:

- Background information regarding the National Forum
- Role of the Moderators/Facilitators
- Structure of the community meetings (timetable, examples of ways to explain the material)
- Presentation of the bulletin content
- Explanation of the questionnaire (role of the facilitator, type of questions, notes on some questions)

The second day consisted of a simulated community meeting. Three Moderators/Facilitators were selected randomly to present the bulletin to the rest of the group. Afterwards the group was divided into three working groups, following the same methodology as in the real meetings, and each group went through a questionnaire, assisted by one member of the Columbia team. Participants showed a strong commitment to the work, asking tough questions during the simulated meeting. Forum Secretariat members were present during the training, offering advice from their experience as Moderators/Facilitators in the first test meeting.

Halfway through the first stage of 56 meetings, a refresher session was held to correct mistakes and ensure consistency. A list of common entry mistakes found in the questionnaires was presented.

Moderators/Facilitators shared advice and heard about problems they could expect to encounter in future meetings. “Final Report on Columbia University Support for the National Forum in São Tomé & Príncipe June - July 2004.”

<http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/National%20Forum/Columbia%20Team%20final%20report.doc>

The informational bulletin and questionnaire were drafted and modified with the input of UNDP, the Forum Executive Secretariat, the Prime Minister, the President, and members of the country's oil commission. The "Boletim de Informação Popular"³⁵ focused on the nature and magnitude of potential oil revenues. In other countries, conflict and mismanagement of such revenues has brought political and economic disaster, often leaving oil exporters poorer than they were before the resource was discovered. The idea behind the bulletin was to increase access to information and promote transparency in the country's budding oil sector.³⁶

The questionnaire was focused on what the government of São Tomé & Príncipe should do with the oil revenue. With the twin goals of gathering information relevant for decision makers and creating space for public dialogue, the questionnaire was meant to be answered in a deliberative process, in groups of 20-40 people. It had 19 questions (with sub-questions) and included spaces for the additional comments of citizens.

The questionnaire asked citizens to state their preferences for the use of potential oil revenues, as explained in the bulletin, and gathered demographic information such as age, gender, and primary economic activities of the respondent groups. Groups were asked to state their priorities in the areas of health, education, water and sanitation, energy sources, roads and transportation, and justice and internal order. Groups were also asked to attest to the quality of public services, the frequency of their contact with authorities, the incidence of corruption, willingness to pay taxes and save money for the future, their view of current economic conditions, and their aspirations for STP's future.

Prior to the commencement of community meetings, each facilitator was asked to complete a Facilitator Data Sheet that recorded some basic demographic data and details regarding prior experience. A goal of this document was to identify previous positions or affiliations that might contribute to biases on the part of the facilitator or might otherwise skew the responses gathered through questionnaires administered by these individuals. The Moderators/Facilitators were also asked to complete the questionnaire themselves—another method of determining whether or not their personal opinions might influence the results of the group sessions.

³⁵ "Popular Information Bulletin."

http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/National%20Forum/bulletin_english_3.1.pdf

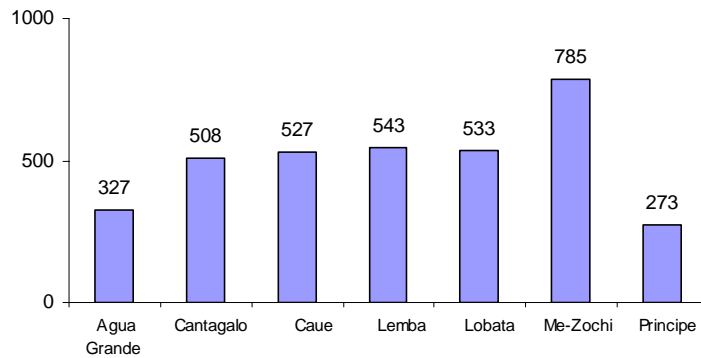
³⁶ The bulletin aimed to give readers a basic understanding of the country's potential oil reserves, the new law through which revenues are to be governed, and the potential role these revenues will play in the national economy. The bulletin was written to convey the following messages:

- Although there is a high probability of oil existing in STP's territorial waters, its quantity and quality are not guaranteed.
- The area with the highest exploitation potential lies in the Joint Development Zone, which means that decisions and revenues must be shared with Nigeria.
- Even if the oil is exploitable, it might take years for STP to see the first revenues.
- The government has created an oil law to ensure transparency and the efficient use of the oil money.
- All Santomeans have the right to know how this money is being used.
- Within the current budget, the oil money cannot solve all the country's problems.
- Oil revenues can be a curse if they are not managed carefully.

2.2.2. Participatory Success

Approximately 3500 Santomeans from the seven districts and from the Autonomous Region of Príncipe attended the Forum meetings – about 3 percent of the total population or about 6 percent of the adult population.³⁷ Approximately 89% of participants were aged between 16 and 56 years, and some 11% were older. The majority of the participants were male (66%), 28% identified themselves as unemployed, 12% as fishermen, 15% as cocoa producers and 16% as “other agricultural” workers. Approximately 20% worked in professional activities (services or industry) and the remaining 10% worked in “other activities.”

Figure 2: Number of Participants by district

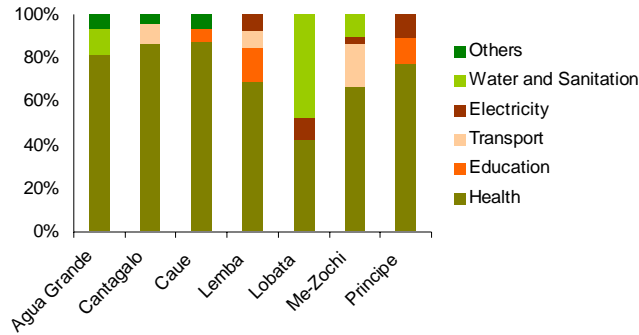


Source: National Forum Questionnaire. 2004

The results of the questionnaire reflect an overwhelming preference for public investment in the health sector.

³⁷ Martin E. Sandbu, “Does Deliberation Matter? A Study of Deliberative Democracy in São Tomé & Príncipe’s National Forum,” Center on Globalization and Sustainable Development, Columbia University September 2004. <http://martinsandbu.net/papers/deliberation.pdf>

Figure 3: Public investment priority, first choice by district



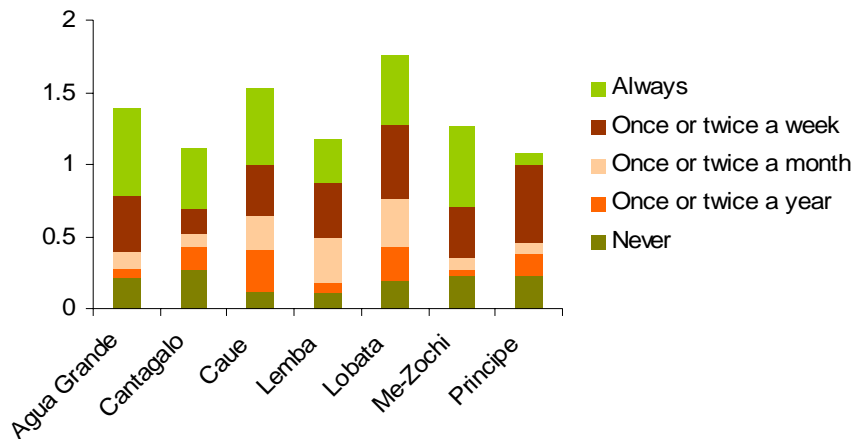
Source: National Forum Questionnaire. 2004

In health, the majority of the population indicated their preference for the construction of hospitals over local health clinics. In education, the population stated their preference for investments in secondary over primary schooling and in professional education over university schooling. In transportation, the population elected for the improvement of roads over better public transportation such as buses.

The most common source of water is either natural sources (rivers, springs) or public fountains. The most common source of energy for cooking is wood. The majority of the population has no electricity at home.

The results from the questionnaire also showed the vulnerable social condition of the population surveyed, with many respondents suffering frequently from a lack of food.

Figure 4: Stated frequency of lack of food (average proportion of persons)



(Note: superior to 100% due to multiple answers)

Source: National Forum Questionnaire. 2004

For a graphical summary of the Forum Results (in Portuguese) see Appendix A.

Analysis of the data shows that the attitudes of the people surveyed were highly correlated with the attitudes of the facilitators. In particular there was a strong correlation between a facilitator's age and gender and responses to certain survey questions. For example, in response to the question about hospitals vs. smaller local clinics, groups with a male facilitator preferred hospitals 76% of the time, while female-moderated groups preferred hospitals just 44% of the time. Similarly, groups led by older people were much less likely to identify a problem with corruption in their region. This data shows there could be some potential for bias in the questionnaire results, namely results could have been leader driven.

2.2.3. Meetings in the Capital

At the end of each of the 56 meetings, attendees selected representatives to take part in the meetings to be held in the capital. The elections were done on a majority basis and each community had between two and four representatives according to their population size. Transportation and food were provided for those that traveled.

These meetings took place July 5, 6, and 7 and a closing ceremony was held on July 12, Independence Day. President Fradique de Menezes, the Prime Minister, and other official representatives were present.

The National Commission's original proposal called for the final days' sessions to be divided by topic: 1) Political Institutional Questions, 2) Social Questions and 3) Regional Political Questions.³⁸ Due to organizational problems, however, this structure was abandoned and a more open format was adopted, allowing people to speak their mind on any topic.

2.2.4. Drafting of the Recommendations

The results from the smaller regional meetings were aggregated and summarized in a document that served as the basis for discussion at the larger meetings in the capital. The final recommendations were drafted with the direct input of the delegates chosen in the regional meetings, in a process where the delegates interacted directly with national political leaders.

Local consultants Pascoal Daio, Guilherme Octaviano and Arlindo Afonso de Carvalho were contracted to draft the recommendations. They compiled the results of the questionnaire and other documents (mainly the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) into a 140-page summary, which was discussed during the meetings.³⁹ Over the

³⁸ "Regulamento do Forum Nacional," 2004. These themes are close to those found in the proposal for the 1998 Forum, which also proposed the creation of three commissions to discuss 1) Political-Institutional Issues, 2) Economic Issues and 3) Socio-Cultural Issues. "Regulamento do Forum," 1998, Artigo 6.

³⁹ "Report of the São Tomean National Forum, June 16 to July 12, 2004: Issues and Recommendations for Reflection on the Foundations for Consensus among São Tomeans," [Relatório: Fórum Nacional de 16 de

course of the meetings in the capital this document was redacted from 140 pages to 11 pages and rewritten to include the recommendations of those in attendance.

The final recommendations drafting phase did count on the direct input of the delegates chosen in the regional meetings. However, members of the National Assembly did not participate in the drafting process.

2.3. Analysis and Critiques of the Forum Process

The Forum events unfolded in a palpably pessimistic political climate. The memory of the failed Forum of 1998 was still fresh in peoples' minds, government corruption was perceived as widespread, and a majority of citizens said their quality of life was worse than in past years. Furthermore, the event was perceived by many citizens as being "the President's Forum" – especially after what was perceived as the dismissal of Carlos Tiny, a leading opposition figure, as the head of the Executive Secretariat. This severely limited the initial political support for the event.

In spite of logistical obstacles and an initial lack of public enthusiasm, the National Forum achieved a number of historical firsts: bringing civic leaders into the provinces to educate the public on the economy and legal system in a non-partisan fashion, bringing citizen delegates (including expatriates from abroad and from the Autonomous Region of Príncipe) into the capital to have their voices heard in a public space, and providing hundreds of citizens an extended audience with the country's president and other elected officials.

Though a few meetings had to be rescheduled, ultimately all 56 community meetings did take place and a sizable sample of the population attended, leaving with a more realistic set of expectations for the country's transition to a petroleum economy. A survey conducted by Columbia University researchers found that citizens' preferences were observed to have converged and moderated somewhat as a result of the deliberative process.⁴⁰

Two categories of criticism can be made about the Forum process, which will help explain the lack of follow-up that is considered in Chapter 3. The first is logistical, revolving around the lack of coordination between all of the actors involved in implementing such a large and complicated national event. The second points to design flaws in the Forum process, which may have adversely affected perceptions of the Forum during and after the event.

2.3.1. Management Problems

A lack of clear hierarchy or functional area assignments led to communication breakdowns and the postponement of important decisions.

Junho á 12 de Julho de 2004, Das Questões para Reflexão ás Recomendações (As Bases de Convergencia entre os Santomenses)], Pascoal Dias, Guilherme Octaviano and Arlindo Afonso de Carvalho.

http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/documents/stp_Forum_consultantfinalreport.pdf

⁴⁰ Sandbu, "Does Deliberation Matter?" 2004, 27.

In addition, an initially oversized Forum budget created expectations that could not be fulfilled. The initial budget prepared by the National Commission included payments to the members of the National Commission. The UNDP and the US Embassy, who bore the costs of the Forum implementation, limited their joint contribution and stipulated they would only cover direct implementation costs and no fees to individuals. The National Commission maintained its initial budget objective, hoping that more resources would be mobilized and when they weren't the National Commission dissolved.

Furthermore, decisions about the cost structure of the Forum were only made by the government on June 11, while the UNDP formal process was only completed on June 15, the day before the Forum formal opening. This created delays in decision-making and complicated planning since no purchases could be made before approval of the project document.

Because the US government contribution reached UNDP-NY only on July 2, UNDP-STP was only willing to provide resources to the Secretariat on an incremental basis, complicating efforts to arrange logistics in a timely manner.

Payment disputes meant that several labor strikes threatened to shut down the Forum. The Moderators and Facilitators decided to strike on Saturday, June 19, demanding more money for having to work on weekends. After negotiations with the Secretariat and the UNDP, however, the problem was solved and the meetings were held as expected. In addition, the Forum delegates led a public protest because they wanted to be paid for participating in the centralized meetings.

There were also concerns about lack of publicity. Columbia University Advisory Group team members met with the directors of the national television and radio stations and TV RTP-Africa on several occasions to coordinate coverage and discuss issues related to the Forum. Having been denied any part of the National Forum budget, the national TV station TVS conspicuously did not give the Forum top billing on the evening news in the first days of the event, but did so only a few days later, on the eve of the meetings in the Autonomous Region of Príncipe.

Members of the Secretariat and Columbia Advisory team were interviewed on local radio (Radio Nacional), on local television (Televisão Nacional, RTP-Africa), by the Portuguese newswire LUSO, by the Norwegian Business Daily, and by a radio team from the BBC. Two national radio reporters and a BBC radio team covered several meetings around the country during the first week of the Forum. A press release was distributed about the Forum on the government's behalf, in both Portuguese and English, targeting foreign media outlets.⁴¹

The Forum Secretariat made some effort to publicize the Forum by word of mouth, sending at least one individual into the countryside for this purpose. Outside the capital, however, awareness of the Forum was observed to be limited.

⁴¹ "Unique example of Grassroots Democracy in Africa Explains Oil to Population," Executive Secretariat National Commission for the National Forum, Contact: Jan Hartman, June 25, 2004.
<http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/National%20Forum/logistics/Forum%20Press%20Release%20English.doc>

2.3.2. *Design Problems*

There were three broad areas where the National Forum would have benefited from a more clearly defined purpose instead of trying to accomplish multiple goals at once. A single purpose with a stated outcome was absent before the process began in the framing of the Forum goals, during the process due to lack of broad based participation in the Forum design and at the end of the process when recommendations were drafted that were unreflective of the public's priorities. This disconnect occurred on three levels; before the process began in the framing of the Forum goals, during the process with a lack of broad based participation in the Forum design and at the end of the process when recommendations were drafted that were unreflective of the public's priorities.

2.3.2.1. *Confusion of Purpose: Divergent Goals*

One criticism of the Forum's design – voiced eight months later during interviews with participants and planners in São Tomé & Príncipe – was that the outsized focus on petroleum issues diverted attention away from the political and institutional questions facing the country, which was the original aim of the Forum as stipulated in the Memorandum of Understanding.⁴² One prominent NGO leader criticized the Forum for having “too much to do with petroleum and not enough to do with governance.” During the 56 regional meetings, the bulletin became an immediate cause of controversy for its omission of the economically and culturally important agricultural and fishing sectors.⁴³

The failure of the Forum to resolve political tensions can in part be traced to the original planning phase, where preparatory documents show a confusion of purpose for the Forum, which reflected on the disjointed process that unfolded. While the National Commission's rules and regulations for the Forum make no mention of oil, the designs drawn up between the Presidency, the opposition politicians, and the Columbia Advisory team were focused on stimulating discussion about the incoming oil revenues and collecting data on the people's development priorities. A development agenda (as opposed to a narrowly-defined political one) was also emphasized by the UNDP, which has made a consistent push to emphasize the implementation of the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

While the National Commission also stressed the importance of development goals, it sought to identify the main social and economic obstacles in the country, not to gather the population's preferences with a questionnaire. As the Forum took shape along the lines favored by UNDP and Columbia, the most serious political questions were left largely unexplored.

⁴² Interview in São Tomé & Príncipe, March 23, 2005.

⁴³ “Final Report on Columbia University Support for the National Forum,” 2004.

2.3.2.2. *Lack of Participation in Process Design*

The design of the Forum was originally meant to be inclusive of many Santomean political views, as outlined by the presidential decree creating the 58-member National Commission. But after this body was dissolved, the planning was done mainly by the Executive Secretariat, with technical input from UNDP and the Columbia Advisory Team. With UNDP and the US government sharing the costs of the Forum, many of the budgeting decisions – and thus management decisions – were made by international actors. This created a dynamic where resources were sporadically allocated or were not allocated at all.⁴⁴

In addition, since they came late to the process, the facilitators and moderators of the Forum were not directly involved in the design of the Forum. This led to some of the confusion and miscommunication that resulted in a series of strikes, discussed above. Inclusion of these community leaders in the design of the Forum might have enabled more of a sense of ownership and accountability towards the process instead of creating an employer/employee relationship between the facilitators and the international donors. If this had happened, civil society leaders could have continued to be involved after the Forum ended by holding leaders accountable for the people's preferences voiced in the questionnaire.

2.3.2.3. *Disconnect between the Regional Meetings and the Recommendations*

Based on the results of the questionnaire and on the documents prepared by the consultants during the final three days of meetings in the capital, a final National Forum document was produced, dictated aloud line-by-line, and approved by the delegates present at the meeting in June of 2004.

The *Report of the São Tomean National Forum: Issues and Recommendations for Reflection on the Foundations for Consensus Among São Tomeans* does refer, in places, to data gathered about the population's development preferences (see for example section 3.22 "National priorities for the economic development process, pages 108-111")⁴⁵ but the consultants took some academic license when consolidating people's preferences into 140 pages of recommendations.⁴⁶ Since the plenary sessions were not ultimately organized into focused thematic meetings, a wide range of topics was discussed leading the consultants to draft a document that was comprehensive but unwieldy in its scope. When the larger document was distilled down to 11 pages at the end of the Forum, the recommendations that remained were very broad.

The Forum Recommendations report includes several sections directly transferred from the 2002 PRSP,⁴⁷ an already existing development document drafted with Santomean participation. The political recommendations cover both issues of good governance and institutional questions. In contrast to the development recommendations,

⁴⁴ Interview with a member of the National Forum's Executive Committee in São Tome e Príncipe, March 25, 2005.

⁴⁵ "Report of the São Tomean National Forum, June 16 to July 12, 2004"

⁴⁶ Interview with National Forum Consultant, São Tomé & Príncipe, March 16, 2005

⁴⁷ Phone Interview with politician in São Tomé & Príncipe, February 4, 2005.

however, Section II of the Report, “Political Institutional Aspects,” (pages 20-74) proposes reforms that are not clearly defined as consensus proposals. For example, the recommendations suggest that São Tomé & Príncipe’s proportional system — the D'Hondt Method — was considered by the participants of the Forum to be an injustice to small parties and an infringement on the rule of equality in popular suffrage. The document suggests instead the adoption of an integral proportional system, or a uninominal system, which – according to the document – allows voters to better know the candidate and reduces the influence of partisan structures.⁴⁸ It also calls for the introduction of a *panachage*, or preferential vote method, which allows voters to eliminate some names from the party list and substitute them with names of candidates from another list. The document claims this would allow the voter to indicate his truly preferred candidate on the list,⁴⁹ but this level of specificity was not discussed with the population during the preliminary communities or at the plenary sessions in the capital.

Summary

In light of these observations, it can be argued that the lack of consensus around the Forum Recommendations comes in part from the unclear political motivations and editorial license taken in drafting certain sections of the final document.

Both the long and short versions of the Recommendations that came out of the Forum process stated a commitment to follow up on the Forum and create plans of action for execution of the sectoral priorities.⁵⁰ The recommendations document however has yet to be signed by the National Assembly and has no binding power. This has led to difficulties in the post-Forum phase, which are outlined in greater detail below.

⁴⁸ “Report of the São Tomean National Forum, June 16 to July 12, 2004,” Recommendations 5-6, 74.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, Recommendation 7, 75.

⁵⁰ “Report of the São Tomean National Forum, June 16 to July 12, 2004,” Long Document: “Sobre o Fórum Nacional,” page 78. Short Document: “Recomendacoes Gerais, 2.”

3. National Forum Follow-Up

The July 2004 São Tomé & Príncipe National Forum ended on a high note, with community delegates and national leaders holding hands in symbolic union. The recommendations of the Forum were meant to follow up on a series of political-institutional and development priorities of the general public in São Tomé & Príncipe.⁵¹ Serving as a tool for helping citizens decide the country's future, the Forum was touted as a "unique example of grassroots democracy in Africa."⁵²

But the "spirit" of the National Forum was short-lived. In the weeks following the conclusion of the Forum, the country was plagued by a series of national political crises. What is apparent now – nine months after the National Forum's closing sessions – is that despite Sãotomeans engaging in dialogue about the future of oil exploration and confirming the country's development priorities, the Forum did little to create a climate of national reconciliation.

3.1. Key Findings

3.1.1. *Unreachable Consensus on the Implementation of the Recommendations*

In order to get approval to move forward with the implementation of the recommendations, the final report of the National Forum was submitted by the National Forum Executive Committee to the National Assembly during the closing sessions of July 10-12. A declaration seeking implementation of the Forum's recommendations accompanied the report.⁵³

According to members of the Executive Committee, the President of the National Assembly would not sign the declaration without first discussing the document with National Assembly deputies in order to reach a consensus on their implementation.⁵⁴ Ultimately, the recommendations and declaration of the Forum were never submitted to the National Assembly, and there have been no additional efforts to date to seek National Assembly approval. In short, the National Assembly never reached an agreement on the implementation of the recommendations of the Forum.⁵⁵

In September 2004, the EPD Workshop Team on São Tomé & Príncipe met with President de Menezes and a group of his advisors in New York. During this meeting it was disclosed that two months after the conclusion of the National Forum, no task force or follow-up had been pursued. The President and his advisors proposed to the EPD Workshop Team the idea of working with the presidency to help implement the recommendations of the National Forum. But due to the fact that the Forum's

⁵¹ "Regulamento do Forum Nacional," Comissão Nacional Preparatória do Forum Nacional, July 2004, 78.

⁵² Unique example of Grassroots Democracy in Africa Explains Oil to Population," Executive Secretariat National Commission for the National Forum, Contact: Jan Hartman, June 25, 2004.

⁵³ Interview with a member of the Executive Committee, March 2005.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*

⁵⁵ Interviews with members of the Executive Committee, March 2005.

recommendations lacked consensus and legitimacy, now, nearly nine months after the event an inter-ministerial task force has still not been established and the government's attention has shifted from the National Forum to other concerns.

3.1.2. Reluctance of UNDP to Move Forward Without Government Support

In a September 2004 letter to the Prime Minister, UNDP, which along with the government was entrusted with helping coordinate Forum follow-up efforts, offered to help begin the implementation process. In a November 2004 meeting with officials from the President's Office, UNDP reaffirmed its willingness to help set up an implementation committee to consider the recommendations dealing specifically with good governance. UNDP repeatedly stressed that the recommendations of the Forum could be aligned with the PRSP's goals.⁵⁶

In general, UNDP's post-Forum efforts were stalled by limited initiative and political will in the country. UNDP officials were reluctant to move forward without government support. But according to one member of the Forum's Executive Committee, the government was reluctant to work with UNDP due to the payment squabbles with the National Commission and other tensions stemming from their collaboration during the Forum.⁵⁷

3.1.3. Inability to Disseminate Results

Efforts to distribute the results of the Forum questionnaire and the Forum's recommendations to the communities where the regional meetings took place have been nonexistent, in spite of the fact that participants were at times promised that this would occur.

As a result, when people in the communities of Micoló and San Marçal were surveyed by the Columbia EPD Workshop Team about the National Forum's recommendations in March 2005, few seemed to have any knowledge of them. Despite the fact that more than half of those interviewed had heard of the National Forum, less than 25% could name one issue discussed in the Forum and none could name a specific recommendation that came from the Forum process.⁵⁸

3.1.4. Exclusion of Civil Society in the Follow-up Process

No effort has been made to include civil society in Forum follow-up efforts, in spite of the fact that most of the facilitators of the 56 community meetings were members of national NGOs. The head of a leading women's advocacy group in the country stressed in an interview that civil society should have been involved in the Forum follow-up process because they are, in her opinion, more transparent, accountable and neutral than the government officials.⁵⁹ Like most of the Santomeans interviewed by the authors

⁵⁶ Meetings with UNDP officials in São Tomé & Príncipe, March 25, 2005

⁵⁷ Interview in São Tomé & Príncipe, March 25, 2005.

⁵⁸ "Results of the National Forum follow-up questionnaire," Columbia University EPD workshop on São Tomé & Príncipe, March 2005.

⁵⁹ Telephone interview to civil society leader, February 2005.

in March 2005, civil society members did not seem to have much knowledge of specific National Forum recommendations.

3.2. Stalled Implementation: Potential causes

In March 2005, members of the EPD Workshop Team returned to São Tomé & Príncipe to identify the obstacles to any National Forum follow-up efforts. Outlined below are the results of their consultations with ministers, consultants, civil servants, civil society representatives and Santomean citizens.

3.2.1. Failure to Address Underlying Political Disputes

As established in Article I of the National Forum Preparatory Commission's "Rules and Regulations of the National Forum," the principle objective of the event was to "reach an understanding between the key political and civil protagonists of São Tomé & Príncipe," in order to find "consensual solutions to overcome the principal constraints blocking the development of the country." In short, it was meant to help resolve the political tensions that inspired the coup against the President in July 2003.⁶⁰

Although the Forum was successful in some regards, the hopeful spirit was short-lived. In September, the country's leading opposition party, the MLSTP, declared that a cabinet reshuffle was necessary. Then a national corruption crisis led to the dismissal of Prime Minister Maria das Neves by the President and to interrogations of many prominent officials by the Public Prosecutor.⁶¹ These events diverted attention away from the government's efforts to pursue National Forum follow-up.

In addition, one of the leading supporters of the National Forum in the Office of the Presidency, Carlos Gustavo dos Anjos, was suspended in September from his duties as Chief Diplomatic Advisor to the President after being implicated in the "blue bag" corruption scandal that led to the dismissal of the Prime Minister da Neves. He was later acquitted of charges.⁶² Dos Anjos, one of the most active figures on the National Forum's Executive Committee, was a strong proponent of the National Forum and his removal from the President's Office stalled follow-up efforts.

3.2.2. Uncertainty of Recommendations' legal validity

The extent to which the National Forum's recommendations were binding was ambiguous from their inception. In the "Rules and Regulations of the National Forum" the National Forum Preparatory Commission organizers did not spell out if, or how, any recommendations might be implemented. Article 6, Clause 2 of the report only states

⁶⁰ Regulamento do Forum Nacional," Comissão Nacional Preparatória do Forum Nacional, July 2004, 78

⁶¹ Seibert, Gerhard, "Situation Report, São Tomé & Príncipe," Institute for Security Studies, <http://www.iss.org.za/AF/current/2004/stomenov04.pdf>, 5-6.

⁶² *Ibid*, 5

that every recommendation proposed would be discussed, and that those around which there was a “consensus” would be approved.⁶³

During the final sessions of the National Forum, the National Assembly was not officially included in the drafting of the recommendations, a fact which cast doubt on the validity of the recommendations and merited mention in the consultants’ final report.⁶⁴ In an interview, a prominent member of the government noted that “we did not have any legal answers to the Forum’s recommendations and we could not reach any real agreements.”⁶⁵

In addition, the National Forum lacked an accountability mechanism. No follow-up committee was established to begin work on the recommendations, although this was one of the central recommendations of the National Forum’s final report.⁶⁶ No civil society groups were approached to help with Forum follow-up efforts, despite their seeming willingness to do so.

One prominent legal authority in São Tomé & Príncipe who was involved in the National Forum suggested the process should never have occurred because it established a parallel democratic structure in the country – echoing one of the concerns raised during the planning stages of the Forum.⁶⁷ Because the country already has a representative system with constitutional mechanisms in place to discuss important national questions, in this individual’s opinion there is no legal validity to the Forum process or its recommendations. This legal ambiguity may help explain the government’s reluctance to support the implementation of the recommendations.

3.2.3. Design of recommendations that were impossible to implement

While some of the recommendations are specific, many are more akin to broad guiding principles. One recommendation calls for the “promotion of good governance” among ministers and high-level civil servants.⁶⁸ Another urges the nation’s leaders to “respond to political and social promises made by improving the quality of life of the population in terms of education, health, water and sanitation, energy and urbanization.”⁶⁹ Asking the National Assembly to approve all these recommendations with the expectation of an effective implementation is unrealistic.

In drawing lessons from the Forum, it is key to distinguish between its two phases: first the popular consultations in the communities and secondly the national meetings in the capital. The two phases were linked, however, because the results of the questionnaire were referred to in the drafting of the recommendations and representatives from the community meetings participated in the plenary sessions. The Forum as a whole may have tried to address too many issues at once while actually avoiding productive discussions about the country’s fundamental problems, specifically the political tensions that lead to the coup in the first place.

⁶³ National Forum Preparatory Commission, “Regulations of the National Forum,” July 2004.

⁶⁴ Report of the São Tomean National Forum, June 16 to July 12, 2004,” 78.

⁶⁵ Interview in São Tome & Príncipe on March 18, 2005.

⁶⁶ Report of the São Tomean National Forum, June 16 to July 12, 2004,” 78.

⁶⁷ Interview in São Tome & Príncipe on March 15, 2005.

⁶⁸ “Report of the São Tomean National Forum, June 16 to July 12, 2004,” 77.

⁶⁹ *Ibid* 115.

4. STP National Forum – Looking Ahead

The National Forum recommendations can be categorized broadly into two groups: 1) politico-institutional and 2) development recommendations. It is clear from interviews in São Tomé & Príncipe that there is little national consensus or political will supporting the implementation of the political-institutional recommendations of the Forum. In particular, one of the main stalling points seems to be a recommendation calling for a national referendum to “clarify the political system of the government.”⁷⁰

A national consensus does seem to exist with respect to the country’s development goals, however. As the EPD Workshop Team’s December 2004 analysis of the National Forum recommendations illustrates, there is a great deal of overlap between these recommendations and the country’s PRSP goals.⁷¹

Due to flaws in the design and execution of the National Forum process that lead in part to the lack of consensus around the Forum’s recommendations, it is not clear that the complete set of recommendations should be implemented in their current form, unless there is a groundswell of public support for the recommendations in São Tomé & Príncipe. However, some elements of the National Forum process should be salvaged, with potential for great positive impact in São Tomé & Príncipe. We suggest the following plan of action:

4.1. Incorporate the People’s Development Priorities into the PRSP Strategy

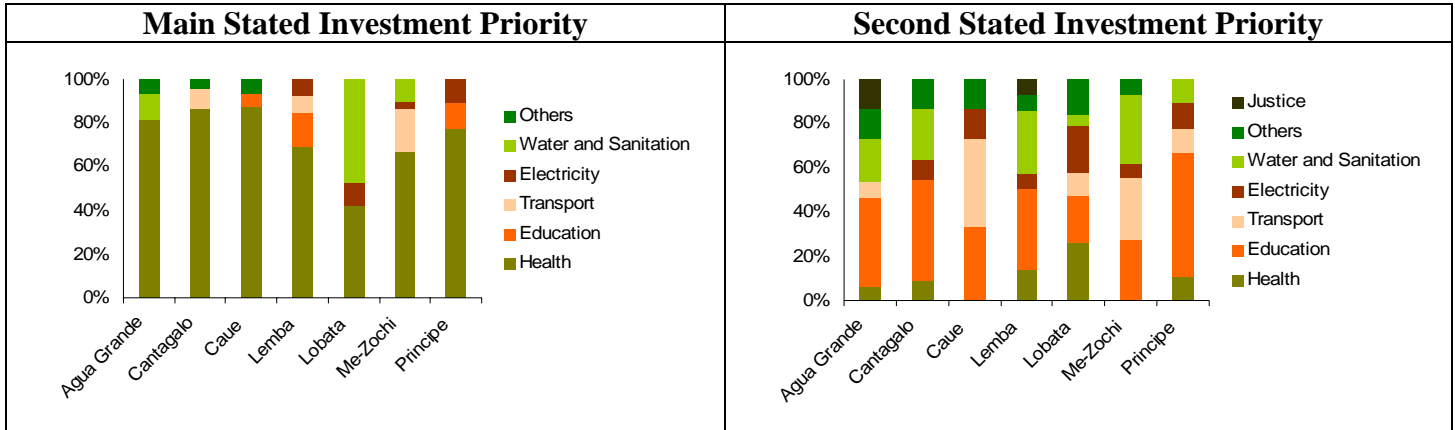
Given that the results of the National Forum questionnaire constitute a comprehensive summary of the population’s preferences and priorities for public investment, we believe they could have a great impact if they were incorporated into the country’s existing Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), by giving an additional measure of popular legitimacy to the goals of the PRSP. Indeed, it would be impractical not to integrate the questionnaire results into the national development goals of the PRSP. However, in order to make implementation successful, a refining and prioritizing of these overlapping goals is essential.

In short, the National Forum questionnaire results can provide valuable information to validate PRSP objectives as well as support policy initiatives. Below, we illustrate some examples of overlap between the questionnaire results of the National Forum and the PRSP priorities.

⁷⁰ “Conclusões e Recomendações – Reunião Plenária, Discussão e Aprovação,” July 2004, p. 3, article 7.

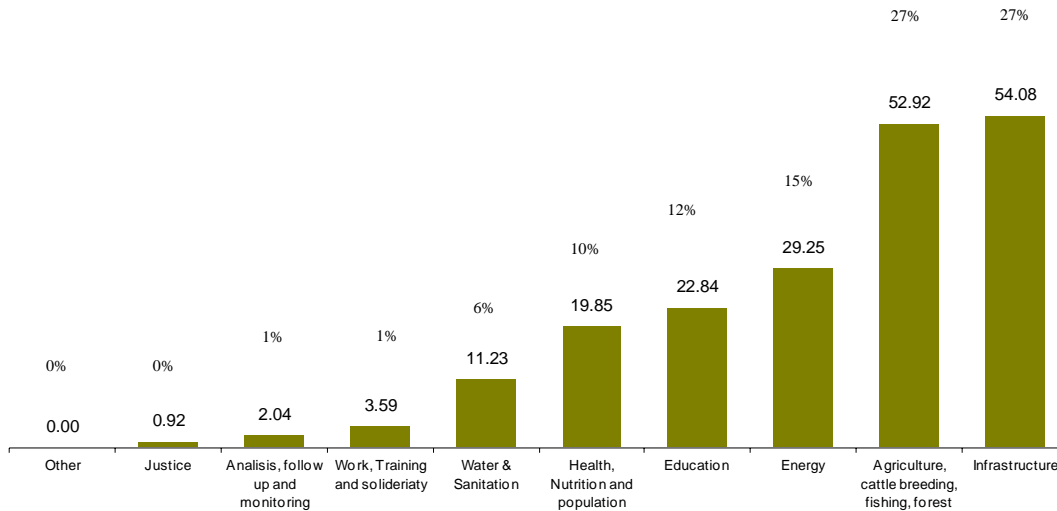
⁷¹ Taken from “Análise das Recomendações do Fórum Nacional,” Columbia University workshop team on São Tomé & Príncipe, December 14, 2004.

Figure 5: The two main priorities of Santomeans, by order of importance



Source: National Forum Questionnaire. 2004

Fig 6: PRSP funds by “action” sector (2003-2010) (US Million \$)
Total: US \$197 Million



Source: 2002 Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for São Tomé & Príncipe

As Figure 5 illustrates, the three main priorities of the Santomean people are, in order of importance, health, education and infrastructure. In contrast, the three main “action” sectors of the PRSP from 2003-2010 are basic infrastructure, agriculture cattle breeding/fishing, and energy.⁷² These three sectors make up nearly half of total funds. Health and education, on the other hand, compose only 10% and 12% of total expected funds. However, during the first stage of the PRSP process (2003-2005), there is a greater emphasis on these two sectors. During these years, health and education comprise 17% and 13% of total funds, respectively.

⁷² Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for São Tomé & Príncipe, http://www.earthinstitute.columbia.edu/cgsd/STP/Development%20Planning/Poverty_Reduction/STP_EN RP+LASTb.doc, December 2002.

These tables illustrate that there can be a closer coordination of the National Forum’s questionnaire results and the PRSP strategy. Under the auspices of the “Poverty Observatory,” UNDP could ensure that the results of the National Forum questionnaire are incorporated into the implementation priorities of the PRSP. With the backing of UNDP, this approach is likely to have more legitimacy than an independent push for the implementation of the development goals outlined by the Forum’s Recommendations.

4.2. Publicly Announce Questionnaire Results and Distribute to Government Ministries.

The results of the questionnaire were never announced or distributed to the participants in the process. While the optimal time to do so has long past, we believe that distributing the results is still essential for the sake of government accountability to the people, and to promote a measure of citizen “ownership” over the National Forum process. In the hands of government ministries, the data represent an essential policy-making tool.

In order to increase awareness in the media about the public’s development priorities, we have included a press release to be distributed on the occasion of the one-year anniversary of the National Forum (see Appendix B).

Publication of the Forum results is one way to engage civil society in the post-Forum follow-up. Because civil society leaders were involved in the execution of the Forum, and because of their familiarity with the process, NGO’s can play a critical role in distribution of the recommendations of the Forum. There are several ways in which this can be done:

- (1) travel to 56 communities to present results to villages
- (2) organize discussions of the Forum results with different stakeholders throughout the country, or
- (3) develop an analysis of the Forum’s results from the NGO perspective and strategies to increase government accountability for citizen’s preferences.

5. Lessons Learned for Future National Consultative Processes

As we have shown, there were logistical and substantive flaws in the design and execution of the National Forum. Although the principal objective of the National Forum was to help resolve the political tensions of the country, the Forum became an analysis of the country's development priorities and a vehicle for to discuss oil and voice criticism of the government. This seems to have muddled the Forum's message and objectives. Due to a disconnect between the community meetings and the plenary sessions in the capital, the recommendations of the National Forum do not seem to follow from the questionnaire results that outlined people's preferences and priorities. At the close of the Forum, there was no clear indication as to how the recommendations would be implemented and who would be accountable for their implementation, or for that matter, whether they should be implemented at all. In addition, expectations were raised that the government would respond directly to the people's voiced concerns. Nine months after the end of the Forum, the lack of follow-up has led many people in São Tomé & Príncipe to characterize the entire process in negative terms.

Nevertheless, one of our key findings is that there were positive outcomes from the participatory meetings of the National Forum, namely the collection of a data-sample recording the population's development priorities. Since two previous Forums have been held in the country, and there is a tradition of using deliberation to resolve problems, it is likely there will be similar events in the future that are centered on National dialogue. This final chapter draws some lessons learned to suggest how future Forums could be designed more effectively, avoiding past mistakes.

5.1. National Forums Can Have Several Purposes

Consultative processes such as “National Forums” can have several purposes. Among these are:

- Conflict resolution – to diffuse or resolve a national crisis;⁷³
- Education – to educate the population about an important change in the political or economic landscape of their country;
- Dialogue – to facilitate mutual learning between the government and the population and establish a communication process;
- Information gathering – to enrich a government's knowledge about the needs of the population and translate citizens' views and values into policy.

The Forum in São Tomé & Príncipe tried to accomplish all these goals simultaneously. This is because planners of the Forum had several different purposes in mind – resolving the political crisis that led to the coup, educating the population about

⁷³ Claudia Carter, Caspian Richards, Kirsby Sherlock, “Practical Approaches to Participation,” Macaulay Institute, 2004.

oil wealth, increasing contact between national leaders and civil society and collecting a comprehensive sample survey of the population's main concerns.⁷⁴

5.2. Create a Match between the Purpose and the Process

The initial purpose of the National Forum as stated in the Memorandum of Understanding was to help resolve the country's political tensions that led to the coup, but the Forum was instead used to educate the population, promote dialogue and gather information from Santomeans. Ideally, instead of having one Forum process that aims to tackle all these objectives at once, it would be more effective in the future to have different, more-narrowly defined processes for each particular purpose.

National Forums to resolve a Political Crisis:

(1) A National Forum may not always be the best means to resolve a crisis

In the case of São Tomé & Príncipe, the Memorandum of Understanding asked for a National Forum. However, it is not clear that a National Forum is the best means of resolving a national crisis. In some cases, a resolution may come from small-scale negotiation involving all relevant political actors and civil society representatives. These negotiations may also benefit from outside mediation. This might be the most appropriate response when the actors who initiated the crisis have little popular legitimacy.

(2) If political actors decide to have a National Forum, it should include broad consultation and have a specific outcome

If there is political consensus around holding a National Forum, the process has the potential to resolve a national dilemma. However, the objectives of such Forums should be well-defined and specifically address the root causes of the crisis.

National consultative processes meant to diffuse or resolve a crisis should occur in the immediate aftermath of the crisis in order to ensure effectiveness. In the case of the São Tomé & Príncipe National Forum there was a one-year gap between the coup and the Forum.

These kinds of Forums are usually one-time affairs in which public and civic leaders congregate to discuss and resolve underlying national tensions. In these cases,

⁷⁴ It must be noted here that the conditions under which the 2004 National Forum transpired in São Tomé & Príncipe are unique. The country's political and economic pre-conditions and small size were important factors in the design and execution of the 2004 National Forum. The purpose of this paper is not to suggest that the lessons learned from the 2004 National Forum should be applied to national consultative or participatory processes in other countries. Rather, the lessons to be learned here are only potentially applicable to future "National Forum" endeavors in São Tomé & Príncipe. However, in some cases, the lessons to be learned from São Tomé & Príncipe's 2004 National Forum might be applicable to similar efforts that evolve under similar conditions in other countries.

National Forums should precede wider participatory processes such as referendums. According to Rousseau, a referendum involving a broad part of the population is designed to develop responsible social and political action through the effect of the participatory process itself,⁷⁵ which is essential for the development of democracy, especially in a relatively new democracy like São Tome & Príncipe.

It is true that a referendum is often thought of as a limited democratic tool for change since its design only allows for a closed-ended question leading to binary answers. However, referendums that are preceded by a broad-based participatory process are not as limited in their scope because the population is more involved, lending legitimacy to the political outcome.

If the end goal of a Forum is to present the population with a specific choice, then the deliberation process could be used to design the two options if they do not already exist or to educate the population about the merits of both options so that they can make an informed decision.

The passing of the Albanian constitution in 1998 provides an example of how a narrowly defined question can be discussed extensively and then presented to the population for a vote.⁷⁶

Following 40 years of communist dictatorship, Albania had its first democratic elections in 1991. But questions about the legitimacy of the new government led to public demonstrations from December 1996 to January 1997. Preliminary elections were called for during the summer of 1997. The main concerns were re-establishment of civil order and adoption of a new constitution. In the months following the crisis, government bodies and NGOs worked to implement a national program of public participation. The program consisted of two phases, (I) collection of information from the public to draft the Constitution, and (II) submission of draft provisions to the public for comment. Phase I of the plan consisted of more than a dozen forums and symposiums at which constitutional issues were discussed in focused discussion groups including legal experts, NGO representatives, government officials and politicians. The results of all the forums and discussion groups were put into writing and incorporated into the drafting process.

Phase II consisted of a broad-based review of the draft of the constitution by individuals and organizations within and outside of Albania.⁷⁷ Before the referendum, the government, in collaboration with NGOs and the European Union, engaged in a nationwide effort to inform voters how to vote, and to explain the constitutional drafting process. On 22 November 1998, the new Constitution passed with approximately 90% of the vote.

When there is no specific national goal like the passing of a new constitution, holding a national Forum by itself may be insufficient to diffuse or resolve a national crisis. Since only a fraction of the population can be involved through direct

⁷⁵ Rousseau's writings, especially *The Social Contract*, 1762, led to the adoption of the referendum in the French Constitution of 1793, i.e. during the French Revolution, even if this constitution never came into operation.

⁷⁶ Summary of full case: *Forging a Democratic Constitution: Transparency and Participation in the 1998 Albanian Constitutional Process*: www.abanet.org/ceeli/about/staffarticles/carlson_inman_2004.pdf.

⁷⁷ This public review was in addition to the drafting consultations provided by foreign experts.

participation. Those who are not included may not view the process as legitimate. There is a risk the population could feel “used” by government officials or even members of civil society perceived as pursuing their own political aims. This may be especially applicable to São Tome & Príncipe where National Forums were held in the past that did not lead to major changes in the political system or to significant improvements in the government’s responsiveness to the population’s demands. Even if a wide range of representative leaders – both from political parties and NGOs – is included in the process, that does not guarantee the authority of the political solutions derived from a Forum, since the majority of the population may not feel represented by their actual leaders, or may consider them to be disconnected elites.

These concerns confirm that a Forum to resolve a political crisis should combine consultation with a clear objective and that a Forum held on its own may not be sufficient.

National Forums to promote participation through education and dialogue and information gathering

(1) Education and dialogue and information gathering about political issues

Forums that address political and institutional concerns can be educational and could occur before major political events like an election. A possible model for this approach to national consultation is the idea of “Deliberation Day” in the work of Bruce Ackerman and James Fishkin.⁷⁸ Ackerman and Fishkin propose a day of civic meetings held in public spaces throughout the country, where citizens discuss divisive issues prior to elections. In order to ensure the effectiveness of these kinds of events, they should occur regularly in concert with the election cycle.

(2) Education and dialogue and information gathering about development issues

Forums that address development concerns should aim to involve the population in the decision making process. For example, in Porto Alegre, Brazil, the local government works closely with community leaders to identify the population’s priorities. In each community, civic associations (unions, cooperatives, mothers’ clubs, etc) discuss specific community needs and after rounds of regularly scheduled work sessions, budget proposals and detailed investment plans are drafted. Those budgets and investment plans are then presented to the Chamber of Deputies for approval and ratification. Because the process is standardized, the community knows what public officials to call upon and hold accountable for specific issues.

⁷⁸ Professor James Fishkin of the University of Texas at Austin first introduced the concept of the Deliberative Poll in 1988. In collaboration with his colleague at the University of Texas, Professor Robert Luskin, he has either directed or advised all twenty Deliberative Polls conducted thus far. Fishkin is Director and Luskin is Research Director of the Center for Deliberative Polling (http://www.pbs.org/newshour/btp/dop_background.html)

Since the objective of these meetings is community dialogue and education, the Forums are centered on increasing civic engagement and building alliances among local, regional, and national actors and groups. A normalized process can help ensure that public deliberation becomes an indispensable part of community decision-making.

Figure 7: Mapping National Consultation Processes

| Purpose | Types | Frequency | Process Description |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Solve Political Crisis | Narrow political negotiations | NA | Alternatives to a Forum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elite/ technical discussions with relevant political actors and civil society • Narrow subject matter |
| | Broad consultation with clear outcome | One time event | Four phase process (e.g. Albania): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Public meetings to gather information 2. Political actors, civil society, and international institutions incorporate population feedback 3. Presentation of results to the people 4. Creation of an accountability mechanism (e.g referendum) |
| Education and Participation | Education on political issues | Periodically | One day of public meetings to discuss a narrow subject before elections (e.g Deliberation Day) |
| | Participation in development | On-going | Continuous participation of the population in decision making process and budget allocation of development priorities (e.g. Porto Alegre) |

5.3. Ensure the Legitimacy, Sustainability and Accountability of the Process.

A final consideration is the importance of the legitimacy of the national consultative process. The national consultative process should not be imposed by foreign actors. In order to ensure the sustainability of such initiatives, locals should be involved in every phase of the process, including design, execution and importantly follow-up. The establishment of accountability mechanisms are critical to the success of the process.

6. Conclusion

Despite some of the successes of the National Forum, it was unclear from the Forum's inception if the process would be sustainable. Although the President of São Tomé & Príncipe called for implementation of the Forum's recommendations, there was no indication how the recommendations would be implemented. In addition, no committee was established to follow-up on the Forum, although this was one of the central recommendations of the consultant's final report. Thus, the legal validity of the recommendations of the Forum remained unclear.

The major lesson of the 2004 forum is that the people of São Tomé & Príncipe are willing and able to engage in constructive discussions about the political questions facing the country and these discussions do in fact lead to greater consensus in the country. However, unless forums of this kind are more carefully designed they can be subject to political manipulation and can easily stall once it comes to the implementation phase.

In light of this lesson a number of recommendations stand out:

(1) Some elements of the National Forum process can be utilized for great positive impact in São Tomé & Príncipe. In particular, we suggest that the President and the government:

- Publicly announces the results of the national consultation and distributes these results to participating communities and government ministries to increase awareness about the country's development priorities and preferences.
- Incorporate the results of the National Forum into the national PRSP strategy.

(2) Implementation of the 2004 forum was stalled in part because of the political divisions in the country and the lack of accountability of the process. These are issues that may affect future processes of this kind in the country. We argue in this paper:

- Public consultations like the national forum could be used to increase the level of political accountability in the country. But for this to be effective, the processes should be mainstreamed into the political system rather than being used irregularly to resolve short term crises.
- A national forum may not be the best way to deal with political divisions among elites; instead some form of elite "retreat" as described above may be most effective.
- If political divisions are determined to be sufficiently deep that a referendum is required to produce a new political order, this referendum should be preceded by a process of national deliberations and information sharing, that can build on São Tomé & Príncipe experience of deliberative democracy in the 2004 Forum.

Sumário da compilação dos resultados dos questionários das reuniões auscultação do Fórum Nacional

Julho 2004

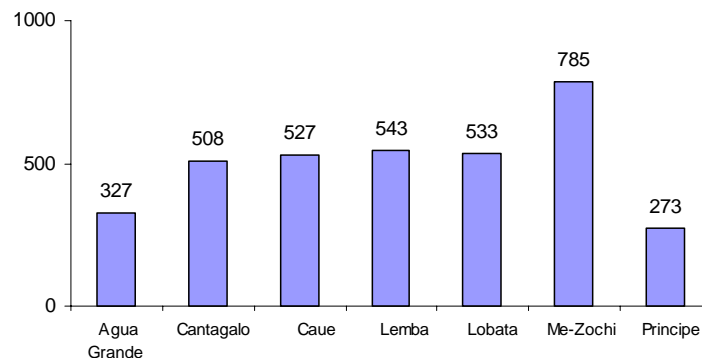
Introdução

Este documento inclui o resumo dos resultados dos questionários executados durante as reuniões de auscultação do Fórum Nacional de São Tomé & Príncipe em Junho e Julho 2004. Os questionários foram apresentados por membros da sociedade civil Santomense e expressam a opinião de grupos de cidadãos em 55 reuniões realizadas em todo o país com o apoio técnico do PNUD e da Universidade de Columbia. A metodologia implementada procurou minimizar influências políticas, pessoais ou regionais durante todo o processo. Os resultados detalhados estarão disponíveis na internet.

1. Identificação

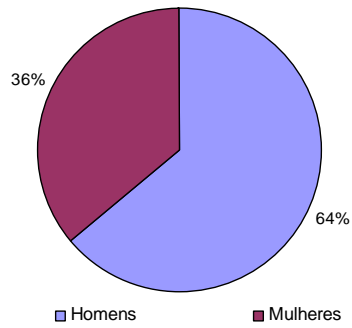
Aproximadamente 3500 pessoas participaram nas reuniões de auscultação nos 7 distritos de São Tomé e na região Autónoma do Príncipe.

Número de participantes por distrito

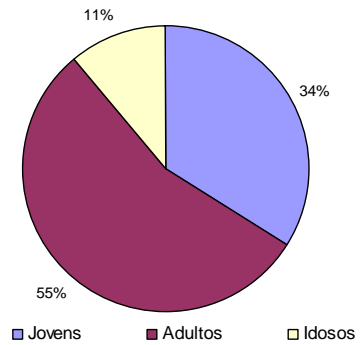


Cerca de 34% dos participantes têm entre 16 e 25 anos, 55% entre 25 e 55 anos e 11% dos participantes têm mais de 55 anos. Cerca de 66% dos participantes são homens e 34% são mulheres.

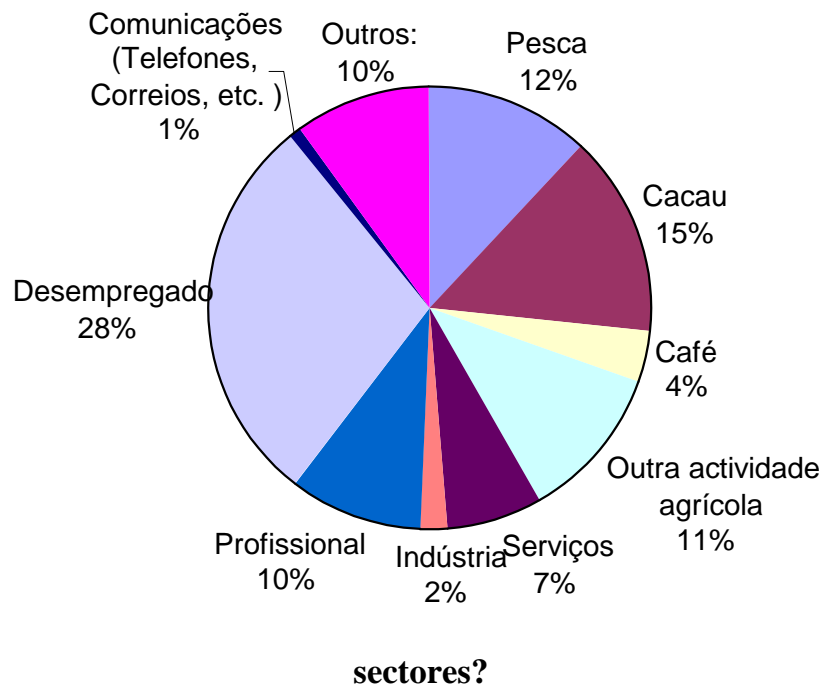
Percentagem de Homens/ Mulheres



Percentagem Jovens/adultos/idosos



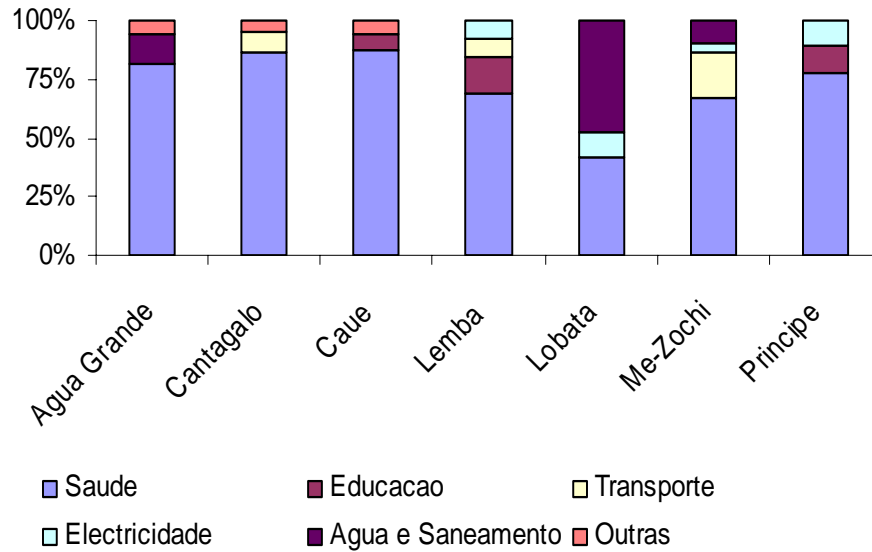
1.b. Qual é o número aproximado de pessoas em cada um dos seguintes



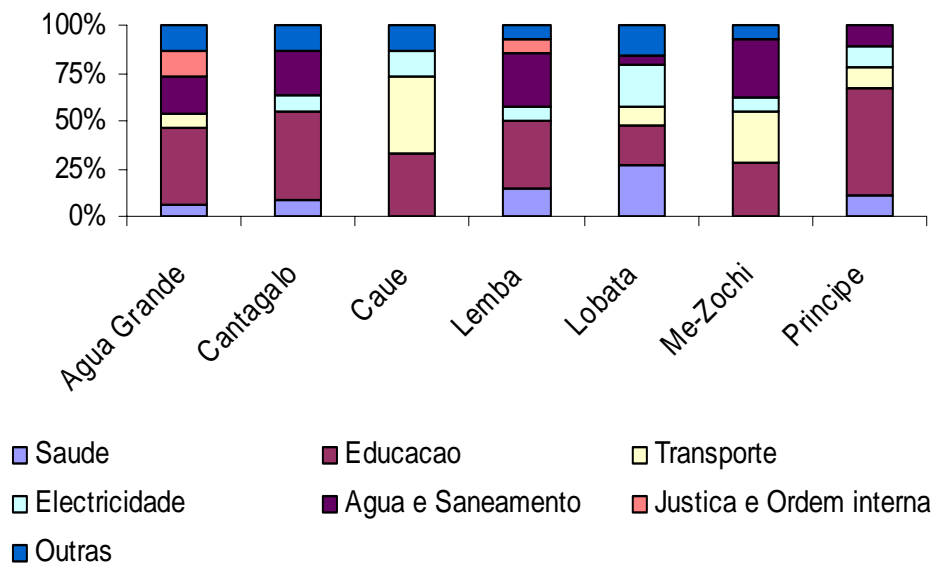
2. Prioridades

2.a Indique quais são as duas despesas que você considera mais urgentes

Prioridades, primeira escolha por distrito



Prioridades, segunda escolha por distrito

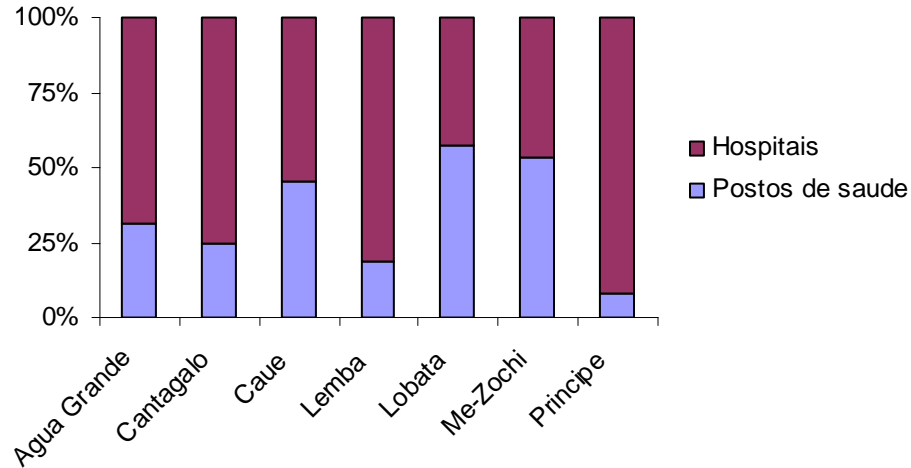


Outras prioridades indicadas: emprego, pesca, agricultura, telefone/comunicações, habitação/construção, industrialização, infraestruturas, serviços sociais, etc...

3. Saúde

3.a. Se o governo tivesse mais dinheiro para gastar em saúde, em que deveria gastá-lo primeiro?

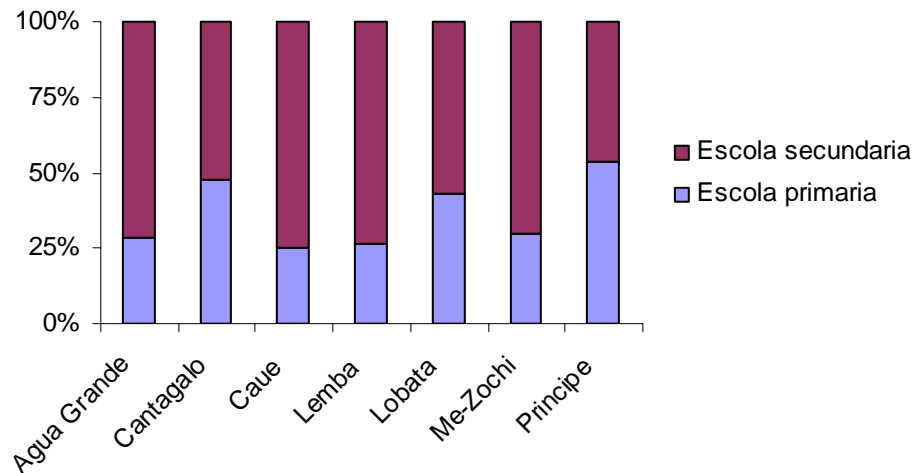
Postos de saúde com serviços limitados vs. Hospitais completo que podem estar a mais de 2 ou 3 horas de distância



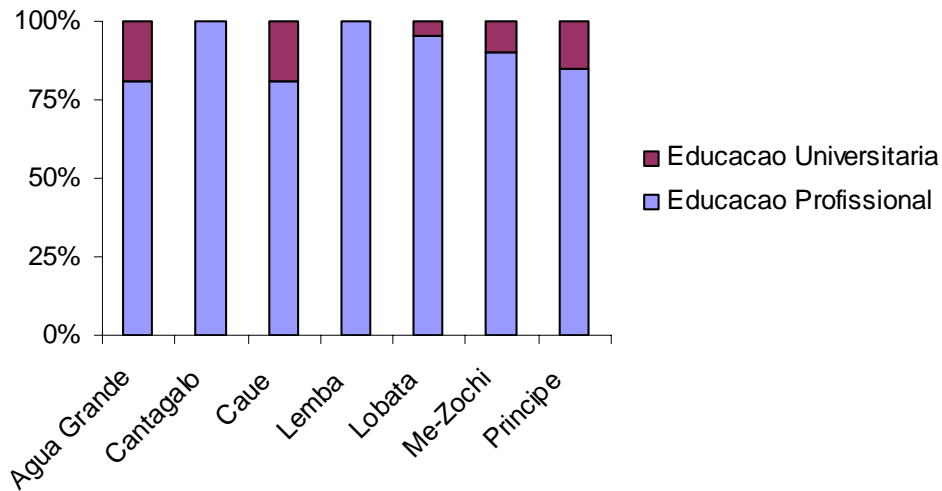
4. Educação

4.a. Se o governo tivesse mais dinheiro para gastar em educação na sua zona, em que deveria gastá-lo primeiro?

Escolas Primárias vs. Escolas Secundárias



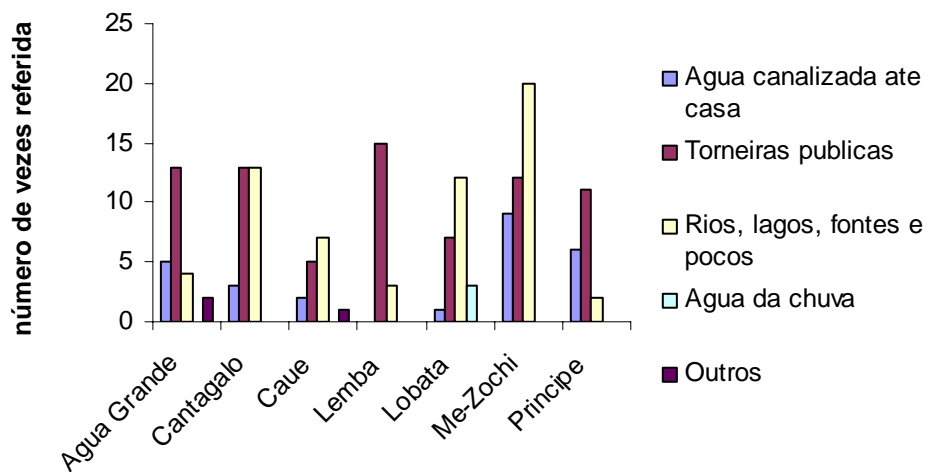
Educação Universitária vs Educação Profissional



5. Água e saneamento básico

5.a Qual é a fonte mais comum de água para beber na sua comunidade?

Fonte de água por distrito



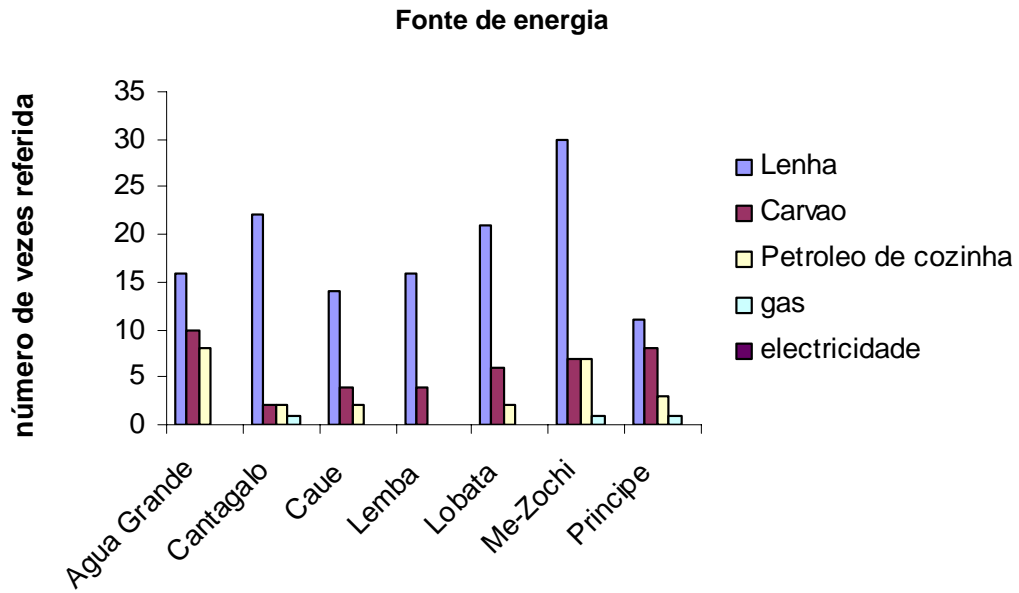
Outras fontes de água referida foram: Sistemas de água canalizada do rio, nascente, etc...

5.b. Se forem referidas outras necessidades de água e saneamento por favor indique

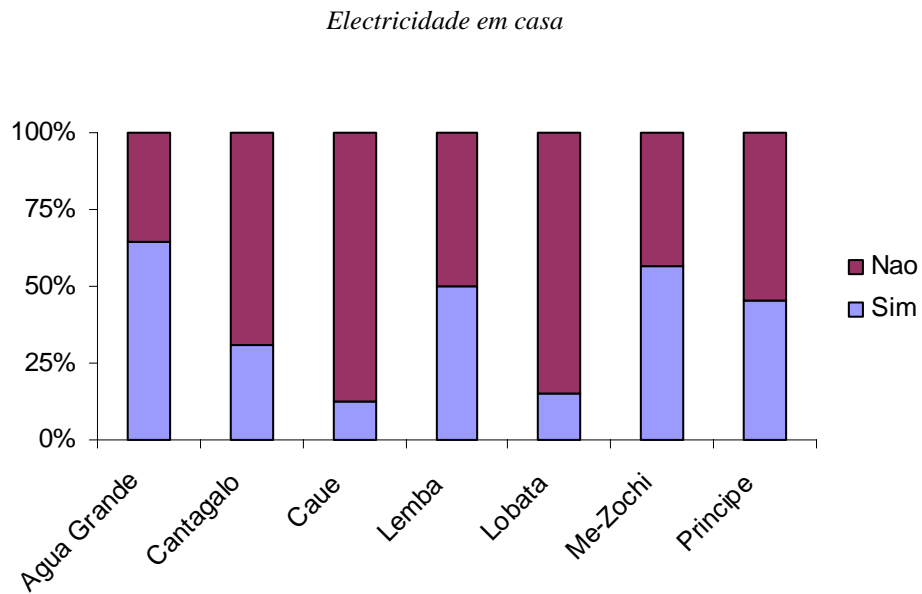
Foram referidas as seguintes necessidades: tratamento de água, água canalizada e água em casa, casa de banhos e latrinas, transporte de lixo e melhor condições de lixo, água potável, chafariz, lavanderia e outros.

6. Fontes de Energia

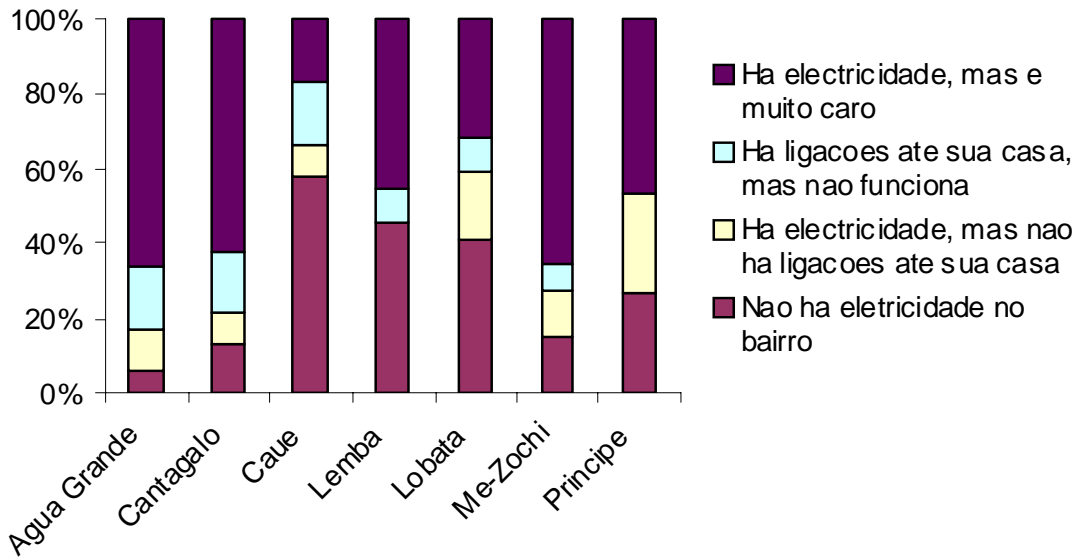
6.a. Qual é a principal fonte de energia que usa para cozinhar?



6.b. Tem electricidade em casa?



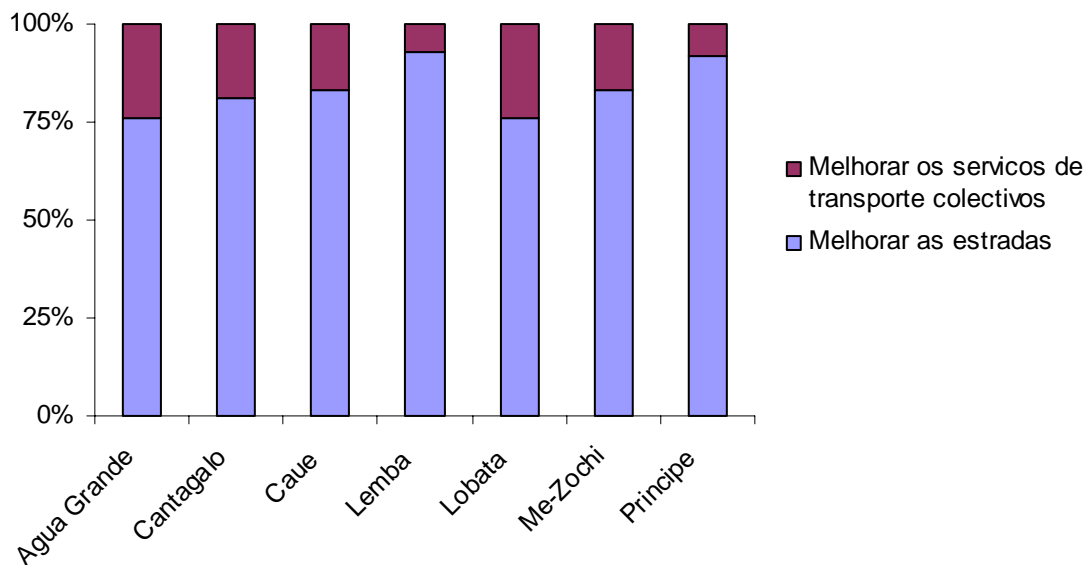
6.c. Para os que responderam Não, porquê?



7. Estradas e transportes

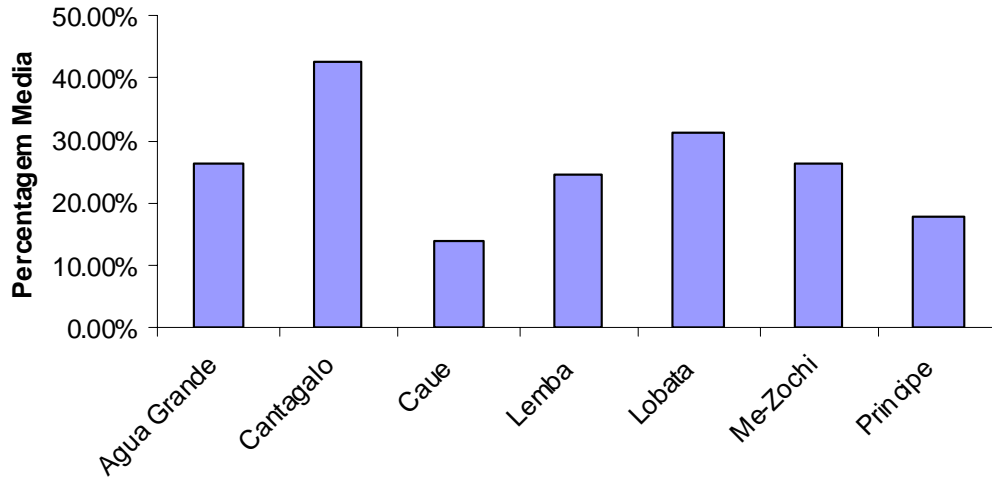
7.b. Se o governo tivesse mais dinheiro para gastar em transportes, em que deveria gasta-lo primeiro?

Melhorar estradas vs Melhorar os transportes colectivos por distrito



8. Justiça e ordem interna

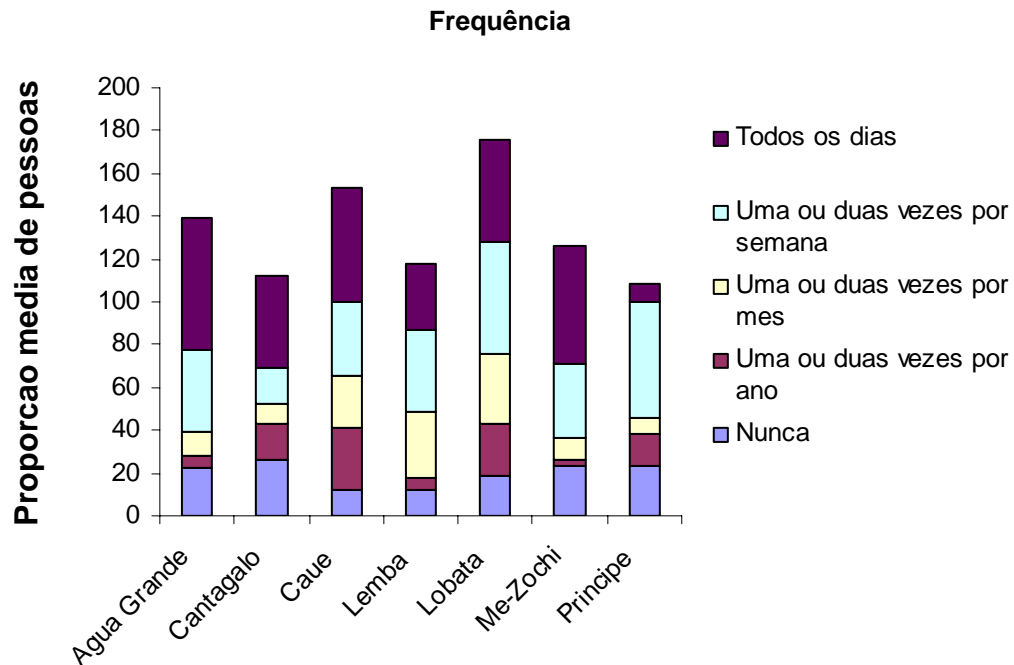
Quantas pessoas foram vítimas dum roubo ou de um assalto nos últimos 12 meses? (proporção)



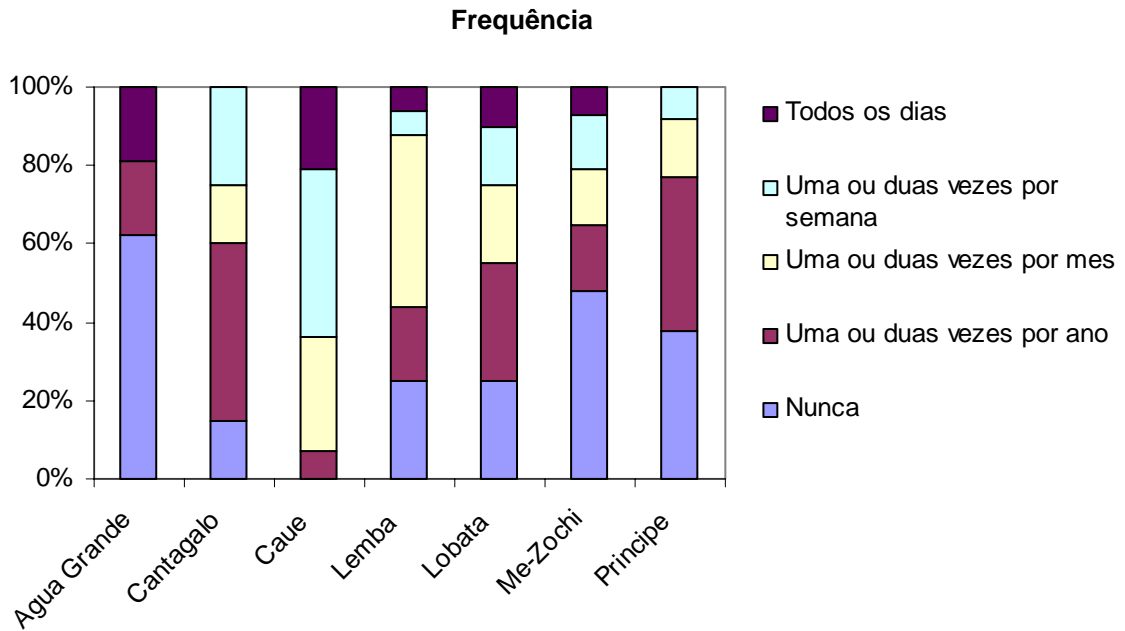
9. Situação individual

9.a. Com que frequência tem falta de comida?

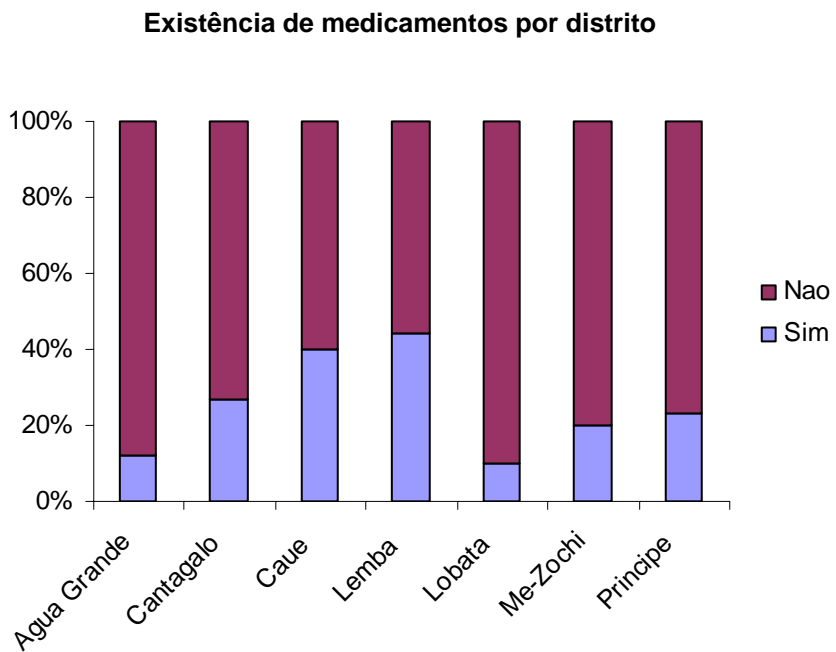
Nota: variavel recodificada. As tabulações referem-se a fontes mencionadas em cada comunidade, qualquer que seja o número de pessoas. (Nota, soma superior a 100% devido a respostas múltiplas)



9.b. Com que frequência a sua zona é visitada por pessoal de saúde qualificado?

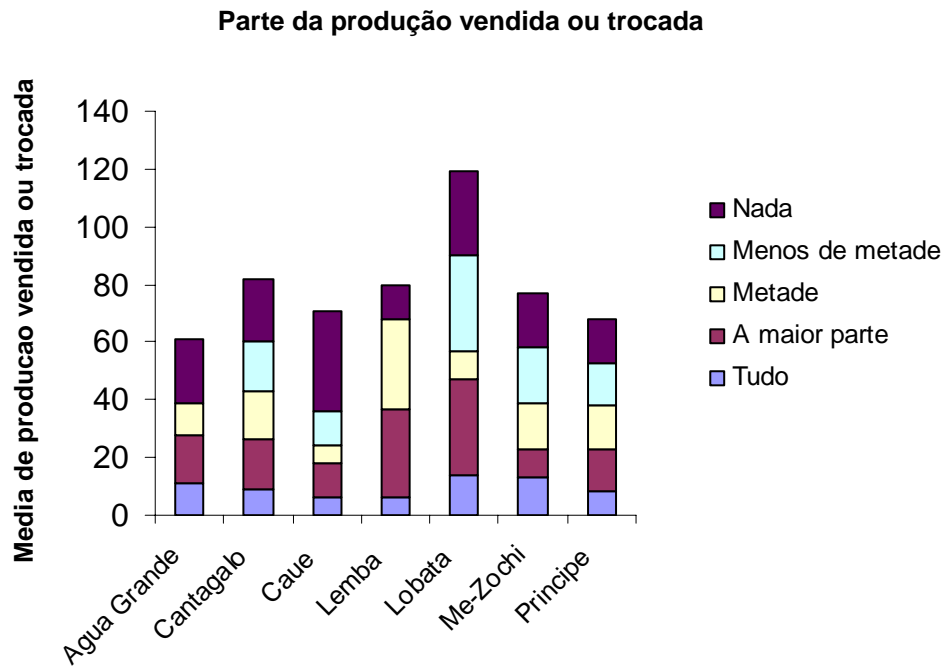


9.c. Existem medicamentos na sua comunidade?



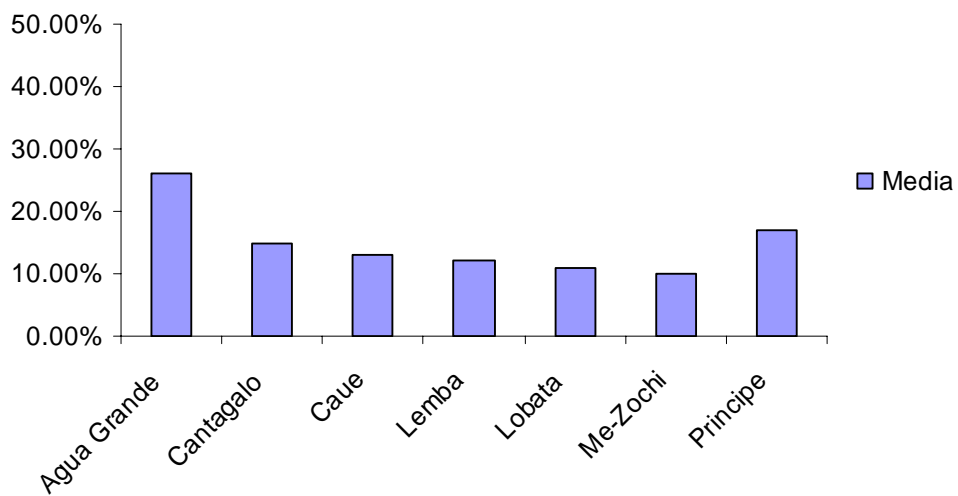
9.e. *Que parte da sua produção é vendida ou trocada?*

Nota: variável recodificada. As tabulações referem-se a fontes mencionadas em cada comunidade, qualquer que seja o número de pessoas. (Nota, soma superior a 100% devido a respostas múltiplas)



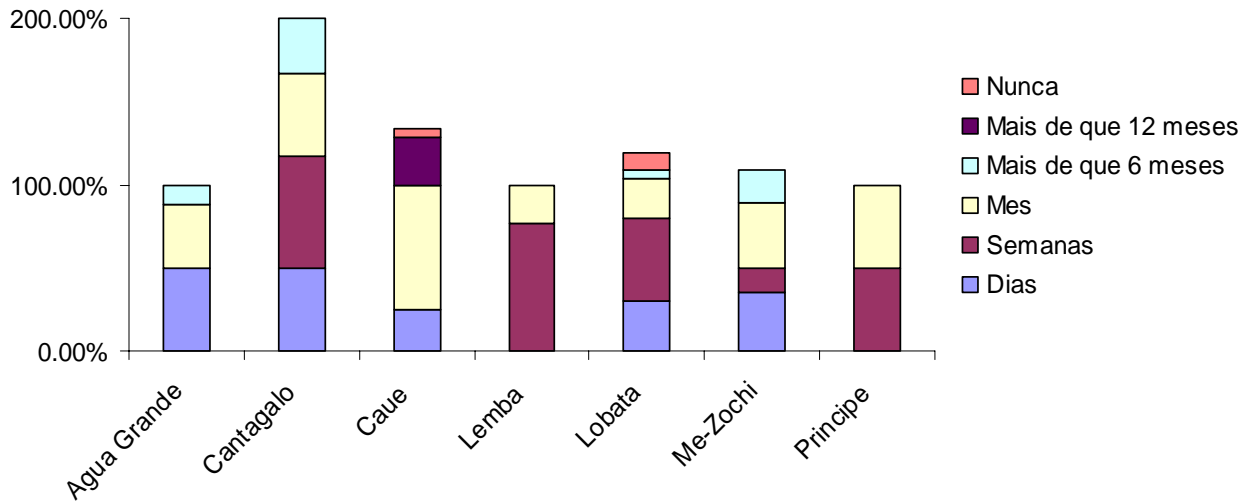
10. Fornecimento de serviços públicos

10.a. *Durante o último ano, quantas pessoas no grupo pediram uma certidão de nascimento para os filhos? (proporção)*



10.b. Para os que pediram, quanto tempo esperou (em média) para receber a certidão desde o momento em que fez o pedido?

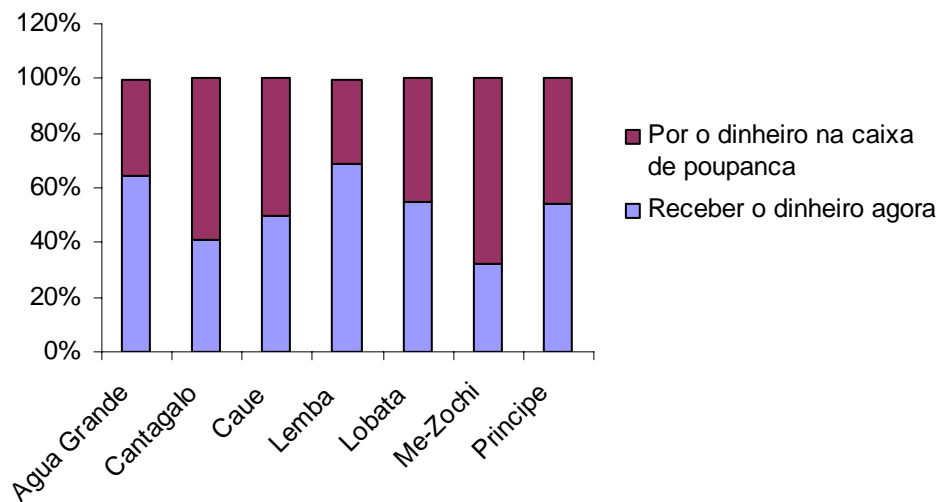
(Nota, soma superior a 100% devido a respostas múltiplas)
Tempo de espera



11. Poupanças

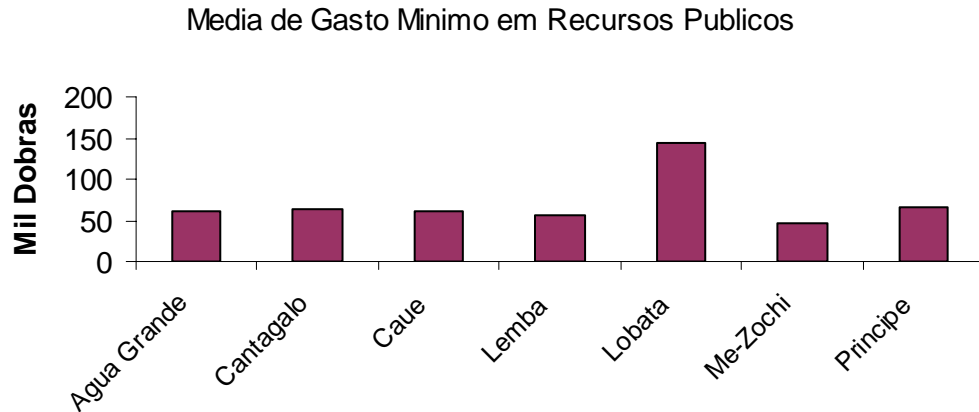
11.a. Suponha que suas poupanças atingiram um milhão de dobras. Você pode escolher entre pôr o dinheiro numa caixa poupança e receber mais dinheiro ou receber o dinheiro agora. O que preferia?

Receber dinheiro agora vs esperar um ano



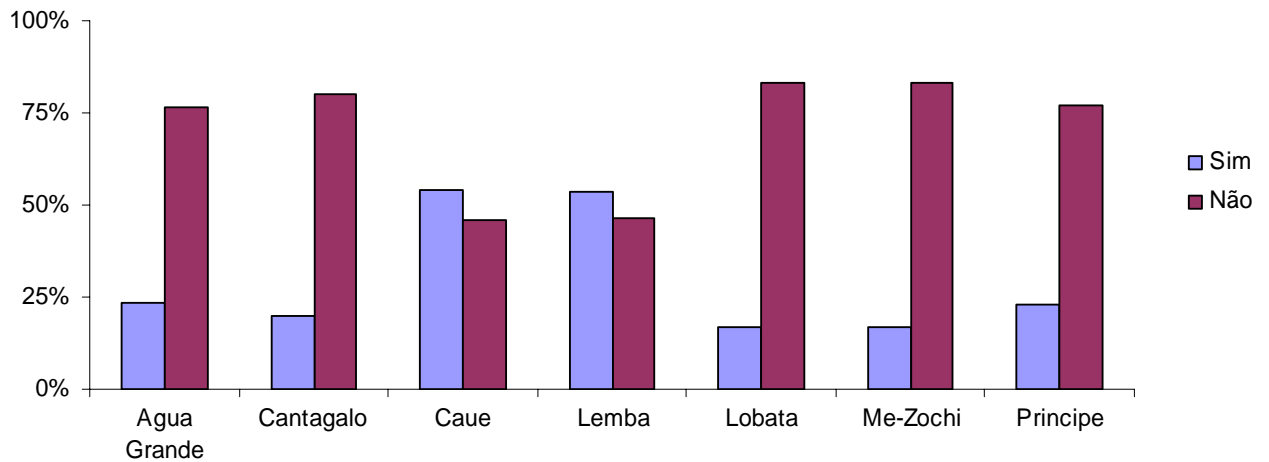
12. Escolha entre público e privado

Suponha que você recebeu um milhão de dobras a mais em salário/rendimento do que hoje. Que parte deste dinheiro acha que contribuiria para melhorar serviços como estradas, escolas e saúde?

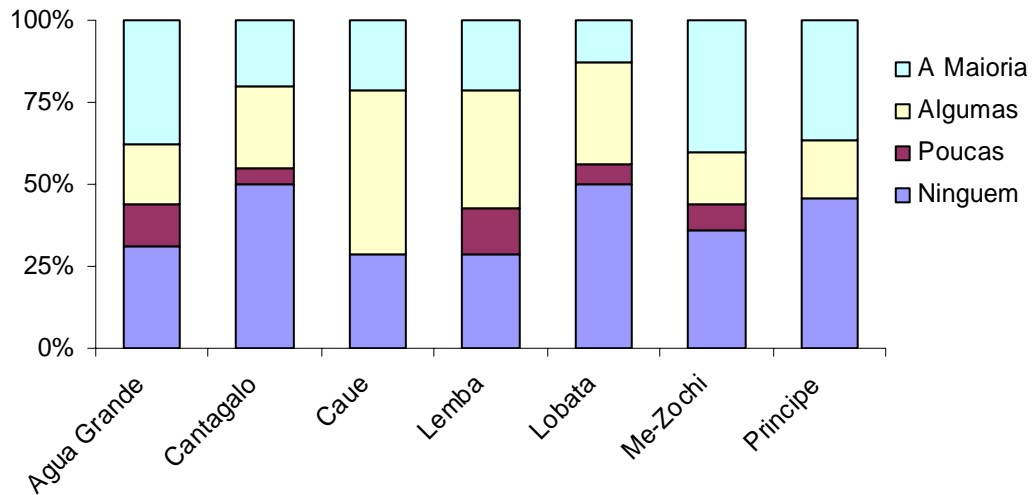


14. Corrupção

14.a. Tem conhecimento de algumas pessoas nesta zona tiveram que pagar dinheiro a funcionários do estado em proveito próprio em vez de entregar ao estado?

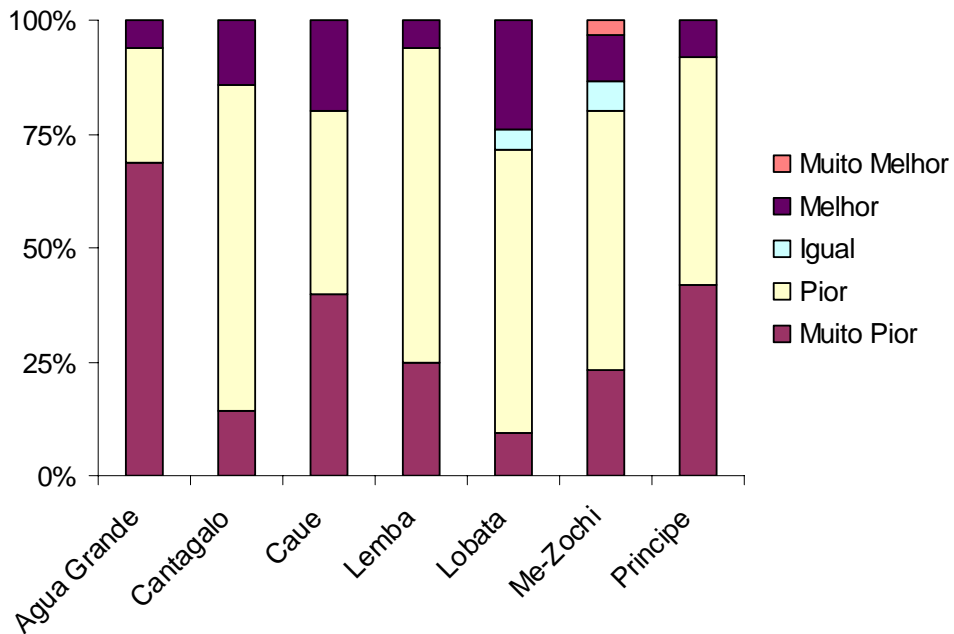


14.c. *Acha que existem pessoas do estado que abusam da autoridade para terem ganhos privados em vez do bem da comunidade?*

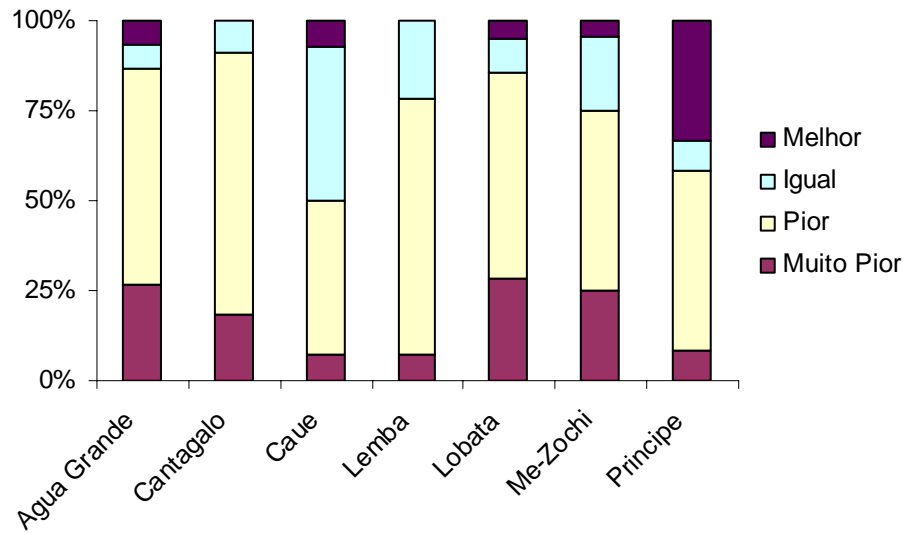


15. Condições económicas

15.a. **Como avalia as condições económicas em São Tomé & Príncipe, em comparação com países vizinhos?**

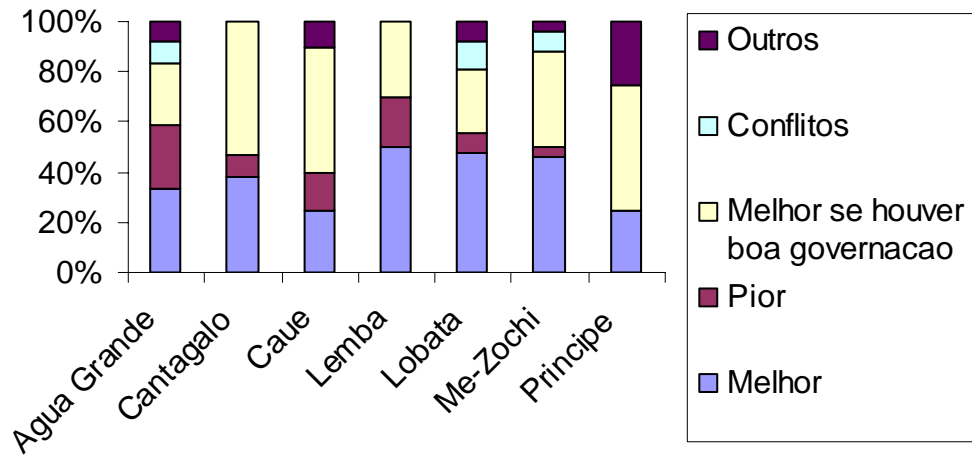


15.b. Como é a sua qualidade de vida este ano, comparando com o ano passado?

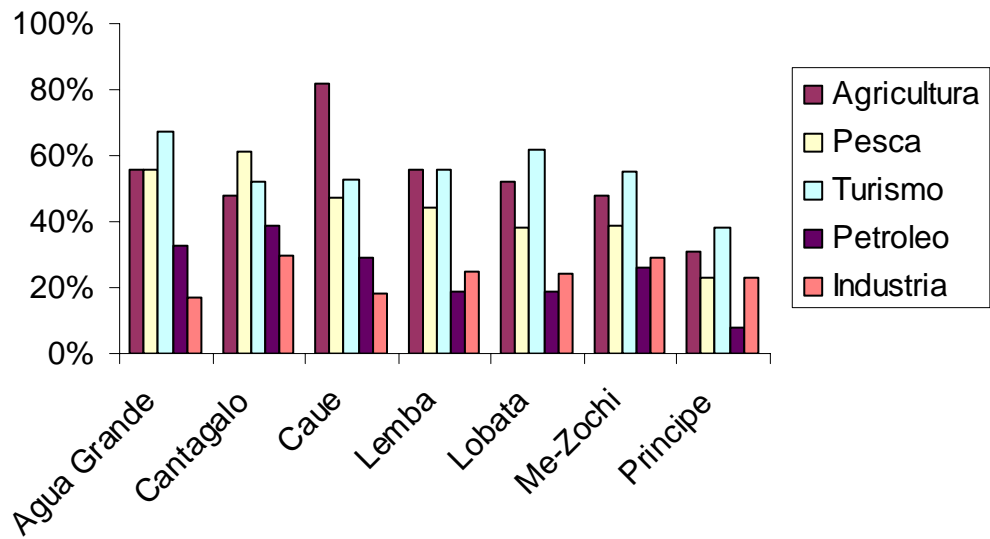


16. Aspirações

16.a. Como é que acha que São Tomé & Príncipe vai ser daqui a 10 anos?



Quais serão as actividades económicas mais importantes?



Appendix B: Press Release for the Launch of the Questionnaire Results

To be distributed with a copy of the results summary.

May 15, 2005

National Survey Results Released

**Santomeans Choose their Preferences for Development
in a Survey by The Earth Institute, Columbia University,
New York**

In an historic study involving some 3-5% of the population in all regions, Santomeans have spoken out about the biggest questions facing the nation. The independent university study collected the people's preferences for health, education, infrastructure, security, and other areas.

Without a doubt, the majority of Santomeans are mostly concerned about issues of health, with education taking second place. Most Santomeans said they would rather the government build more hospitals than local clinics, but the majority in Lobata and Me Zochi said they would rather have more clinics. In education, most Santomeans said the government should spend more on secondary schools than on primary schools, but in the Autonomous Region of Principe, people were divided on that question. The vast majority of Santomeans said the government should spend more on professional schools than on university schooling.

The survey also helped determine where Santomeans get their water, what kind of fuel they use for cooking, and the number of citizens who have electricity at home. Santomeans shared their experiences with crime and corruption, the economic conditions where they live, and their attitudes about the future.

Other key findings include:

- The great majority of people said the government should spend more on improving the roads than on public transportation such as buses.
- About 80% of the people in the survey said they have to go without adequate food at least some of the time; only about 20% said they never have a lack of food.
- Many areas complain of the lack of health care professionals, and the vast majority say they have no access to medicine where they live.
- Roughly equal numbers of people chose agriculture, fishing, and tourism as the most important economic activities for the future, with petroleum a distant fourth choice.

The questionnaire was drafted with the participation of then-Prime Minister Maria das Neves, His Excellency President Fradique de Menezes, the United Nations Development Program, The Earth Institute Advisory Team on STP, the Executive Secretariat of the National Forum 2004, and members of the National Oil Commission.

Professor William Masters of the Earth Institute at Columbia University said, "We undertook this survey in the hope that the government can use the information to improve public services for all Santomeans in the future."