

Policy Brief

Shock-Responsive Social Protection Adaptation and Policy Options for Children in Timor-Leste

UNICEF Timor-Leste | May 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

Timor-Leste is highly vulnerable to climate, environmental and disaster risks capable of widespread destruction and shocks to the lives of people. The capacity to plan and respond to these risks needs improvement. Timor-Leste has a “negligible national contribution”, amounting to just 0.003% of aggregate global emissions.¹ Small Island Developing States (SIDS) like Timor-Leste and others, comprising more than 65 million people are losing significant output due to climate-related events and disasters despite contributing less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions.²

UNICEF views shock-responsive social protection as integral to upholding the rights of children, and to prevent “long-term negative repercussions” when shocks arise from fragility, economic, as well climate and other natural hazards that threaten their nutrition, education, health, and protection outcomes.³ Social protection should be adapted to mitigate “covariate” shocks that affect many people through prevention, preparedness, and response actions. Using social protection beyond its usual application to “idiosyncratic” shocks that affect people in more unique ways is considered an adaptation.⁴

Climate change profoundly impacts children, families, and communities globally. In the East Asia and Pacific (EAP) Region, it is the leading cause of shocks and disasters. These often-unexpected events disrupt entire lives, economies, and social structures, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and introducing new complex risks. The compounded effects of climate change, economic downturns, and health crises create a cycle of increased vulnerability and reduced resilience, posing significant challenges towards existing social protection systems.⁵ The COVID-19 pandemic is a good example of disaster risks that significantly undermined existing social protection systems but also illustrated its importance that can be built on to improve coverage, adequacy, and impact. In Timor-Leste, new schemes such as a universal one-off cash transfer to all households was implemented in response to the pandemic. Climate change in Timor-Leste poses significant risks of exacerbating nutrition, health, water, and sanitation predisposing conditions that weaken household economic resilience and increase the risk of adverse outcomes for children and families, which necessitates a versatile social protection system that can reliably be effected against material emergency and disaster events.

¹ Secretary of State for the Environment, 2022, p. 64

² United Nations Development Programme, 2022, p. 3.

³ UNICEF, 2019, p.3.

⁴ World Bank, 2023, p.10.

⁵ Over the Tipping Point, UNICEF EAPRO, [Over the Tipping Point](#)

A major gap in shock responsive social protection in Timor-Leste is the inadequate focus on the vulnerability to malnutrition, poverty, and disease, which are exacerbated by climate change and disasters. Children should have more support from the social protection system in Timor-Leste due to being prone to the worst outcomes when climate change and disasters worsen food security, accelerate disease incidences, and deepen poverty.

In the 2025 Timor-Leste budget, government spending on direct social assistance transfers for children is US\$33.55 million, or 9% of the total of US\$361.95 million, down from about 14.7% share in 2024.⁶

UNICEF emphasizes that shock-responsive social protection is effective if there is focus on risks for children associated with “fragility, stressors and shocks”, which should be considered in adapting existing systems.

⁶ Ministry of Finance, 2025.



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Timor-Leste – Estimated Precipitation Anomaly

Description: Difference between current rainfall volume and the Long-Term Average (LTA) in the period 1989-2015. Warmer colors indicate areas receiving lower-than-average rainfall, and colder colors show areas with above average precipitation.

Year	April	August	December	Comment
2024				Current precipitation anomaly with LTA illustrates both seasonal and annual variability. Rainy seasons occasionally have lower than LTA average as seen in the April - December rainy periods.
2023				
2022				

Source of data: Earth observation data by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts. Collated by the FAO (2025).

Rainfall variability is also increasing according to earth observation data showing anomalies compared to the Long-Term Average (LTA) as illustrated above. Predictions for annual mean surface air temperatures in Timor-Leste forecast an increase of between 2.9°C in the extreme Representative Concentration Pathways (RCP) 8.5 scenario of dramatic increase in emissions without mitigation, and 0.9°C in the lower RCP 2.6 with significant action to curb global emissions. This means there may be a significant rise in daily maximum and annual temperature averages compared to the historical mean in Timor-Leste.⁷

Declining agricultural yields due to climate and other impacts, as well as growing population, have made Timor-Leste dependency on imports significant and exacerbated food insecurity. About 60 percent of Timor-Leste total cereal consumption in 2024-25 will be met from imports. Food insecurity is increasing as about 364,000 people, or 27% of the population, faced high levels of acute food insecurity, at or above the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3, which is considered a crisis, from May to September 2024. This was an increase from 260,000 people over a similar period in 2023.⁸

Low agricultural yields, rising imports to satisfy food needs that utilizes scarce resources, inflates prices and reduces domestic employment, as well as increasing food insecurity are the severe consequences of the rainfall variability and other climate change impacts.

The altered patterns of rainfall and rise in temperatures are likely to exacerbate natural disasters such as flooding, drought and landslides that will affect children and families, especially the poorest most. Most people in Timor-Leste depend on agricultural production for food and income and widely variable rainfall patterns and rising temperatures will affect their ability for timely planting and tending to crops, preventing pests and diseases, and conserving harvests, thereby impacting crop and livestock yields. This may increase malnutrition of children, deepen poverty of households, and increase the need for social protection and other resources to respond and mitigate the impacts.

The climate-related risks identified in the Timor-Leste outline of the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) 2022-2030 commitment to the Paris Agreement are increased average temperatures, sea level rise, biodiversity losses, increased droughts, unpredictable and enhanced rainfall, changes to climate, and altered human health conditions.

The compounded effects of these changes, combined with an economy of low national production, limited diversification, and high dependence on oil and gas for national revenue increases socio-economic risks of poverty, vulnerability, morbidity, malnutrition, mortality, and fragile peace that can be disrupted by conflict.⁹

⁷ World Bank Group and the Asian Development Bank, 2021, p. 2.

⁸ FAO, 2024, p. 2.

⁹ Secretary of State for the Environment, 2022, p. 11-12.



2. BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION

Adaptation of social protection to address climate and disaster shocks implies enhancing the system capacity and versatility to plan and respond. This can be achieved by policy reforms to adjust government priorities to incorporate better forecasting of risks, contingency funding, preparedness planning, and investments in improving household livelihoods and access to services.

2.1 Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) Strategy

A Disaster Risk Financing (DRF) strategy is needed to analyze and inform planning for the multiple risks and various response mechanisms that can leverage existing opportunities and fill gaps in the system to address climate change. UNICEF and other partners can provide the Government of Timor-Leste with technical advice to establish mechanisms for regular evidence based stress assessments to analyze risk profiles, simulate economic and social costs, as well as estimate fiscal implications of climate change and disaster risks to feed into the planning and budgeting processes to design contingency funding and market-based solutions. A DRF strategy would be a comprehensive tool to establish mitigation that can work better with various risk layering methods, propose design of financing mechanisms, determine a viable quantum of contingency funding, outline optimality of market-based solutions, and lay out donor readiness and resources. This could improve adequacy and timeliness of responses when risks materialize.¹⁰

2.2 Child Poverty and Vulnerability Analysis

The social protection system capacity to respond to shocks in all contexts, especially to children as among the most vulnerable members of society should be assessed regularly through capacity for state and non-state stakeholders to collaborate and use data from administrative systems, assessments, and surveys to understand demographic, social and economic dynamics and how climate shocks and disasters affect them, identify the most deprived children and households that face disproportionate risks, and plan response.

UNICEF's 2019 Social Protection Program Framework is built on four main pillars of a solid evidence base, effective policy, coordination and financing of social protection systems, coverage and adequacy of programmes for social assistance such as cash transfers, social insurance, labour interventions, and social service workforce, as well as effective implementation for impact. To mitigate the adverse effects of climate change, it is crucial to integrate the angle of climate change into UNICEF's work in the region and within country systems to reinforce evidence generation, advocacy, policy, and program design, and in its overall operations. A comprehensive approach is needed to address the mutually reinforcing vulnerabilities children and households face. UNICEF's social protection approach needs to be proactive and adaptive to the frequency and intensity of climate-related events and contribute to longer-term climate change mitigation efforts, in line with global climate action frameworks and the SDGs.¹¹

¹⁰ UNICEF, 2019, p. 34.

¹¹ Global Social Protection Framework, UNICEF, [Global-social-protection-programme-framework-2019.pdf](#)



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Framework for Shock-Responsive Social System Adaptation¹²

Level	Component to incorporate	Outline of approach to adapt social protection system to shock response
Evidence	Regular child poverty analysis and system assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess all vulnerabilities to risks using regular surveys and administrative means to collect up to date data. Assess systems to ascertain capacity to expand coverage and increase adequacy.
Policies	Policy implementation, financing, and coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy implementation follows standard operating procedures and coordination between central and local government, and partners. Contingency budgets and insurance mechanisms are established through risk assessments and risk layering.
Programmes	Expansion and improvement of cash transfers for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climate, disaster, and fragility risks are considered in all programmes to ensure capacity to adequately respond. Cover children at various stages of life for all vulnerabilities in cash transfer schemes.
	Cash plus knowledge and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge to enable people to prepare and respond, as well as to change to appropriate behaviors complements cash assistance to improve the effectiveness of nutrition, education, child protection, healthcare, and other services.
	Expand and improve health insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reform and incentivize insurance to cover more people and reduce exclusions.
	Support childcare and employability in households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide services that incentivize employment and income generation such as childcare services and skills development for young people.
	Strengthen the social welfare workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop capacity of the social welfare personnel for community preparedness and response. Have funding and logistical ability to “surge” social welfare workers to shock response.
Administration	Strengthen integrated delivery systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social and civil registry, as well as administrative systems for assistance, payments and monitoring are available.

¹² UNICEF, 2019, p.3

Timor-Leste has some shock-responsive social protection building blocks in place such as significant spending on social security and assistance, contingency funding, emergency response such as those used in the Covid-19 pandemic, and contributory social security for workers. The contingency funding for response to climate and disaster impacts is funded in the government budget depending on revenue and spending priorities, and is used to assist affected vulnerable people, with the Ministry of Finance having to seek authorization to spend from the National Parliament when the need arises. Risk and cost assessment that utilize better forecasting are being considered.¹³

Large programmes such as school feeding, which is fully funded and run by the government since 2011, show that the State can discern growing needs and adjust priorities that result in improved implementation. Nutrition services by the Ministry of Health to treat severe acute malnutrition supported by UNICEF, and supply of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food supported by WFP illustrate government commitment to address vulnerability, upon which shock responsive social protection can be built. Adaptation to the Covid-19 pandemic and El Nino phenomenon indicated some capacity to plan and respond to climate and emergency shocks. Inter-ministerial coordination through the Office of the Vice Prime Minister has also enhanced preparedness planning to address risks such as food insecurity. The best practices exhibited in response to the Covid-19 such as the “Uma Kain” one-off cash transfer and “Cesta Básica” food basket to all families in coordination with development partners should be sustained.¹⁴

There is more focus on catastrophic events but slow-onset events such as climate and environmental shocks need to be also considered as priorities using evidence of their likelihood and the risks they pose to advocate, plan and budget for them.

¹³ Secretary of State for the Environment, 2022, p. 42.

¹⁴ Ministry of Finance, 2024.



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3. GAPS IN SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN

In Timor-Leste, the transformation of the social protection system is ongoing, with various modalities used to address shocks and life cycle risks, but specific vulnerabilities have had low coverage and therefore less effectiveness. Older people get “greater per capita investment than children or working-age adults” in the Timor-Leste social protection system.¹⁵ Social protection still has low coverage although this is increasing, notably, being effectively used as an “essential shock response mechanism” during the Covid-19 pandemic.¹⁶ Coverage of social assistance has not “expanded vertically or horizontally” and may not be readily adjustable to respond when risks materialize. Vulnerable groups such as young children are at heightened risks now and in case of shocks. Vulnerability assessment data crucial for preparedness and response is not available in a timely fashion. Listing of vulnerable people is done to some extent by the Civil Protection and other authorities who offer emergency assistance when emergencies such as landslides occur. Updated listing using digital technologies to enable sharing of information is needed. Financing for disasters is provided for through an annual government budget allocation to a contingency fund for emergencies but accessing the contingency fund is a lengthy bureaucratic process and there is no “risk layering” to utilize various mechanisms such as insurance to transfer some of the risks to competitive markets.¹⁷

Timor-Leste has established an extensive, albeit incomplete, social protection system. Children poverty remains high in Timor-Leste because of malnutrition, multidimensional deprivation, and disability. The Timor-Leste National Strategy for Social Protection seeks to establish a versatile safety net to shocks and build resilience of people to manage “covariate shocks” that arise simultaneously from natural disasters, economic decline, and pandemic diseases.¹⁸ Lack of an adaptable social safety net with flexibility to address vulnerabilities of children to climate change and related malnutrition, disease and mortality risks in Timor-Leste is a major challenge. Child poverty remains high as evidenced in malnutrition and multidimensional deprivations. Timor-Leste has one of the highest social protection spending in the world, averaging 11% of the Gross Domestic Product between 2018 and 2023 but this increased expenditure does not reach all children in need resulting in persistent child poverty. Bolsa da Mãe child grants reduced poverty by 0.9% points in the period due to low coverage and inadequate “benefit levels”.¹⁹

Adaptation of social protection to address climate and disaster shocks children and families in Timor-Leste face must consider the following gaps in the system:



Poverty is a major factor in the deprivation of children and the malnutrition that ensues leading to poor outcomes for the rest of their lives in Timor-Leste. The prevalence of being stunted and underweight in children under five years of age in Timor-Leste is correlated with increasing poverty as seen in the poorest quintiles having worse malnutrition on these measures than the wealthier ones.²⁰



The first 1,000 days of children’s lives are vital for their cognitive development and healthy growth, which translates into better educational outcomes and productivity later in life. Children in this age group have no social assistance in Timor-Leste. Providing cash transfers for children and mothers in the first 1,000 days of life, accompanied by social and behaviour change interventions, helps them afford more nutritious food and adopt better nutrition, hygiene, and health practices.²¹

¹⁵ ILO, 2018, p. 28.

¹⁶ Commonwealth of Australia, 2024, p. 2.

¹⁷ World Bank, 2023, p. 11-12.

¹⁸ Ministry of Social Solidarity and Inclusion, 2021, p. 24.

¹⁹ World Bank, 2025, p. 47.

²⁰ Ministry of Health, 2020, p. 32.

²¹ Maffioli et al, 2019, p. 5; Manley et al, 2022, p. 1.



Malnutrition in Timor-Leste is one of the highest in the world, with 47.1% of children aged under 5 years being stunted, indicative of chronic undernutrition.²² Bolsa da Mãe conditional cash transfer under Decree-Law No. 1/2024 still has low coverage and the amounts paid are inadequate to address poverty, disability, and malnutrition of children. Simulations indicated that the cash transfer needed to be higher, at about US\$ 23 per child per month, with more coverage, for it to make a significant dent in the poverty gap.²³



Many children with disabilities do not attend school, potentially due to social attitudes, discrimination, lack of assistive devices, poor infrastructure, inaccessible public facilities, and lack of enough teachers trained and equipped to teach children with impairments. The Census of 2022 showed that at the official primary school age of 6-11 years, the net attendance rate for children with disabilities was only 20.5% compared to 75.4% for those without disabilities. Among children at the official secondary school going age of 15-17 years, the net attendance rate for children with disabilities was 5.9% compared to 40.3% for those without disabilities.²⁴ Implementation of the child grants and carer support in such a way that the conditionality on school attendance is eliminated will enhance assistance to children with disabilities and complement school attendance.

Social protection adaptation to shock response in Timor-Leste will therefore need to consider these shortcomings that mean children, in the best of times, are not sufficiently protected from climate and disaster risks. Climate shocks exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and impact children differently depending on their circumstances and preexisting poverty and inequality. Children are the most vulnerable and suffer the most in cases of climate and disaster risks materializing. The adaptation of the social protection system should therefore include the following components:

- 1 In disasters, emergencies and climate-related shocks, there can be no doubt the impact on children will be more long-term, manifested in malnutrition, disruption to education, interruption of immunization and preventive healthcare, as well as higher risks of water-borne and other diseases. The impact on children therefore can be expected to be costly in the long run:
 - Universal social protection of children in the first 1,000 days of life, as well as reforms to provide Bolsa da Mãe cash transfers to make it available for all children in poverty, including those with disabilities, without conditions or with only soft educational and health conditions that do not exclude any, is imperative.
 - The adequacy of social assistance for children should be bolstered and adjusted regularly to meet higher costs of living, as well as provide for the care of children with disabilities.
- 2 Women and girls bear some of the heaviest burdens in most disasters and emergencies:
 - The social protection system in Timor-Leste should be built to empower them with options for coping with unanticipated catastrophic as well as predictable and slow-onset risks and shocks from climate change and disasters. Sustaining and improving care and protection of all children from abuse, neglect, and violence, including girls and those with disabilities, must be a priority in a shock-responsive social protection system.

²² Ministry of Health, 2020, p. 31.

²³ World Bank, 2015, p. 2.

²⁴ Timor-Leste National Institute of Statistics, 2024, p. 27-28.

4. SHOCK-RESPONSIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEM STRENGTHENING

Understanding the extant social protection system capacity and strengthening it for shock response entails four components:²⁵

- Using evidence to assess risks and incorporate them into planning.
- Reforming policies and laws to account for climate shocks and disaster risks and financing.
- Designing programmes to address the unique vulnerabilities of children and households to climate change and disasters.
- Improving administration and coordination mechanisms for seamless identification, registration, payments, and monitoring of assistance.

The capacity of officials to institute and manage responses across all ministries and agencies responsible for contingency funding, social protection, health, education, and civil protection, as well as municipalities is important to strengthen shock responsive social protection in Timor-Leste. Policies and strategies should be streamlined and be embedded with triggers, standard operating procedures, coordination mechanisms and incident management protocols to ensure responses are feasible and actionable.²⁶ Programmes must incorporate appreciation of climate, disaster and fragility risks, and cash transfers for children should be adequate for various vulnerabilities. Knowledge and behavior change are important for complementing cash assistance to improve effectiveness of nutrition, healthcare, education, and protection interventions. Universal health coverage using various modalities such as fee waivers and insurance should be emphasized. Employability of people can be enhanced with supportive services such as childcare and learning skills for youth. Human resource capacity of social welfare and other personnel should be strengthened through assessments and training for emergency response. Social registry and administrative processes need to be effective at registration, identification, delivery of cash and other assistance, as well as monitoring.²⁷

The response strategy must be based on the NDC commitment to the Paris Agreement that seeks a “nature-positive” adaptation, mitigation, and socio-economic development. This will rely on carbon sequestration, and diversification of the economy to grow the non-oil productive sector, benefiting from Article 6 carbon market financing to establish “nature-based” land use, green tourism, sustainable agriculture, and improved food security. This will also involve protection of water sources, conservation of terrestrial, forest, and marine life, increased renewable energy use, improved transport efficiency, better waste management, increased capacity of the health sector, and integration of climate and disaster risk information into preparedness planning and response.²⁸ Improvements in social protection to mitigate climate and disaster risks is emphasized.²⁹

Increased spending on social safety nets, health, education and “climate-resilient infrastructure” should be a priority for Timor-Leste to meet nation goals and Sustainable Development Goals.³⁰ Given the high vulnerability to climate risks and disasters, and the low investment in building resilience, there is need to increase on spending social protection as well as social and infrastructure services to safeguard lives and protect incomes of the people.

For the social protection system in Timor-Leste to be adapted for shock response, the building blocks identified in section 1 above form the foundation that needs to be built upon for rapid scale up and adjustment when climate or disaster shocks arise.

The components to add to the building blocks must allow appropriate scale up with vertical deepening to enhance benefit adequacy, and horizontal expansion to increase categories and population of people covered in the social safety net. These components include:

²⁵ UNICEF, 2019, p. 21.

²⁶ UNICEF, 2019, p. 30.

²⁷ UNICEF, 2019, p. 9.

²⁸ Secretary of State for the Environment, 2022, p. 5.

²⁹ Secretary of State for the Environment, 2022, p. 47.

³⁰ International Monetary Fund, 2024, p. 10.

4.1 Poverty and Vulnerability Profile Updates

Regular updates to poverty and vulnerability profiles are important for planning, targeting, and responding to shocks. Climate change risks and impact on children can be embedded in child poverty analysis in Timor-Leste to:

- Assess the social and economic impacts of climate change, environmental degradation, and disasters, and the mitigation measures, on children and young people living in poverty, with disabilities, and other deprivations. Understanding these impacts can guide child-focused policies that address the needs and protect the rights of the most vulnerable children and young people.
- Integrate climate, disaster, and environmental dimensions into child poverty analysis at national and sub-national levels and assess climate risks and impacts on child poverty. This will provide a comprehensive outline of potential climate shocks and risks to children living in poverty, disability, discrimination, and deprivation to establish a basis for targeted programmes and services.

The conclusion of the Timor-Leste Standards of Living Survey (TL-SLS) in 2024 provides new data for analysis of poverty since the last survey in 2014. This will facilitate an update of the poverty profile, enable better identification of needy children, and be useful for better climate risk mitigation.

4.2 Improved Coverage and Adequacy of Social Protection Schemes

The existing schemes are an important foundation for adaptation to shock response. Inadequate coverage of children in their first 1,000 days of life with cash, food assistance as well as support for mothers to improve knowledge on care should be prioritized to create a scheme to address the malnutrition and cognitive development risks. This will be a solid basis to adapt care for children when shocks arise given that resilience and knowledge of mothers and carers are integral to their ability to adapt to climate and disasters risks. Incentives and assistance should be provided for participation of informal and self-employed people in contributory unemployment and incapacity insurance, as well as retirement pensions.

4.3 Payment and Assistance Modalities

The social protection system must utilize a variety of payment and assistance modalities using the latest technology. Mobile payments are versatile, enabling beneficiaries to easily access cash close to where they live at a much lower costs compared to traveling to get benefits from cash payment centre, bank branches and automated teller machines. Internet connectivity, mobile phone coverage and merchants' density are important for viable mobile money usage, and this should be encouraged by a conducive business environment and infrastructure development in all municipalities and rural areas.

4.4 Anticipatory Cash Transfer and Assistance Modalities

Shock responsive social protection requires rigorous ex-ante assessment of vulnerability, risks, needs, and costs. The targeting, payment, and grievance redressal modalities to be implemented when risks materialize must be established within existing regular schemes with flexibility to rapidly adapt to shock response when required. Government has defined some emergency levels that trigger responses and partnerships with the United Nations agencies and international organizations. The UN agencies have their own thresholds for triggers of anticipatory actions and emergency response. Coordination and harmonization of these thresholds and triggers can enhance preparedness, improve funding, and make responses more effective.

4.5 Social Registry

A social registry should be built with user-facing computer and mobile applications that provide information on the objectives of schemes and eligibility and enable requests and submission of supporting documentation. The back end of the registry would allow social, education, health, civil registry, and other relevant government entities to share information on each case regarding birth registration, identification, eligibility, approval, service delivery, payments, grievance redress and monitoring. Existing birth registration systems in health facilities and the civil registry, as well as initiatives by the Timor-Leste National Institute of Statistics to collect data on non-institutional births at aldeia level should be supported as integral parts of the registry. The social registry must be owned, and its development led by government to ensure its sustainability.



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Type	Scheme	Legal Basis	Benefits	Direct transfer in 2025 (excluding salaries, materials, and capital) (USD millions)
Contributory (funded by employees and employers in public and private sectors)	General Social Security and Transitory Social Security Schemes	Decree-Law No. 12/2016 of 14 th November 2016	Payments proportional to wage and length of contribution providing for old age pension maternity, paternity, adoption of a child, sickness, disability, and survivors' benefits.	12.72
Non-contributory (funded by government budget)	Support of the Elderly and Invalids (Subsídio de Apoio a Idosos e Inválidos-SAII)	Decree-Law No. 19/2008 of 19 th June 2008 as amended by Decree-Laws 53/2022 of 20 th July and 8/2024 of 24 th January	Social pension for elderly people aged 60-69 years and people living with disabilities aged 18+ years. The law of 2024 establishes daily value of US\$2 x 30 days per month per person, to be revised depending on resources, salary levels and cost of living. US\$20 is added to those aged between 70-79 years, and US\$40 for those aged 80 years and over.	111.68
	Mothers' grant (Bolsa da Mãe)	Decree-Law No. 18/2012 of 4 th April as amended by Decree-Law No. 1/2024 of 3 rd January	Conditional cash transfer of US\$8, US\$9 or US\$10 for children attending the 1 st , 2 nd , or 3 rd school level capped at 3 children per household.	7.07
	School feeding for basic and pre- school pupils in public and private schools (Merenda Escolar)	Decree-Law No. 14/2008 of 29 th October on basic education and Decree-Law No. 61/2022 of 24 th August	Each school receives US\$0.42 per child per school day.	22.52
	Pensions and grants to National Liberation Combatants and Martyrs	Decree-Law No. 15/2008 of 4 th June as amended by Decree-Law No. 8/2020 of 19th March and Decree-Law No. 13/2022 of 30 th March	Pensions, pecuniary payments, medical assistance, and funeral costs.	190.0
	Scholarships for children of National Liberation Combatants	Decree-Law No. 8/2009 of 15 th January	Covers cost of education from primary school to technical, and university education.	1.1
	Nutrition and health grant for pregnant women and children	N/A	Conditional allowance to pregnant mothers for their food and health needs.	2.86
	Human Capital Development Fund (FDCH)	Decree-Law No.12/2011 of 23 rd March	Scholarships for students to further human capital development	14.0
Total				361.95
Of which direct transfers for children amount to about				33.55 (9%)
Contingency Reserve Fund: This is maintained by the State and is allocated US\$42.6 million in 2025 for unforeseen natural disasters, emergencies and arising shocks and vulnerability.				

Sourced from: Ministry of Finance (2025) and the laws cited in the text.

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