



UNITED NATIONS
ERITREA
.....

Annual Results Report 2024



Eritrea

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Photos (unless otherwise stated):
UN Communications Group







Foreword

I am pleased to present the 2024 Annual Results Report of the United Nations in Eritrea, highlighting the tangible progress achieved under the UNSDCF 2022–2026. In the face of global challenges—from climate shocks to economic pressures—Eritrea has demonstrated remarkable resilience, and the UN has remained steadfast in its commitment to supporting inclusive development, focused on our shared priority of leaving no one behind.

Reflecting on my first year as UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, I am deeply inspired by Eritrea's resilience, self-reliance, and commitment to progress. The nation's journey toward its 2030 aspirations underscores the transformative power of strategic partnerships and innovative solutions.

Throughout 2024, the United Nations Country Team worked closely with the Government of Eritrea and key stakeholders to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our tailored interventions, in synergy with Eritrea's self-reliant development model, have driven meaningful progress in key areas such as health, education, climate resilience, and food security, directly improving the lives of the most vulnerable. Together, we achieved the following results:

- ▶ **Health:** The percentage of births attended at health facilities increased from 71% in 2023 to 81% in 2024, enabling over 61,000 women to safely give birth with professional care.
- ▶ **Education:** Girls outperformed boys in school retention, with 87.8% of girls reaching Grade 5 compared to 82.7% of boys. This highlights significant progress in gender equality in education.
- ▶ **Women's Rights:** Eritrea achieved 94% village-level abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) across all 2,840 villages nationwide in 2024—up from just 32% in 2015. This is a testament to the impact of legal enforcement, social mobilization, and community-led change.
- ▶ **WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene):** Eritrea achieved 94% Open Defecation-Free (ODF) status across all 2,840 villages, up from just 32% in 2015, significantly improving rural sanitation, hygiene, and health outcomes.
- ▶ **Food security and economic inclusion:** Fish production increased by 66.7%, from 16,000 tons in 2023 to 18,431.6 tons in 2024. This was made possible by the establishment of new ice production infrastructure, boosting incomes and job opportunities, particularly for women and youth.



These achievements are a result of the strong partnerships between the UN, the Government of Eritrea, development partners, and other stakeholders. Grounded in mutual respect and alignment with national priorities, Eritrea's collaborative approach positions it to capitalize on emerging opportunities from global reforms and forward-thinking dialogues.

Looking ahead to 2025, the UN remains committed to supporting Eritrea's SDG progress through five core priorities: food systems, data, climate, social protection, and communications. These initiatives, spanning four programmatic areas and one cross-cutting theme, address immediate needs while unlocking long-term opportunities in emerging sectors such as tourism—ultimately fostering inclusive, sustainable development.

I extend my deepest gratitude to the Government of Eritrea, our development partners, and the communities for their invaluable collaboration. Together, we are building a future founded on dignity, opportunity, and shared progress for all Eritreans.

Nahla Valji

UN Resident and Humanitarian
Coordinator in Eritrea



Population

(2025 est.)



Total Population
~3.6 million

Population Underage 15
41.1%

Rural Population

74.8%

Urban Population

25.2%

Eritrea at a Glance



Land Area

Total Land Area
~124,320 km²

Coastline
~3,150 km
(including 350 islands)

Arable Land
~2.1 million hectares

Economic Indicators

(2021)



Gross National Income (GNI) Per Capita
\$609

Human Development Index (HDI)
493

Health and Well-being

(2022)



Life Expectancy at Birth
68 years

Total Fertility Rate (2025)
3.65 births per woman

Education



Adult Literacy Rate
76.6%

Male

82.39%

Female

65.45%

Youth Literacy Rate (15-24 years)
93.25%

Male

94.55%

Female

91.91%



UN Country Team Members

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Eritrea continues to strengthen its collective impact, advancing the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2022-2026 in alignment with Eritrea's national priorities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Comprising 19 UN entities—9 Resident and 10 Non-Resident—under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, the UNCT remains committed to delivering coordinated, efficient, and results-driven support. By leveraging expertise across UN Agencies, Funds, and Programmes, the UNCT continues to enhance programmatic coherence, resource mobilization, and strategic partnerships, ensuring impactful and sustainable development outcomes for the people of Eritrea.



UNITED NATIONS
ERITREA



Resident Agencies



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations



Non-Resident Agencies



Investing in rural people



International
Labour
Organization



International
Trade
Centre



UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER



ECA



UN
environment
programme



unesco



UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



UNIDO



UNODC
United Nations Office
on Drugs and Crime

Key Development Partners

Development Partners



Arab Gulf Programme for Development



Africa Development Bank (AfDB)



AUSTRIAN NATCOM



Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



**China International Development
Cooperation Agency (CIDCA)**



European Union (EU)



Global Climate Facility (GCF)



**Global Alliance for Vaccines and
Immunization (GAVI)**



Global Environment Facility (GEF)



Global Partnership for Education (GPE)



Government of France



Government of Germany



Government of Italy



Government of Ireland



Government of Japan



Government of the UK



Government of Kuwait



Government of Switzerland



Multilateral Fund for Montreal Protocol



Government Collaboration

Ministry of Finance and National Development

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Health

Ministry of Agriculture

Ministry of Land, Water, and Environment

Ministry of Local Government

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

Ministry of Mines and Energy

Ministry of Trade and Industry

Ministry of Marine Resources

Ministry of Information

Ministry of Education

National Statistics Office

Customs Department

National Higher Commission

1

Key Developments: Country and Regional Contexts

Eritrea, one of Africa's youngest nations, remains a beacon of stability in a volatile region. Despite growing geopolitical tensions and humanitarian challenges across the Horn of Africa—including conflict in Sudan, unrest in Ethiopia, and disruptions in Red Sea trade routes—Eritrea has preserved internal cohesion and steadily advanced its national development agenda. At the same time, the country has expanded diplomatic outreach and deepened strategic partnerships, reaffirming its commitment to national development and regional stability.

Covering over 124,000 square kilometers and home to nine diverse ethnic groups, Eritrea is administratively divided into six Zobas (regions) and 67 Sub Zobas (sub-regions). Around 65% of the population lives in rural areas, with a significant concentration in the central highlands. As of 2020, 41% of Eritreans were under 15, while just 4.5% were over 65—underscoring a youthful demographic and the need for sustained investment in human capital.

Eritrea faces mounting climate-related risks. With high scores on UNICEF's Children's Climate Risk Index (2021), 7.1 for overall risk and 8.3 for child vulnerability¹. The country remains extremely exposed to environmental shocks. After four failed rainy seasons, 2024 brought much-needed rainfall, improving harvest prospects. However, recovery remains uneven, particularly in drought-affected areas such as the Northern and Southern Red Sea and Anseba. Climate-related displacement, livestock loss, and increased burdens on women and children have heightened food insecurity and weakened resilience.

Economically, Eritrea has shown cautious optimism. GDP growth is projected at 2.9% in 2024 and 3.1% in 2025.² Driven by the extractives sector and private consumption. Due to improved agricultural output, inflation is expected to fall below 5%. Nonetheless, structural challenges persist: limited employment opportunities, an underdeveloped private sector, and climate-sensitive livelihoods. Sanctions continue to restrict access to external financing, yet the government has made notable strides in infrastructure development.

1. United Nations Children's Fund, *'The Climate Crisis is a Child Rights Crisis'*, UNICEF, New York, 2021

2. Eritrea Economic Outlook—Africa Development Bank, 2024

Key achievements include road network expansion, electrification through the Hirgigo project, and investments in renewable energy, such as the AfDB-supported 30 MW solar plant in Dekemhare. Electricity access rose from 40% in 2015 to 52% in 2020, with further gains expected. Nearly 60% of water systems are now powered by solar energy, reducing operational costs and emissions while improving service delivery.

Eritrea has made significant strides in water management through the construction of more than 5,000 water catchments, dams, and micro-dams across the country. Among these, nearly 800 are medium to large-sized dams, aimed at enhancing food security and improving access to water. These efforts have dramatically increased the nation's water storage capacity, transformed the landscape, and improved the livelihoods of many Eritreans.

On the development front, Eritrea continues to build on gains in health and education. Under-five mortality fell to 36.6 per 1,000 live births in 2022. Enrollment has increased, particularly among girls and children with disabilities, supported by improved infrastructure and inclusive policies. Social protection programmes have expanded, helping marginalized groups and boosting resilience.

Progress is also evident in gender equality and efforts to eliminate harmful practices: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Gender- Based Violence (GBV).

While Eritrea's Human Development Index (HDI) remains low at 0.493, the country has demonstrated a strong commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly focusing on equality, social protection, and social justice. Its second Voluntary National Review highlighted advances in health, education, and women's rights, though challenges remain in poverty reduction, clean energy, and decent work.

The UNCT has adapted its support to align with Eritrea's self-reliant development model, prioritizing climate resilience, food systems transformation, social protection, and data-driven planning. This strategic alignment, coupled with strengthened government-UN collaboration, positions the UN to deliver more impactful and targeted results in 2024 and beyond.

2

UN Development System support to national development priorities through the Cooperation Framework

2.1. Overview of Cooperation Framework Results

The year 2024 marked the third year of implementation of the UNSDCF 2022–2026. Despite significant challenges—including limited funding, recurrent climatic shocks, and unilateral sanctions—the Government of the State of Eritrea and the UN system achieved measurable progress toward the Cooperation Framework outcomes. Joint efforts led to enhanced policy coherence, strengthened government–private sector engagement, and initial gains in job creation and economic diversification.

A key milestone was the renewal of strategic partnership discussions between the Government and the UN system through the Joint Work Plan (JWP), a key mechanism for advancing the Cooperation Framework (CF). The UN reaffirms its commitment to driving forward the CF through the JWP, focusing on five transformative areas. Looking ahead to 2025, the UN remains committed to supporting Eritrea's SDG progress through these five priorities: food systems transformation, data and statistics, community resilience and climate action, and social protection and safety nets, with strategic communications as a cross-cutting initiative.

Outcome 1

Equitable Access to Quality Social Services (People)

Under the People Pillar of the UNSDCF, significant progress has been made in ensuring equitable access to quality social services. Maternal and child health outcomes improved, with high immunization coverage reducing vaccine-preventable diseases. Education enrollment rates increased, enhancing access to learning opportunities. The expansion of safe drinking water and sanitation services contributed to better public health, while integrated social protection programmes provided critical support to vulnerable children, including those with disabilities. These achievements reflect a strengthened commitment to inclusive development, with continued efforts to enhance service delivery and social equity.

Outcome 2

Accountable and Efficient Public Institutions (Peace)

Under the Peace Pillar, Eritrea has shown advancement in governance, gender equality, and data-driven decision-making. Public institutions have improved efficiency and accountability, enhancing fiscal management, media reach, and legal frameworks. Targeted interventions reduced FGM prevalence and strengthened GBV response systems, ensuring better protection for women and girls. National Statistics Office (NSO) produced reliable GDP estimates for the first time in over a decade, supporting informed economic planning. Preparations for the Fourth Population and Health Survey (EPHS) are underway, improving demographic and health data for policy decisions. These achievements reflect Eritrea's commitment to sustainable development, gender equality, and institutional accountability.

Outcome 3 Inclusive and Diversified Economic Growth (Prosperity)

The Prosperity Pillar of the UNSDCF fostered inclusive and diversified economic growth by promoting sustainable agriculture, fisheries, and date palm projects, creating jobs, and improving rural livelihoods. Income-generating activities and cash transfer programmes provided crucial support to thousands of households, particularly women and vulnerable groups, enhancing economic stability. Climate-smart agriculture initiatives increased productivity and resilience to climate shocks, ensuring long-term food security and sustainability. Additionally, the UN's life-saving interventions under this pillar addressed urgent food insecurity, strengthened social cohesion, and enabled communities to drive their recovery. These efforts collectively contributed to a more resilient and adaptive economy, positioning Eritrea for sustained growth and development.

The UNCT, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and the Ministry of Finance and National Development (MoFND), held a high-level strategic dialogue to strengthen partnerships and accelerate progress on food security and nutrition under Eritrea's Strategic Development Plan (2024-2028). Discussions centered on enhancing agricultural systems, improving Government-UN coordination, promoting climate-smart agriculture, and advancing gender-responsive initiatives, particularly for women smallholder farmers.

Eritrea has made significant strides in integrated farming, community-led agricultural initiatives, and climate adaptation, including investments in drought-resistant crops and small-scale irrigation. Looking ahead, the government aims to expand sustainable farming practices, scale up nutrition-sensitive agriculture, reduce post-harvest losses, enhance rural financing, and implement a One Health approach to address zoonotic diseases and antimicrobial resistance.

The UN reaffirmed its commitment through financial and technical support, with agencies pledging targeted assistance: FAO on food security, UNICEF on nutrition, UNDP on women's rights, UNIDO on food processing, and IFAD on rural financing, among others. A joint monitoring framework will track progress while Eritrea's best agricultural practices will be shared at regional and global forums.

This dialogue reinforced the Eritrea-UN partnership in achieving sustainable, inclusive, and resilient food systems.

Outcome 4 Climate-Resilient Sustainable Development (Planet)

The Planet Pillar of the UNSDCF drove climate-resilient, sustainable development through large-scale land restoration, expanded renewable energy projects, and enhanced solar-powered water infrastructure. Communities gained the skills to mitigate and adapt to climate change through targeted capacity-building and disaster risk management initiatives. These efforts, achieved through strong collaboration between the UN, the GOSE, and development partners, have reinforced environmental sustainability, strengthened resilience, and improved the overall well-being of Eritreans.



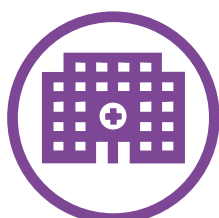
2.2. Cooperation Framework Priorities, Outcomes, and Outputs



Outcome 1

By 2026, More People Have Benefited from Equitable Access to and the Use of Inclusive, High-Quality Essential Social Services

Key Achievements



81% of births in 2024 occurred in health facilities



Near-universal 98.9% immunization coverage for children under two



National retention rates improved, with 85% of students reaching Grade 5, with 87.8% of girls



77,053 vulnerable children (48% girls) benefited from psychosocial support and cash transfers

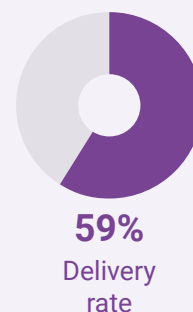
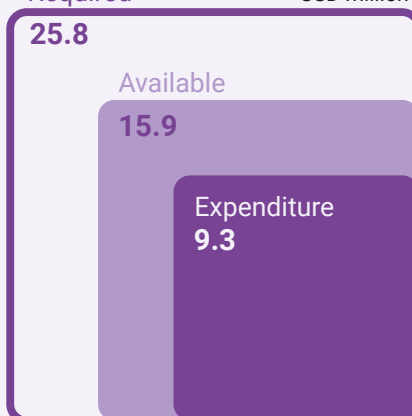


unicef
for every child

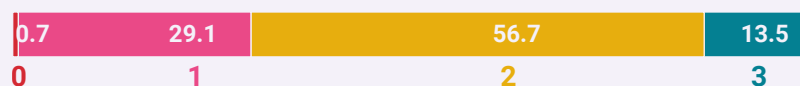


World Health Organization

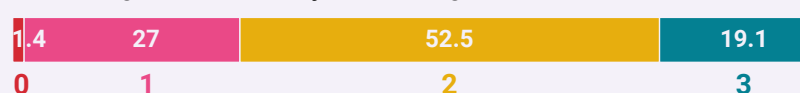
Required USD million



Percentage of activities by Gender Equality Marker %



Percentage of activities by Human Rights Marker %



0 - Not expected to contribute 1 - Limited Contribution
2 - Significant contribution 3 - Principal objective

Output 1.1

Policy Instruments and Strategies Developed and Adopted to Guide Institutional Capacity Building, Service Delivery, and Emergency Preparedness and Response

Through key reforms and strategic initiatives supported by the UN, Eritrea's Ministry of Health (MoH) has made significant strides in strengthening institutional capacity, improving service delivery, and enhancing emergency response systems—directly benefiting communities across the country. This collaboration led to the revision of critical health policies and the expansion of quality care, laying the foundation for a more resilient and equitable health system, as highlighted below.

- **Developed Eritrea's National Health Laboratory Strategy (2025–2029)** to modernize and standardize diagnostic services nationwide. The strategy introduces advanced technologies—including genomic sequencing—and strengthens resource coordination to improve disease detection, accelerate outbreak response, and enhance public health security.
- **Prepared a national public health risk profile, including a risk calendar** to identify seasonal and contextual health vulnerabilities. As a result, national preparedness improved significantly: readiness scores rose from 37% during the June 2024 regional MPox outbreak to 64% during the November 2024 Cholera outbreak—exceeding the regional average of 60%. Continued efforts are needed to keep risk assessments current and response capacities agile.
- **Formulated a national Artemisinin Resistance Response Strategy (2025–2031)** to strengthen malaria surveillance and slow the spread of drug-resistant strains. The strategy supports early detection, preserves treatment efficacy, and safeguards public health gains against the resurgence of resistant malaria.



Output 1.2

Delivery of Equitable, Age-Appropriate, and Gender-Responsive Essential Social Services Strengthened

The Government of Eritrea, in close partnership with the UN system, expanded access to essential social services in 2024, achieving notable progress in education, child protection, and social welfare. These efforts prioritized inclusive and quality service delivery—particularly for children and persons with disabilities, contributing to more equitable outcomes for vulnerable populations and advancing the country's commitment to leaving no one behind.

In this regard, Eritrea's education sector has undergone a transformational shift, marked by strategic investments that prioritize inclusivity, equity, and quality. Anchored in the Education for All initiative, these efforts have led to measurable improvements in enrollment, retention, and learning outcomes, particularly for the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach areas. By expanding access and strengthening foundational systems, the education sector is increasingly positioned to deliver equitable, resilient, and lifelong learning opportunities for all children, regardless of background. Key outcomes include:



- **National enrollment rates improved markedly between 2021/22 and 2022/23**, with more children attending school at the right level for their age (Adjusted Net Enrollment Rate, ANER). Pre-primary enrollment rose from 17.4% to 21.1%, middle school from 65% to 83.2%, and secondary from 46.7% to 50.6%, reflecting expanded access and retention across the education system.
- **National retention rates improved, with 85% of students reaching Grade 5 in 2022/23—up from 83.7% the previous year.** Girls outperformed boys, achieving a retention rate of 87.8%, thanks to targeted efforts to enroll out-of-school children and provide transition support to secondary education, particularly for vulnerable groups.
- **Student learning outcomes**, assessed through the fifth round of the Measuring Learning Achievement (MLA V), showed marked improvement in 2024 compared to the 2019 MLA IV. Average scores rose from 47.9 to 54.2 in Grade 3 and from 45.6 to 54.3 in Grade 5, with girls outperforming boys—reflecting the positive impact of targeted efforts to enhance learning quality and equity.
- **Strategic interventions.** These outcomes were made possible by a number of strategic interventions implemented by the Ministry of



Click or scan

Girls Incentive Programme in Eritrea Meet Halima Mohammed Abdu, a Determined Young Student

Education in collaboration with the UN and communities. **Over one million textbooks were distributed, 189 classrooms constructed, and digital infrastructure installed in 12 schools—reaching over 6,500 students. Investments in early childhood education, community learning spaces, and cash-plus incentives for 4,500 girls improved access and retention.** These efforts strengthened learning environments, reduced disparities, and expanded inclusive education for out-of-school and underserved children across Eritrea.

Child and Social Protection

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW), in partnership with the UN system, has strengthened access to essential social services, delivering child and disability-inclusive, gender-responsive, and quality interventions across nutrition and child and social protection. These efforts resulted in measurable improvements in child and social protection and nutrition, particularly for vulnerable children, children with disabilities, and survivors of GBV, as demonstrated below.

- **Integrated social protection services—including psychosocial support and cash transfers—enabled 77,053 vulnerable children (48% girls), including 23,883 children with disabilities, to access education, health, and community services that were previously out of reach.** Initial follow-up data indicate improved school attendance and service uptake, especially among children with disabilities and girls from low-income households.
- **The rollout of an integrated child protection manual improved the capacity of local social service providers to identify, refer, and support vulnerable children and families.** As a result, 87,678 individuals—including 60,000 women and adolescent girls—accessed timely and appropriate support services related to gender-based violence. Community members reported increased awareness, and service providers documented faster response times and improved case management.

Nutrition

- **With support from the UN, the Ministry of Health reached 185,500 mothers and caregivers of young children with practical guidance on breastfeeding and preparing nutritious local foods Dura-cereals, Milk, and Kebkebe-legumes, known as DMK+.** This nationwide initiative, part of the First Foods campaign launched in 2023, is already helping families adopt healthier feeding practices, contributing to the prevention of stunting and wasting among children aged 6–23 months. A national DMK+ guideline was also developed with input from health, agriculture, and marine sectors to support consistent messaging and long-term improvements in child nutrition.





Nourishing Beginnings: Rahel's Journey to Homemade DMK for Her Child

Deep in Eritrea's Zoba Maekel, nestled within the village of Tsaeda Christian, lives Rahel Isaías—a young mother with a newfound passion for healthy cooking. Like many in her community, Rahel initially used store-bought DMK, a fortified blend of grains, pulses, and oilseeds, to nourish her child.

"Previously, I only knew how to buy DMK from the store," she explains. "I didn't know I could prepare it at home."

That changed with a government-led initiative supported by the UN Eritrea, which brought a cooking demonstration to her village. Unlike a typical cooking class, this hands-on session introduced Rahel and other mothers to the transformative potential of homemade DMK. Using 4–5 locally available grains, they learned to create a nutrient-rich mix that promotes children's growth and development.

"The nutrition experts' guidance gave me important knowledge on selecting and preparing ingredients," Rahel says, "and helped me understand the nutritional value for my baby's development."

But the demonstration went beyond recipes—it equipped mothers with practical skills and nutritional literacy, fostering independence and confidence in their ability to support their children's well-being. For Rahel, it marked the start of a new chapter one where she no longer depends on store-bought solutions.

Today, Rahel is sharing what she learned with other women in her community. Her story reflects a wider shift toward community-based, sustainable nutrition solutions across Eritrea.



Output 1.3

National and Community-Based Systems for Delivering Social Services Improved

Maternal and Child Health

Eritrea has made substantial progress in strengthening national and community-based health systems, particularly in maternal and newborn care, through close collaboration with the UN development system. Since 2000, the country has reduced maternal mortality by 56%, with the Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) dropping to 322 per 100,000 live births by 2022—surpassing regional benchmarks. These results reflect expanded access to quality, life-saving services, including antenatal care, skilled birth attendance, and emergency obstetric care. By 2024, 81% of births occurred in health facilities, furthermore, more than 80% of the population lived within 10 kilometers of a healthcare facility. These gains underscore Eritrea's commitment to equitable, accessible healthcare for women and children and provide a strong foundation for delivering inclusive social services across the country.

Key achievements include:

► **Expanded capacity for Cesarean sections.**

Expanded Cesarean section capacity has strengthened the national health system's ability to deliver continuous emergency maternal and newborn care. Over 100 general practitioners were trained to perform Cesarean sections, enabling junior doctors to provide life-saving interventions in underserved areas. As a result, the number of hospitals offering comprehensive emergency obstetric and newborn care increased from 10 in

2023 to 12 in 2024, while facilities providing basic services rose from 210 (70%) in 2022 to 233 (78%) in 2024—broadening access, reducing preventable deaths, and improving health outcomes for mothers and newborns nationwide.

► **Improved access through Maternity Waiting Homes (safe residential spaces for expectant mothers near health facilities).**

Eritrea has established approximately 50 Maternity Waiting Homes (MWHs) across the country, providing a safe and supportive environment for pregnant women in the final stages of pregnancy. In 2024, over 20 MWHs in Gash Barka and Anseba were upgraded with essential supplies—such as food, kitchen utensils, and washing machines, enhancing comfort and dignity for expectant mothers and improving their ability to access skilled delivery services. Nearly 15,000 women benefited from MWHs during the year, including 5,997 who gave birth while staying in these facilities—representing nearly 10% of all skilled deliveries nationally and demonstrating the growing role of MWHs in reducing geographic and socio-economic barriers to safe childbirth.

► **Mobile outreach and referrals through ambulances.**

The deployment of four ambulances in drought-affected and hard-to-reach areas has ensured timely access to life-saving care for over 5,000 individuals—many of them pregnant women in emergency situations. These mobile units also enabled regular outreach, screening, and follow-up services in nomadic and isolated communities, reducing delays in care and strengthening early detection of maternal and child health risks. Over their projected 20-year

A Mother's Journey: How a Maternity Waiting Home Saved Lives in Eritrea

In the remote village of Begasa, young mother Meriem Tuleq nearly lost her life during her first pregnancy after a home delivery led to sepsis. Desperate, her family and neighbors carried her for an entire day to reach the Adi-Tekelezan Health Facility's maternity waiting home.

"They saved my life," Meriem said. Learning from the ordeal, she returned for all her later pregnancies—including the birth of her twin boys. "I've used the waiting home three times now," she shared. "No mother in remote areas should deliver without this safety net."

These homes provide shelter, care, and free ambulance access when possible, bridging gaps in remote healthcare. Yet challenges like transportation and water shortages remain.



lifespan, the ambulances are expected to improve health access for up to 281,000 people, particularly in underserved sub-zobas.

- **Universal Immunization Coverage.** Eritrea achieved near-universal immunization coverage in 2024, reaching 98.9% of children under two with life-saving vaccines—a key milestone in preventing childhood illness and deaths. Mobile outreach teams played a vital role, especially in underserved zobas like Gash Barka, Anseba, and the Red Sea zones, reaching 42,907 children and 15,205 mothers with Pentavalent-3, Polio-3, and Measles/Rubella-1 vaccines. This sustained investment in immunization has significantly reduced the risk of vaccine-preventable diseases and improved child survival outcomes nationwide.

- **Robust disease surveillance systems.** Eritrea's investment in disease surveillance has strengthened its capacity to detect and respond to public health threats before they escalate. In 2024, robust monitoring systems helped prevent outbreaks of major communicable diseases, with zero recorded cases of wild poliovirus or measles. Surveillance teams investigated and tested 58 cases of Acute Flaccid Paralysis (AFP) and 280 suspected measles/rubella cases—all of which were laboratory-confirmed negative. These results reflect the country's growing ability to protect communities through early detection, rapid response, and a strong commitment to preventive health.



“No Child Left Behind”: A Village Health Worker’s Mission

In the remote village of Filhito, 65-year-old Mohammed Saleh Mohammed walks tirelessly from house to house, ensuring every child gets lifesaving vaccines. With no phones or radios, his voice and footsteps are the only call to action.

“I count the vaccinated—so I know who’s missing,” he says. His persistence paid off: on the campaign’s first day, families flocked to vaccination sites. But Mohammed’s work isn’t done. He tracks down every absent child, battling distance and distrust with determination.

Located 38 km from the nearest health center, Filhito typifies the challenges of rural healthcare. Yet, thanks to Mohammed’s grassroots efforts—supported by Eritrea’s health authorities, UN and Gavi—the village is beating the odds.



- **Community-driven behaviour changes improve health outcomes nationwide.** A nationwide Social Behavior Change (SBC) campaign mobilized 1.3 million individuals through structured community dialogues held across 2,500 villages in all Zobas, embedding sustainable health practices at the grassroots level. This wide-reaching effort led to measurable improvements in health-seeking behaviors, with the adoption of key practices—including nutrition, hygiene and sanitation, immunization, and maternal health—rising from 60% to 64% at the national level between 2021 and 2024. The campaign's success highlights the impact of community engagement in promoting long-term behavioral change and advancing population health outcomes.



Reaching Every Child Measles and Rubella Vaccination and Vitamin A Campaign



Click or scan

- **Rapid response systems reduce outbreak risks.** Eritrea established three fully functional Public Health Emergency Operation Centers (PHEOCs) in Zoba Maekel, Debub, and Gash Barka to strengthen its capacity for emergency preparedness and response. These centers have significantly improved the availability of real-time surveillance data and made public health responses more agile. As a result, mobilization time during health emergencies has been reduced from three weeks to one week, enabling faster containment of potential outbreaks and minimizing the risk of disease spread.
- **Integrated services reduce mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis.** Eritrea expanded HIV prevention by integrating hepatitis and antenatal care services to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis. This integrated approach led to a measurable decline in transmission rates in 2024—HIV dropped to 0.13% and syphilis to 0.49%. These results mark significant progress in protecting maternal and child health, and the country is now on track for WHO certification under the global triple elimination initiative.



Eritrea's Barefoot Doctors: A Grassroots Path to Universal Health

Thirty years after independence, Eritrea has brought healthcare within reach of 80% of its people—but the last 20%, scattered across mountains and nomadic lands, remained beyond clinics' reach. In 2019, the government revived the Barefoot Doctors (BFDs) programme, training community-nominated health workers for 6 months and arming them with medical kits and even camels for transport.

These frontline heroes deliver maternal care, immunizations, disease prevention, and sanitation education, slashing malaria and TB cases while boosting antenatal visits. Their secret? Trust and adaptation. By selecting workers locally and using camels to reach pastoralists, BFDs ensure no one is left behind.

In just 4 years, the programme has proven that innovation beats infrastructure gaps. Where roads fail, community commitment prevails. Eritrea's model shows that Universal Health Coverage is about meeting people where they are.





Watch the inspiring
story of Barefoot
Doctor



Click
or scan





Outcome 2

By 2026, Eritrea's Public Sector Institutions are More Accountable and Efficient, and More People Enjoy the Right to Development

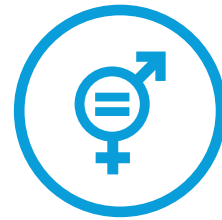
Key Achievements



The national prevalence of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) dropped to 2.3% for girls under five



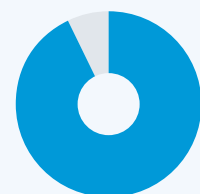
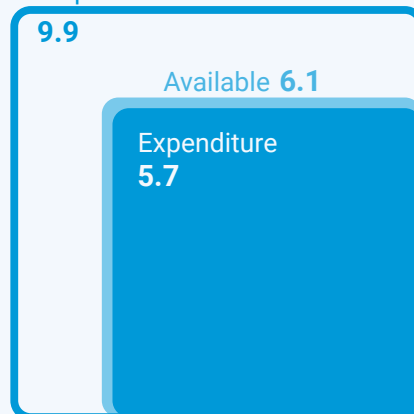
842 villages and 12 sub-zobas declared FGM-free, protecting 346,102 girls



67% increase in trained Gender-Based Violence (GBV) service providers and expanded coverage to 100 support centers (from 60 in 2022)



Required USD million

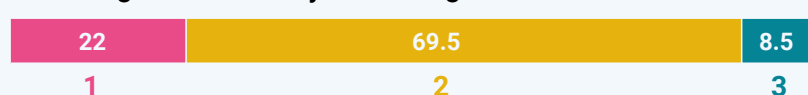


93%
Delivery rate

Percentage of activities by Gender Equality Marker %



Percentage of activities by Human Rights Marker %



0 - Not expected to contribute 1 - Limited Contribution
2 - Significant contribution 3 - Principal objective

Output 2.1

The Capacity of Institutions to Provide Oversight and Deliver Services Is Improved

Through strategic support and capacity-building, the UN has contributed to stronger, more accountable public institutions in Eritrea. Targeted efforts to improve data systems, promote gender-responsive governance, and enhance institutional coordination have enabled national and local authorities to make more informed, inclusive, and transparent decisions. These changes have laid the groundwork for better public service delivery and accelerated progress toward equitable development.

- ▶ **Eritrea demonstrates progress and commitment to the 2030 Agenda on the global stage.** With support from the UN system, Eritrea was one of 12 countries to present its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) at the 2024 High-Level Political Forum in New York. The review showcased national progress on SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), and SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), highlighting successes, challenges, and lessons learned in implementing the 2030 Agenda. This milestone reaffirmed Eritrea's commitment to inclusive, sustainable development and enhanced the country's visibility and engagement in global SDG processes, creating new opportunities for peer learning, policy dialogue, and international cooperation.
- ▶ **Digital systems strengthen transparency and efficiency in public finance and trade.** The UN supported Eritrea in modernizing key public systems to improve financial governance and trade efficiency. The upgrade and full automation of Customs operations will accelerate cargo clearance, strengthen revenue control, and generate accurate, real-time trade statistics. In parallel, enhancements to the Public Financial Management System (PFMS) are enabling more effective cash management and full traceability of public funds, from release to final disbursement into beneficiaries' bank accounts. Together, these digital reforms are increasing transparency, reducing inefficiencies, and reinforcing institutional accountability.

Output 2.2

National Statistical and Data-Producing Institutions Have Increased Their Capacity to Collect, Collate, Analyze, Use, and Manage Data

Eritrea has significantly strengthened its national statistical capacity, enabling more timely, reliable, and disaggregated data for decision-making, policy planning, and progress tracking. In collaboration with the UN, NSO has modernized data systems to better capture economic and social indicators that are critical for advancing national priorities and SDGs. These improvements are driving more transparent governance, evidence-based service delivery, and increased public accountability.

- ▶ **Modern infrastructure strengthens national statistical capacity.** In collaboration with the UN, Eritrea prioritized the institutional strengthening of the NSO, equipping it with critical IT infrastructure, software, and solar power systems. These upgrades have enabled more reliable data operations and laid the groundwork for large-scale national surveys such as the EPHS 2025, strengthening the country's capacity for evidence-based decision-making.
- ▶ **Improved population data will drive inclusive, evidence-based policymaking.** Eritrea made significant progress in preparing for the 2025 EPHS—the first comprehensive demographic and health survey since 2010. In collaboration with the UN, the NSO and the MoH enhanced technical capacity through staff training, improved sampling design, and introduced Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews (CAPI) to boost data accuracy and efficiency. The EPHS will generate disaggregated data on key indicators such as maternal and child health, education, and nutrition, providing critical evidence to track SDG progress, identify service gaps, and inform data-driven policies.
- ▶ **New economic data systems support macroeconomic planning.** Through collaboration between the NSO and the UN, Eritrea made major progress in addressing a decade-long gap in economic data, particularly GDP estimation. A new methodological framework and the creation of a dedicated GDP Task Force have laid the groundwork for credible, regular national accounts, marking a significant shift toward evidence-based macroeconomic planning and policymaking.



Output 2.3

Capacity of Public Institutions to Consolidate National Harmony and Socio-Economic Development Increased

The UN collaborated with the GOSE to strengthen public institutions' capacity, enhancing legal frameworks and modernizing the media sector:

- ▶ **Digital broadcasting and information access.** Improved broadcasting efficiency and access to information through a shift to digital broadcasting platform have drastically improved production and dissemination. TV production time has decreased from days to hours, and data retrieval from hours to seconds. Remote areas, such as the Southern Red Sea, now have better access to timely information, reaching 90,000 people.
- ▶ **Legal assessment and reform programme.** The Ministry of Justice (MoJ), in partnership with the UN, conducted a comprehensive legal assessment that identified the need for alignment with international and regional legal standards. This led to the development of a five-year legal reform programme and a Comprehensive Capacity Building Strategy, focusing on trade, investment, and environmental law.

Output 2.4

Communities Have Increased Capacities to Counter Harmful Traditional Practices

In collaboration with the MoH, MOLSW, and the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW), the UN has supported Eritrea's comprehensive campaign to end FGM and GBV. Through a multi-faceted approach—combining community-led initiatives, advocacy, and Social Behavior Change (SBC) strategies—significant progress has been achieved. Key outcomes include:

- ▶ **Eritrea sees a major reduction in FGM through enforcement, education, and grassroots action.** Eritrea has made significant progress in eliminating FGM through a combination of legal enforcement, community action, and awareness campaigns. Since the enforcement of the Female Circumcision Abolition Proclamation No. 158/2007, 237 prosecutions have been recorded, and 842 villages have officially



renounced FGM—460 of them in 2024 alone. **A 2024 study covering 1,086 villages found FGM prevalence at just 2.3% among girls under five and 4.4% among girls under 15, down from 12% and 33% in 2010.** Twelve sub-zobas are now FGM-free, protecting an estimated 346,000 girls. The study also showed 63.4% of villages reported no FGM under age 15, underscoring the impact of legislation and sustained social mobilization.



Aziza Hassan is smiling at her bright future

Fifteen-year-old Aziza Hassan moves confidently through her day in Elabered subzone - studying, working at her family's shop, and dreaming of becoming a nurse. Her confidence stems from a remarkable achievement: her community has been declared 100% free of FGM and child marriage.

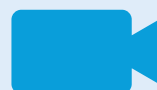
"This change means everything," Aziza explains. "Before, girls would disappear from school - some forced into marriage, others suffering in silence from FGM complications." She recalls how women in her mother's generation endured painful menstruation and dangerous childbirth due to these practices.

The transformation in Elabered didn't happen overnight. Through years of persistent efforts by the Eritrean government and the UN, community elders, religious leaders, and families came together to abandon harmful traditions. Today, the results speak for themselves: classrooms remain full of girls, and young women like Aziza are charting new paths.

"I want to show what's possible when girls are free to learn and grow," says Aziza, who balances her studies with work to support her education. While challenges remain in sustaining this progress, the community's commitment is unwavering.

Elabered's success offers a powerful blueprint: when communities unite behind girls' rights, generations of suffering can end, and the potential of half the community can be realized.

- **Expanded GBV response services.** Over 2,300 social workers and community members were trained between 2022 and 2024, significantly strengthening national capacity to prevent and respond to GBV. As a result, the number of GBV service delivery points with trained providers increased by 67% nationwide—from 60 in 2022 to 100 in 2024—broadening survivor access to timely, safe, and appropriate support across the country, including in underserved areas.



Asrar Teklemariam A
Journey of Change.
Zero Tolerance for
FGM



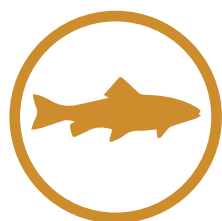
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Outcome 3

By 2026, people in Eritrea, especially the disadvantaged population, will have increased livelihoods as economic growth becomes more inclusive and diversified

Key Achievements



Annual Fish catch increased by 66.7% (18,432 tons), surpassing the 16,000-ton target



Restored 2,500 hectares of degraded land, supporting 4,000 households



Transformed livelihoods for 1,370 vulnerable women (including women with disabilities and female-headed households)



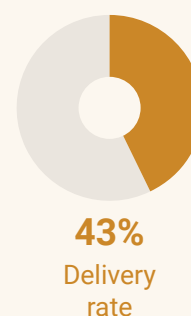
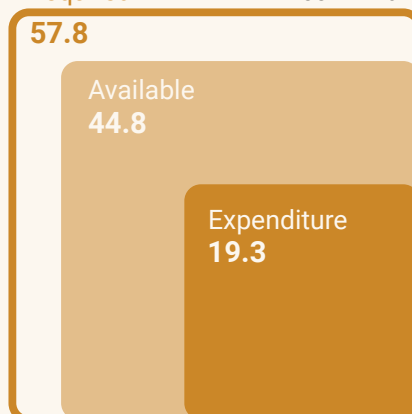
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



Investing in rural people



Required USD million



Percentage of activities by Gender Equality Marker %



Percentage of activities by Human Rights Marker %



0 - Not expected to contribute 1 - Limited Contribution
2 - Significant contribution 3 - Principal objective

Output 3.1

The Capacity of the Public Sector is Strengthened to Develop Strategies and Policies for Enterprise, Job Creation, and Employment

The GOSE, in collaboration with the UN, has strengthened public sector capacity to design and implement strategies that promote enterprise development, job creation, and employment. These efforts are essential for advancing inclusive economic growth, supporting youth livelihoods, and expanding opportunities across sectors. Notable achievements include:

► **Strengthening Marine Resources Management.**

Eritrea advanced the sustainable management of marine resources by revising the National Aquaculture Development Strategy (NADSIP) to include new marine resource management plans and sustainable harvesting strategies.

Complementing this, stock assessments established a recommended sustainable catch limit of 80,000 tons per year, balancing fishing efforts with long-term conservation goals.

- **Agri-Fisheries Value Chain Development and Strengthening Coastal Livelihoods.** Agri-fisheries value chain initiatives have strengthened rural livelihoods, improved household incomes, and equipped women across coastal and inland areas with knowledge and skills. The establishment of Abdur Enterprise produced 330,000 liters of organic fertilizer and created 40 jobs—93% of them for women—while 500 women-headed households in five coastal villages were supported through seaweed-based livelihoods. In parallel, the creation of 20 new fishing cooperatives brought the national total to 236, boosting household incomes by 52.4% in inland and 62.5% in coastal communities, and promoting more sustainable and inclusive resource use.



Abdur Enterprise- Homegrown liquid fertilizer with a double purpose

Born from a partnership between Eritrea's Ministries of Marine Resources and MoA in 2021, Abdur Enterprise has revolutionized agricultural sustainability by transforming seaweed and fish waste into opportunity. This initiative not only provides income opportunities and promotes environmental sustainability but also supports local farmers by providing access to affordable and effective organic fertilizers, significantly boosting crop yields and contributing to food security within the region. What began as a modest operation producing hundreds of liters of organic liquid fertilizer now yields 40,000 liters monthly – thanks to industrial choppers and fermentation tanks that turn coastal waste into a precious resource.

The enterprise's impact is twofold: livelihood improvement and agricultural innovation. With 40 employees (37 women), Abdur provides stable incomes while supporting women seaweed harvesters in five coastal villages. Their 330,000 liters of fertilizer distributed nationwide have boosted crop yields and generated 9 million Nakfa in revenue, proving that sustainability is profitable. Beyond commerce, Abdur drives research, donating 119,000 liters (worth ERN 3.2 million) for field trials with the Ministry of Agriculture. Now, plans to expand into seaweed-based soap and bleach aim to uplift more communities. Abdur's model shows how local ingenuity and strategic partnerships can turn environmental challenges into victories for women, farmers, and the planet.



Boosting Sustainable Farming with Innovative Organic Fertilizers

In recent years, Eritrea has faced severe challenges, including drought, erratic rainfall, and the economic fallout from the Ukraine crisis, leading to food shortages and rising agricultural input costs. To combat these issues, the Crisis Response Initiative (CRI) launched a \$3.3 million project to support rural households. This initiative focused on enhancing sustainable agricultural practices and building resilience against future shocks. A key element of this initiative was the partnership with local enterprises like Abdur Enterprise, which produces organic liquid fertilizer from marine waste, turning a potential environmental challenge into a valuable resource for farmers. The availability of this locally produced fertilizer has been crucial in reducing costs and promoting sustainable farming practices, providing income opportunities, and promoting environmental sustainability.

One of the most innovative aspects of the project was the introduction of these organic liquid fertilizers made from marine waste. By processing fish scraps

and seaweed, the project produced nutrient-rich fertilizers that significantly improved crop yields. Over 15,000 households received 343,650 liters of this marine-based fertilizer, with 30% of beneficiaries being women-led households.

The results were remarkable: Farmers like Tsige Dawit from Adi-Ahderom village saw their potato yield skyrocket from 35 to 110 quintals per hectare after using the fertilizer. "Last year, it was very expensive for us to use fertilizers because the price increased to around ERN 4,500 for a quintal," said Tsige Dawit. "The CRI-funded project provided me with 210 liters of fish amino acid [liquid fertilizer from marine waste] and supported me very much. After the application, my potato yield increased from 35 to 110 quintals per hectare." The project also fostered public-private partnerships, enabling local companies to scale up the production of bio-fertilizers. This not only reduced costs, making fertilizers more affordable for farmers, but also promoted sustainable farming practices aligned with Eritrea's organic farming policy.

The success of the CRI project highlights the power of innovation and collaboration in addressing food security and building resilience in vulnerable communities.

- **Addressing Ice Shortages for Fishermen.** The construction of two modern ice production facilities in Massawa, Northern Red Sea, has addressed chronic ice shortages, benefiting 1,200 fishermen and 200 boats. This has reduced ice waiting times from 20+ days to 1 day, increasing fishing trips by 150% and boosting annual fish catches to 18,431.6 tons from 16,000 tons, exceeding the target by 66.7%.



More Than Just Fish: A Single Mother's Livelihood Transformation in Eritrea

Akberet Weldemichael, a 48-year-old single mother of three, is a testament to the transformative impact of these interventions. Selected for the UN's support due to her challenging background as a woman-headed household with limited education, Akberet's life has dramatically improved. She now enjoys better household equipment, a diversified diet with fish as a stable part of her family's nutrition, and active participation in dam fishing alongside her male counterparts. She has also introduced small poultry farming, using fish by-products as chicken feed, which has improved egg quality and frequency, demonstrating her growing awareness of the nutritional benefits of fish for her family.

Promoting Sustainable and Climate-Resilient Farming Practices

► **Integrated policy reforms drive smarter farming and better food systems.** Eritrea has strengthened its agricultural policy framework to promote climate-resilient and nutrition-sensitive food systems, launched the “100m² Initiative” to support small-scale, climate-smart farming, and complemented these with measures to boost productivity, improve input quality, and advance national food security objectives.

Small and Productive Farm Plot (SPFP) Initiative: Achieving Safe and Nutritious Food for Everyone, Everywhere

The Small and Productive Farm Plot (SPFP) is an innovative agricultural initiative introduced by Eritrea’s MoA to help farmers maximize food production and nutrition on a small, manageable plot of 1,000 square meters (about a quarter of an acre). Designed for both rain-fed and water-stressed zobas, the programme promotes sustainable and intensive farming by carefully planning crop rotations across different seasons.

In the main rainy season, the entire plot is dedicated to cereal crops like wheat or maize. In the following seasons, the land is divided—divided between protein-rich pulses (such as beans and chickpeas) and vegetables (like tomatoes, peppers, and leafy greens), with sweet potatoes grown year-round for added nutrition. This diversified cropping system ensures a steady supply of balanced, organic food while improving soil fertility.



Farmers receive guidance on composting, row planting, and irrigation, along with high-quality seeds to boost yields. The programme also encourages community learning, where successful farmers share their techniques with others. By focusing on efficient land use, crop diversity, and organic practices, the SPFP helps families achieve food security, better nutrition, and higher incomes, contributing to the national goal of “Safe and Nutritious Food for Everyone, everywhere.”

This low-cost, high-impact model is especially valuable for small-scale farmers, proving that even a small plot can make a big difference in fighting hunger and improving livelihoods.

Output 3.2

Skills and Capacity of People, Especially Women and Youth, are Improved for Increased Access to Diversified Livelihoods and Employability

Sustainable date palm farming strengthens livelihoods in climate-affected zobas

The Date Palm Support Programme, led by the MoA with FAO, IFAD, and UNDP, has strengthened rural livelihoods and climate resilience in the Northern and Southern Red Sea zobas. In 2024, 10,000 vitro plants were distributed, bringing the total to 25,400, and 165 farmers (including 80 women) were equipped with improved farming practices. With anticipated yields of 70–100 kg per tree, the initiative is boosting household food security and income, thanks to the high nutritional and market value of dates. Supporting infrastructure, including a pollen collection center and modern packing facilities, promotes value addition, market access, and community-level resilience.

Beyond food security and income, the date palm initiative enhances climate resilience by absorbing significant amounts of CO₂ and providing a sustainable solution for climate-vulnerable coastal areas. With mature trees absorbing up to 200 kg of CO₂ annually, the full cohort of planted trees is projected to absorb approximately 5,080 tonnes of CO₂ per year, supporting national climate mitigation targets. Furthermore, date palms' natural resilience to drought and salinity positions them as a sustainable solution in climate-vulnerable coastal areas.

To ensure long-term impact and market readiness, the programme has established critical infrastructure, including a pollen collection center and modern packing facilities, enabling value addition, enhanced market access, and community-level economic resilience.



Planting Prosperity: Eritrea's Date Palm Programme Delivers Growth and Hope

The impact of the programme was highlighted during a field assessment in February 2024, where Kibrom Medhanie, a date palm farmer from the outskirts of Massawa, Northern Red Sea, shared his experience: "Year after year, we have witnessed a steady increase in our harvests. Initially, we had modest expectations and were pleasantly surprised by the profitability of this venture. With the unwavering support of the government and the expertise at our disposal, coupled with our relentless efforts, we have witnessed the potential to secure bumper harvests that can satisfy both local and international market demands. Currently, our plantation consists of 170 trees, and we have plans to expand it by an additional 500 trees. The land is fertile, and all it wants is hard work and dedication. With the right support, we can transform this sector into a cornerstone of our economy and a source of pride for our communities."

Output 3.3

Access to Finance, Productive Assets, Technology, Infrastructure, and Equipment is Increased to Support Sustainable Livelihood

Through the Food Security Project, the MoA, in collaboration with the UN, has strengthened technical capacity and improved ecosystem and rangeland management—delivering tangible benefits to rural communities, as illustrated below:

Food Security and Climate Resilience Initiatives

► **Drought-Prone Zoba Support.** In the drought-prone zobas of Anseba, Northern Red Sea, and Southern Red Sea, 4,000 vulnerable households—including 40% female-headed—enhanced their climate resilience through Food-for-Work programmes. As a result, 2,500 hectares of degraded land were restored, improving soil fertility and water retention. These

efforts have increased agricultural productivity and secured more reliable food sources for participating communities.

► **Female-Headed Household Livelihoods Enhancement.** The “Enhancing Livelihoods of Female-Headed Households” initiative, which was implemented in Zobas Anseba, Maekel, and Northern Red Sea, supported 11,813 households—34% of them female-led—by providing 1,400 metric tons of poultry feed. As a result, egg production increased from 60–80% to 80–85%, improving household nutrition and generating additional income from surplus sales, thereby strengthening food security and livelihoods for vulnerable families.



Transforming Lives and Land: Promoting Gender Equality in Sustainable Agricultural Development by Tackling Climate Change in Eritrea

At dawn, Hawa Idris Ismael joins thirty women in Anseba, Eritrea, wielding shovels to restore degraded land. Since 2022, an UN-MoA initiative has trained them in terracing, rainwater harvesting, and sustainable farming, transforming 6,100 hectares across 90 villages.

The results are profound: over 16,000 households now have reliable water access, and women lead 72% of conservation teams, gaining economic independence while reviving ecosystems. In Habero Tselim, administrator Usman Ali Mohamud witnesses vegetables growing where dust once ruled, and ancestral springs returning to life.

For Hawa, success is personal. “My children eat tomatoes from plants I nurtured,” she says, proving that “the land remembers how to give when we care for it.” With plans to expand to three more zobas, these women’s calloused hands symbolize resilience, turning climate challenges into hope for future generations.

Empowering Resilience: Yirgalem's Journey to Rebuild Livelihoods Through Partnership and Perseverance

The story of Yirgalem Elias, a 50-year-old poultry farmer and head of a six-member household in Himbirti, Gala-nefhi Sub-zone, exemplifies the transformative impact of this partnership. Despite facing significant challenges, including a devastating Newcastle Disease outbreak in 2021 that wiped out 2,000 chicks and personal family setbacks, Mrs. Yirgalem remained resilient. With technical support from the MoA and the UN-backed project, she was able to revive her poultry farm, ensuring the survival of her chickens and maintaining her household income. "Although hard work and perseverance always pay off, I was struggling to make ends meet," she shared. "With the assistance from the project, I was able to improve the survival of my chickens, enabling me to continue with my farm, maintain my household income, and ensure the well-being and nutrition of my children."

The collaboration between the Government and the UN has not only provided immediate relief but also laid the foundation for long-term resilience and sustainable progress. By addressing critical challenges such as feed shortages, disease outbreaks, and climate vulnerabilities, this partnership has enabled women like Mrs. Yirgalem to overcome adversity, secure their livelihoods, and contribute to the broader socioeconomic development of their communities.





Off-Season Potato Farming: Driving Food Security and Economic Resilience in Gash Barka

In Gash Barka, off-season potato farming has emerged as a transformative intervention for economic stability, food security, and climate resilience. By optimizing land use, disrupting pest cycles, and enhancing soil fertility, farmers have achieved higher yields and better-quality produce. This approach ensures a year-round food supply, reducing seasonal shortages while also granting farmers access to premium markets, increasing their bargaining power and income. Additionally, it strengthens economic resilience, creating new opportunities for farmers and communities.

- **Strengthening Food Security through Crisis Response Initiative (CRI) Financing.** Through Crisis Response Initiative (CRI) financing, food security and economic stability were strengthened by providing agricultural inputs to 36,282 households, rehabilitating 11,537 hectares of land, and increasing agricultural yields by 214%.



Outcome 4

By 2026, people in Eritrea will have benefited from a resilient, sustainable environment and natural resources

Key Achievements



Expanding Clean Energy Access:
New infrastructure set to provide clean energy to 250,000 people by mid-2025



Enhanced Climate Adaptation Capacity:
Developed a climate-adaptation framework and equipped 1,700 women with income-generating skills



Achieved 94% Open-Defecation Free (ODF) status nationwide, drastically improving sanitation



Provided safe drinking water to 36,000 people (50% women) through 17 new solar-powered water systems



Required **3.8** USD million

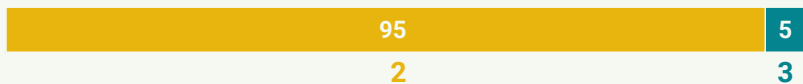
Available **3.8**

Expenditure **3.2**



85%
Delivery rate

Percentage of activities by Gender Equality Marker %



Percentage of activities by Human Rights Marker %



0 - Not expected to contribute 1 - Limited Contribution
2 - Significant contribution 3 - Principal objective

Output 4.1

Capacities of Institutions and Communities are Strengthened to Sustainably Manage and Use Environmental and Natural Resources

- **Strengthening land restoration efforts through data-driven desertification monitoring.** Eritrea reaffirmed its commitment to environmental sustainability by ratifying the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and actively contributing to global land restoration efforts. With UN support, Eritrea was one of 20 GEF-eligible countries to successfully prepare and submit its Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN)³ Monitoring report, in alignment with the UNCCD Strategic Framework 2018–2030 and SDG 15.3. This achievement enhances data-driven policymaking to combat desertification and restore degraded land.
- **Building public sector skills to drive climate-smart planning and policy.** To build climate resilience, 150 government officials—including 60 women—from the Ministry of Land, Water, and Environment were trained in sustainable land management, cadastral registration, and climate change assessment. As a result, institutional capacity to design and implement climate adaptation strategies has been strengthened, enabling more proactive planning and improved land governance at both national and community levels.

Output 4.2

Access to Modern, Renewable, and Affordable Clean Energy Sources and Services Increased

Eritrea is expanding access to clean energy, particularly in underserved Zobas. With strategic and technical support, the UN has contributed to the development of renewable energy solutions, improved energy efficiency, and expanded rural electrification. As a result, more communities now have access to reliable, affordable electricity, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, lowering greenhouse gas emissions, and improving quality of life in off-grid areas.

- **The installation of a major 2x6 MVA, 66/15 KV substation in Adi-Keih (Zoba Debub),** projected to provide reliable energy access to ~250,000 people across the Adi-Keih, Senafe, Mai'aini, and Tsoronna sub-zobas upon completion (mid-2025). This strategic investment enhances energy security for homes and economic activities, reduces reliance on less stable sources, and contributes significantly to national energy access and sustainability goals.

3. A goal to prevent land degradation and restore degraded land.



Output 4.3

Capacities of Communities and National Institutions are Enhanced to Mitigate, Adapt to, and Mainstream Climate Change and Disaster Risks

In collaboration with the UN, Eritrea has accelerated climate action and resilience-building through integrated watershed management, water infrastructure development, and sanitation improvements. Below is a summary of key achievements.

- **Watershed and Land Restoration.** To improve water access and restore degraded land, two small dams are being built in Zoba Northern Red Sea (Qetina: 200,000 m³; Tsabra: 500,000 m³) to support farming and livestock. In addition, nearly 102,000 cubic meters of small stone barriers were constructed to slow water runoff and prevent soil erosion. Restoration work was carried out across Maekel, Debub, Anseba, and Northern Red Sea, where 2,830 hectares of land were rehabilitated, and 28% of key



water catchment areas were treated. Over 662,000 tree seedlings were planted—with an 85% survival rate—and 1,547 hectares were set aside to allow nature to recover, helping to restore soil, water, and vegetation in vulnerable areas.

- **In Zoba Debub, land restoration efforts on closed and treated areas led to a 47% increase in wheat yields and an 80% increase in tomato yields.** The interventions also resulted in the annual production of 141,164 quintals of animal feed and a 52% rise in groundwater levels, improving water access for downstream communities.
- **Strategic Climate Resilience Planning.** A Strategic Framework on Integrated Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation was developed to guide planning across six agroecological zones. As a result, national and local authorities are better equipped to anticipate climate shocks, reduce disaster risks, and strengthen the resilience of vulnerable communities.



Click
or scan



Ripples of Change The Adi Sema's Solar-Powered Water Project

- **Clean Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene.** Eritrea has made significant progress in expanding access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene, particularly in rural areas. Seventeen solar-powered water systems were installed, reaching 36,000 people—half of them women—while promoting water security through renewable energy. Through the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach, Eritrea achieved a 94% Open Defecation-Free (ODF) status across all 2,840 villages nationwide, up from 92% in 2023 and just 32% in 2015—dramatically improving rural sanitation, hygiene, and environmental health. In addition, hygiene education was delivered to 15,300 people, helping improve public health and contributing to the elimination of trachoma as a public health concern.

Women-Led Transformation: Rehabilitating Eritrea's Land for a Sustainable Future

In Eritrea, land degradation has long threatened the livelihoods of local communities and the environment. Arid, barren landscapes were increasingly losing their capacity to sustain life, but today, a powerful transformation is underway. At the heart of this change, women are leading the charge to rehabilitate degraded areas and restore life to once-forgotten lands. With support from the UN and Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP), Eritrean communities have embarked on ambitious initiatives to reclaim the environment and uplift their livelihoods.

As Ms. Amna Hassen, Head of the NUEW in Zoba Anseba, explains, "The initiative aimed to restore degraded land through collaboration with all stakeholders and enhance the community's livelihood by ensuring women's active participation at every level." This dedication from women has transformed barren fields into lush green spaces, where sustainable practices like tree planting, sustainable agriculture, and soil and water conservation now thrive. The initiatives not only address land degradation but also provide sustainable livelihoods, such as timber and honey production.

Similarly, the SGP project in Weki village, which started on barren land, now spans 80 hectares, flourishing with rich biodiversity.

Freweini Abraham from Weki village proudly states, "Without a shred of doubt, it is the women of the beneficiary village who are responsible for the green transformation we are witnessing."

In villages like Gabgabo and Adi Berbere, the results speak for themselves. The initial goal of restoring 40 hectares was surpassed fivefold, thanks to community involvement and local leadership.



These initiatives are a testament to the power of community-led change. Through collaboration, innovation, and a clear vision for the future, Eritrean communities are not only reversing land degradation but also creating a sustainable future for generations to come.

Weki Protected Area in 2014



Weki Protected Area in 2025



2.3. Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda

The UN has played a pivotal role in Eritrea's development journey, providing critical support despite ongoing challenges such as limited external financing, unilateral sanctions, and a restricted donor base. Eritrea has relied on the UN's ability to mobilize global funding mechanisms—such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund), GAVI, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF)—to advance national priorities. Through strategic interventions in health, education, agriculture, climate resilience, energy, and infrastructure, the UN has brought in essential resources and technical expertise to accelerate progress toward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In health, support from the Global Fund has helped reduce the incidence of communicable diseases, including HIV, TB, and malaria, by 35% over the past five years. GAVI's assistance has contributed to sustained immunization coverage above 90%, dramatically lowering the burden of vaccine-preventable diseases. In agriculture and climate action, funding from the GCF and GEF has strengthened food security and promoted sustainable land management practices, benefitting thousands of farming households.

In the area of South-South and triangular cooperation, the UN has expanded collaboration with various partners. This includes a partnership with China on sustainable food production and consumption initiatives. Japan and Saudi Arabia have invested in sustainable farming technologies to boost agricultural productivity. The United Kingdom and Italy have provided funding for health, climate finance, and renewable energy initiatives.



In education, the partnership with GPE has improved access to inclusive, quality learning through school construction, foundational literacy and numeracy programmes, and system-wide capacity-building.

The UN has also facilitated access to pooled and innovative financing. The Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) addressed food insecurity and emergency needs, while the establishment of the Eritrea Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) is expected to serve as a national platform for coordinated development financing.

Notable progress has been made in engaging with International Financial Institutions (IFIs). The African Development Bank (AfDB) allocated \$50 million for clean water and electricity and co-financed a \$9.8 million WASH Climate Adaptation Project with the UN. Additionally, the UN mobilized \$19.5 million from the AfDB and \$5 million from other partners for hybrid energy systems.

Looking ahead, the UN will continue to serve as a key convener and connector, supporting Eritrea in expanding partnerships, including with BRICS, Middle Eastern countries, and global funds, while promoting multistakeholder approaches to accelerate sustainable development.



Eritrea 2024: From Dialogue to Action

In 2024, Eritrea's partnership with the UN shifted gears from dialogue to tangible impact. High-level visits became catalysts for change, accelerating climate resilience, economic reform, and cultural preservation.

The momentum began when UN Climate Crisis Coordinator Reena Ghelani landed in Asmara. Her talks weren't just diplomatic formalities—they forged a roadmap for climate financing, adaptation policies, and regional collaboration, bolstering Eritrea's fight against environmental threats.

Then came ECA's Claver Gatete, leading a mission to modernize Eritrea's economy. His pledge: technical support to overhaul GDP measurement and statistical systems—cornerstones for data-driven development.



Meanwhile, UNESCO advanced plans for an Asmara presence safeguarding Eritrea's heritage while amplifying its global voice. Parallel efforts strengthened public communication, ensuring citizens see and shape progress.

By the year's end, these engagements had unlocked funding, fast-tracked initiatives, and expanded partnerships. As 2025 approaches, Eritrea isn't just planning—it's executing: building capacity, mobilizing resources, and proving itself as a determined SDG partner.



2.4. Results of the UN Working More and Better Together: UN Coherence, Effectiveness, and Efficiency

The UNCT in Eritrea has optimized its structure to deliver effective support under the UNSDCF 2022–2026. Operating under a jointly governed management structure, the UNCT ensures coherence and efficiency across its programmes.

Strengthening Programme Management and Monitoring

Through the Programme Management Team (PMT), the UNCT conducts annual performance reviews of CF implementation in collaboration with the government. These reviews enable strategic adjustments to maximize impact and ensure alignment with the UNSDCF. The process also enhances monitoring of Joint Work Plan (JWP) implementation, refining SDG indicators for evidence-based planning and programming.

To enhance efficiency, the UNCT has adopted joint programmes (health, harmful practices, data), reducing costs and redundancies. These mechanisms have improved resource allocation and strengthened integrated policy support for social protection and nutrition strategies, aligning them with international best practices.

Operational Efficiency: Business Operations Strategy (BOS 2.0)

The BOS 2.0 (2020–2025), a joint initiative between UN agencies and the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO), has achieved significant efficiencies, generating a total of USD 2.9 million in cost avoidance from 2019 to 2024, including USD 531,543 in 2024 alone. These savings were driven by strategic measures such as the implementation of Common Long-Term Agreements (LTA) for procurement, the use of shared ICT platforms to reduce redundancies, and joint staff training that lowered operational costs.

Looking ahead, projected savings of USD 432,768 in 2025 will further advance environmental sustainability efforts, including energy monitoring to reduce CO₂ emissions. Despite a modest 2025 budget of just USD 13,000, BOS remains a powerful tool for delivering cost savings and enhancing service efficiency.

Strengthening Communication and Advocacy

The UN Communication Group (UNCG) has played a key role in promoting SDG progress, gender equality, and UN partnerships through social media, fact sheets, and human-interest stories. Joint events, such as International Women's Day and UN Day, have fostered engagement with national stakeholders, international partners, and marginalized communities.





2.5. Evaluations and Lessons Learned

During programme implementation, several key lessons emerged across sectors such as child protection, health, climate resilience, and service delivery. These lessons underscore the critical importance of integrated approaches, strategic partnerships, continuous capacity building, and adaptive management to enhance programme effectiveness and sustainability.

Integrated Child Protection and Education Programmes

Capacity-building for teachers and school staff to recognize and respond to signs of abuse, trauma, or neglect has reached many students, creating a safer and more supportive learning environment.

Strategic Partnerships for Improved Service Delivery

Leveraging existing programmes like the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI) has facilitated the delivery of essential MNCH services, especially in areas with limited funding. This approach has improved health outcomes for women and children by reaching more vulnerable populations.

Technology for Development and Awareness

Offline app technology, such as the nutrition app demonstrating the importance of complementary feeding (DMK+ approach), has increased awareness nationwide. This innovative approach has proven transformative, particularly in settings with low internet access.

Integrated Programming for Climate Resilience

The UN's expertise facilitated strategic applications for climate funding. By integrating climate resilience into existing programmes, the UN helps vulnerable populations adapt to climate change impacts, reducing risks of displacement, hunger, and disease.

Strengthening Implementation and Coordination

Strong partnerships between the UN, the GOSE, and stakeholders are essential for effective programme implementation. Coordinated efforts among UN agencies and government counterparts enhance service delivery, while robust monitoring and evaluation systems ensure accountability and track progress. However, securing adequate funding remains a critical challenge. Given the dynamic development landscape, frameworks must remain flexible and adaptable.

Continuous Engagement and Advocacy

Consistent and proactive engagement with government bodies and implementing partners is essential for successful programme execution. This collaborative approach ensures alignment on programme goals and facilitates effective navigation of challenges.

Ongoing Capacity Building

Providing continuous, targeted training for implementing partners is crucial for sustainable project outcomes. Investing in their skill development enhances programme effectiveness and builds a more competent workforce.

Regular Technical Engagements

Regular technical meetings and field monitoring visits with implementing partners are critical for tracking project progress and identifying challenges and solutions. This approach strengthens partnerships and improves overall programme impact.

Key Challenges and Areas for Improvement

Weak Data Systems and Limited Accountability

The absence of timely, quality disaggregated data hinders accurate progress assessment, evidence-based decision-making, and programme adaptability. Under-reporting and the lack of baseline studies further weaken impact measurement.

Skills and Absorptive Capacity Gaps

Limited technical expertise highlighting the need for continued capacity-building.

Low Implementation Capacity and Outstanding Direct Cash Transfers (DCTs)

A growing backlog of DCTs—exceeding nine months—continue to disrupt partnerships and slow down programme delivery.

Scaling Limitations

Resource constraints hinder the expansion of successful initiatives, such as the date palm project.

Supply Chain and Market Constraints

Limited availability of goods, supplier capacity gaps, and disruptions—exacerbated by the Red Sea crisis—further slow procurement and service delivery.

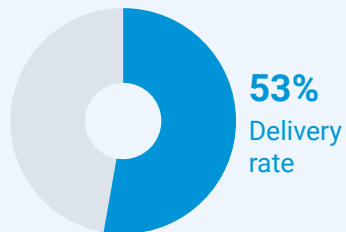
The unpredictability of short-term and emergency-based financing fails to address the long-term and sustainable interventions necessary for a more robust approach to development.

Delays in programme implementation

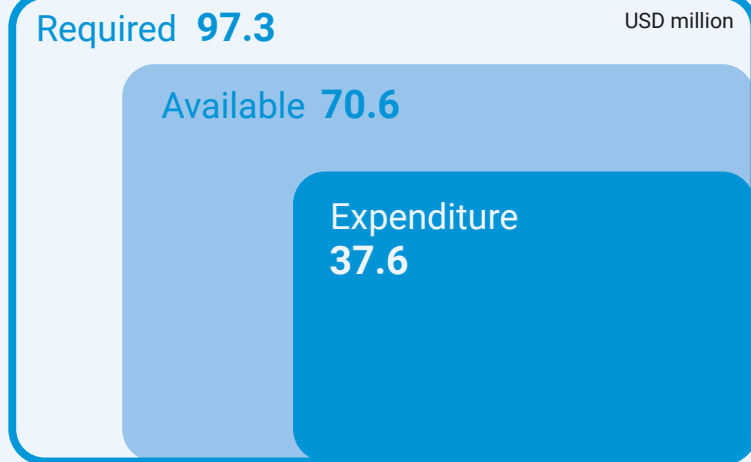
stemming from lengthy operational procedures—both internal and external—related to bank transfers, procurement, and other processes severely impact the timely execution of initiatives.



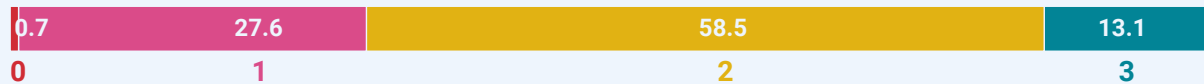
2.6. Financial Overview and Resource Mobilization



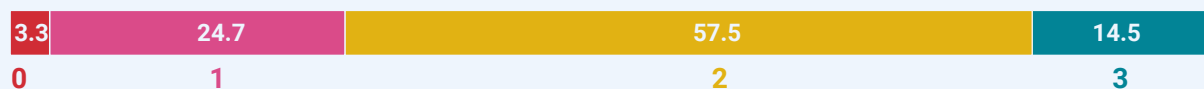
Total resources



Percentage of activities by Gender Equality Marker %

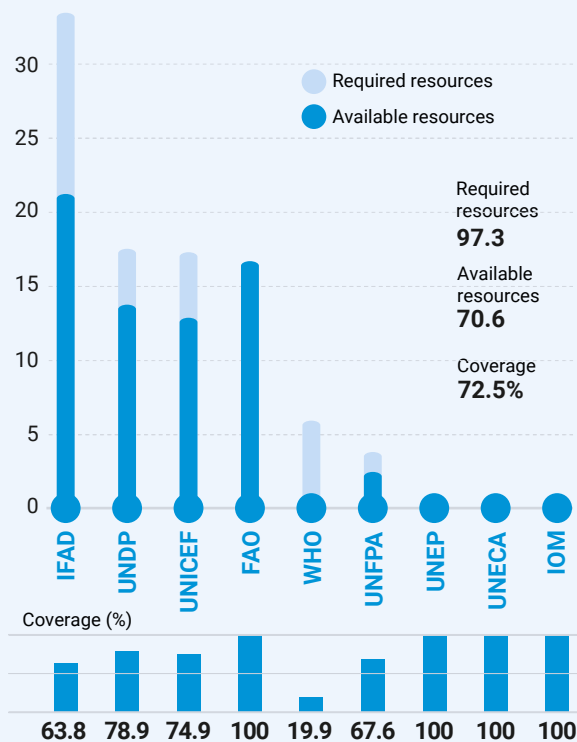


Percentage of activities by Human Rights Marker %

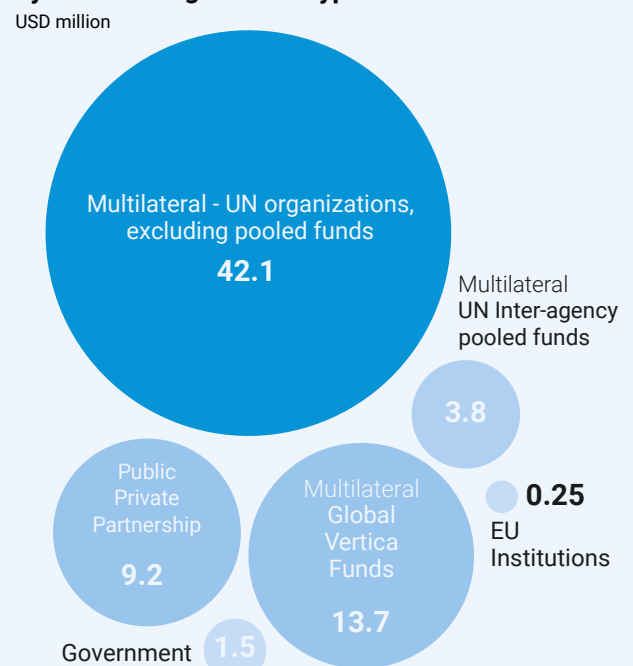


0 - Not expected to contribute 1 - Limited Contribution 2 - Significant contribution 3 - Principal objective

Funding by Agency USD million



Available resources by Contributing Partner Type



3

UNCT Key Focus Areas for 2025

In 2025, the UNCT in Eritrea will prioritize implementing the UNSDCF 2022-2026, aligning its efforts with Eritrea's national priorities and SDGs. The UN's work will center on five transformative priorities—referred to as the “Big Ticket” items—designed to accelerate sustainable development while ensuring no one is left behind. These priorities include:

- ▶ **Food Systems Transformation**
Promoting sustainable agriculture, water management, and value chains to enhance food security and improve rural livelihoods.
- ▶ **Data and Statistics**
Strengthening data systems to support evidence-based policymaking and development planning.
- ▶ **Climate and Community Resilience**
expanding renewable energy initiatives, climate adaptation measures, and disaster preparedness to mitigate the impacts of climate change.
- ▶ **Social Protection**
Enhancing safety nets for vulnerable groups while reinforcing healthcare, education, and economic support systems.
- ▶ **Strategic Communication**
Shaping the global narrative on Eritrea to attract partnerships and investment. The UN will work with the government to better highlight Eritrea's progress in self-reliance, social justice, and advancement toward the SDGs.

A major focus in 2025 will be the execution of a country-based pooled fund (Multi-Partner Trust Fund), a joint initiative between the UN System and the GOSE. This fund will serve as a coordinated, flexible, and predictable financing mechanism, ensuring sustainable support for Eritrea's development agenda under the UNSDCF 2022-2026 and future frameworks. The Eritrea MPTF will help bridge financial gaps, strengthen program implementation, and drive progress toward long-term national and regional goals by securing diverse funding sources.

Acronyms

AfDB	Africa Development Bank
AFP	Acute Flaccid Paralysis
ANER	Adjusted Net Enrollment Rate
BFDs	Barefoot Doctors
BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CAPI	Computer-Assisted Personal Interviews
CERF	UN Central Emergency Response Fund
CF	Cooperation Framework
CIDCA	China International Development Cooperation Agency
CLTS	Community-Led Total Sanitation
CRI	Crisis Response Initiative
DAP	Development Assistance Programme
DCTs	Direct Cash Transfers
ECCE	Early childhood care and education
EPHS	Eritrean Population and Health Survey
EPI	Expanded Programme on Immunization
ERN	Eritrean Nakfa
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GCF	Global Climate Facility
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GEF SGP	Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme
Global Fund	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
GoSE	Government of the State of Eritrea
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HDI	Human Development Index
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFIs	International Financial Institutions
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ITC	International Trade Centre
JWP	Joint Work Plan
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality
LTA	Common Long-Term Agreements
MLA	Measuring Learning Achievement
MMR	Maternal Mortality Ratio

MNCH	Maternal, Newborn and Child Health
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoFND	Ministry of Finance and National Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoJ	Ministry of Justice
MoLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MPTF	Eritrea Multi-Partner Trust Fund
MWHs	Maternity Waiting Homes
NADSIP	National Aquaculture Development Strategy
NSO	National Statistics Office
NUEW	National Union of Eritrean Women
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODF	Open-Defecation Free
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PFMS	Public Financial Management System
PHEOCs	Public Health Emergency Operation Centers
PMT	Programme Management Team
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office
SBC	Social Behavior Change
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SPFP	Small and Productive Farm Plot
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCG	UN Communication Group
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
USD	United States Dollar
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization



UNITED NATIONS
ERITREA



Annual Results Report 2024



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