Dear friends, in Eritrea and outside,

We are publishing this newsletter as an exciting year is coming to an end. Our programs are moving along well, and we see a strengthened relationship between the UN and the government. With the revival of the Eritrean Development Partners Forum this year, the UN and development partners have also formalized a forum for sharing and discussing how to best partner with Eritrea in its efforts for self-reliance and development. We aim to strengthen and build on this in 2015.

We hope that the articles inside will give you some insight into the progress of UN activities in Eritrea, and perhaps also stimulate debate on development issues in the country. We are at an exciting cross-roads these days, starting discussion on the post-2015 development agenda in Eritrea, and trying to learn from the impressive progress achieved in the health MDG’s.

Eritrea is building its own development solutions. The goal of the UN System is to provide quality advisory services, share best practices and support government efforts to build capacity to address development challenges related to basic social services, capacity development, disaster risk management, food security, and gender in the context of the Strategic Partnership Cooperation Framework (SPCF) 2013-2016. To achieve this, we call for both strengthened practical partnerships with other actors, but also financial resources to continue, and reinforce, the impact of our work on the ground.

With the best wishes for the holidays,

Christine N. Umutoni, UN Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator

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The past 12 months have been productive and fruitful for the United Nations in Eritrea. Towards the end of 2013, the UNDG-ESA mission visited Eritrea, kicking off a year of several missions and events. Key among them include; the visit of the technical mission from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in January 2014, the Joint Annual review of the SPCF in June 2014, the data and statistics mission at the invitation of Government in August 2014, the DPA mission also in August 2014, the DPA led brainstorming on Eritrea facilitated by the Conflict Prevention and Peace Forum (CPPF) in New York, and lastly the visit of the UNDG focal point for Eritrea and UNICEF Regional Director, Ms. Leila Pakkala together with IOM Regional Director, Mr. Ashraf El Nour.

We have also seen developments in the relations between World Food Program and the Government. Recently the government approved two concept notes from WFP, which means that a food security assessment and a port assessment will be undertaken in 2015. These are good news after WFP has been un-operational in Eritrea the last few years.

For everyone working on the ground in Eritrea, an important event was the re-establishment and first meeting in June, of the Eritrean Development Partner’s Forum. UN Agencies, Embassies and NGOs came together to update each other on their activities in Eritrea. This first meeting saw presentations by ambassadors of South Africa and the EU Delegation on their work in the country, and hopefully, future meetings will see more sharing and learning from each other.

A UN General Assembly side event on Eritrea took place 26 September 2014. The side event, jointly organized by the Eritrea UNCT and GoSE, was part of efforts aimed at improving the visibility of Eritrea at global level. The Government of Eritrea seized the opportunity of its participation in the 2014 UN General Assembly to share its experiences, lessons learnt, and best practices in achieving the health MDGs, 4, 5, and 6 with the rest of the world. Preparations for this important high level event were supported by all agencies in country and HQ departments of various agencies and worked closely with the UNDP MDG Advisor for Africa. Read more about this in the next article.

Another highlight of the year was the successful congress and international symposium of the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) September 15, which was supported by UNDP and UNFPA. This event brought together women from all over Eritrea joined by gender experts, Ministers for Gender issues from the COMESA region, as well as the representative of UN Economic Commission for Africa. This was an opportunity for Eritrean women to interact among themselves and choose their leaders and to meet other women from the region but also for the visitors from the region to visit and interact with Eritreans and learn from each other. After the symposium the visitors had an interaction with the President of Eritrea and made field visits in different parts of the country to see women projects.

The celebration of UN Day 2014 sparked the debate on the post 2015 development agenda in Eritrea and on how to build on the success achieved on the Millennium Development Goals. We look forward to more discussions on this in the time to come, and hope on engagement from all stakeholders in Eritrea.
Eritrea has achieved impressive progress on health-related Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), members of the United Nations and the Government observed in an event organized during the UN General Assembly.

The discussion was facilitated by the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations, the UN Resident Coordinator in Asmara, Christine Umutoni, with the Foreign Minister of Eritrea, Osman Saleh and Yoka Brandt, the Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF as keynote speakers.

In more than twenty years since independence, Eritrea reduced child mortality by two thirds, decreased the maternal mortality ratio from 1,700 to 380 per 100,000 live births, and maintained exceptionally low HIV and tuberculosis prevalence rates.

Around 98 percent of all children are now immunized, as compared with 14 percent only at independence.

“Eritrea has emerged from 30 years of a devastating war, with non-existing infrastructural, institutional and human resources capacity,” said Osman Saleh. “It has been able to make real progress in all areas of social, economic and political development,” he added.

Eritrea’s concerted efforts, bold policies and considerable investments are considered responsible for the progress in the health sector.

“*What we see as development partners, the success is attributed to community participation, the enabling environment, leadership, strong mechanisms for prevention, value for money and coordinated inter-sectorial approaches,*” said Christine Umutoni.

She added that community and women’s involvement were key to tackling health challenges. Ms. Umutoni also pointed out that the country has put into place a number of innovations to accelerate change. These include temporary maternal clinics, mobile medical units, as well as knowledge of migration patterns and remote areas.

Generating statistics, sustaining funding, partnerships with the private sector and human resource capacity were identified as priorities.

Participants agreed that success on MDGs 4,5 and 6 should serve as lessons for all other goals and targets, and inform priorities for the post-2015 development agenda in Eritrea.

Keynote addresses were followed by technical presentations by Abraham Kidane, Economic Advisor to the Ministry of Development, and Usman Abdulmumini, WHO representative in Eritrea.
Jemila Hassan is 7 months pregnant and has been staying at the Ursuline Sisters Health Facility in the town of Glass in Anseba, for the past three weeks. The 25 year old mother of two travelled from Akurdet, 62km from the health facility to give birth to her third child. “It is extremely clean here and they treat you like one of their family members,” she said as she pointed to two other pregnant women who share a room with her. Jemila also has her two children Salim, 4 and Siham, 2, with her.

Birth waiting rooms are rooms that are attached to health facilities where mothers from remote communities, 7 months or more pregnant, can move in to deliver their babies safely. The aim is to provide pregnant women with a living space with the comforts of a home but near to a health facility so any complications or emergencies during deliveries can be immediately addressed. Home delivery exposes mothers to a number of life threatening dangers. Home delivery is still a common practice for a majority of women in the remote villages of Eritrea where access to health facilities can sometimes mean travelling long distances on foot or riding a mule in difficult terrain. The most recent Eritrean Population and Health Survey (EPHS 2010) reported that 83 % of women living in rural Eritrea delivered at home and distance was reported as one of the main barriers to accessing health facilities.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health to introduce birth waiting rooms in Eritrea in 2007 and since then the number of UNICEF-supported birth waiting rooms has increased to 35 in 2014. Deliveries in birth waiting rooms at Ursuline Sisters Health Facility have increased from 10 in 2009 to 80 in the first half of 2014.

Expectant mothers are provided with basic commodities such as flour, sugar, oil and soap, so they can cook and take care of themselves. They are also allowed to bring their younger children to stay with them if these are too young to stay at home. The women receive antenatal care, health education and develop healthy feeding practices until their deliveries which are under the supervision of a skilled birth attendant.

Sister Elsa Hidrom, the Head of the facility, works in partnership with village administrators and traditional birth attendants to track down every pregnant woman in the six villages where Ursuline Sisters provides health services. They are informed about the birth waiting rooms and encouraged to deliver safely at a health facility. Sister Elsa has also established ‘Mother’s Safety Committees’ in all six villages which refer pregnant women to the health facility. Each committee has seven members and at least two men. They encourage and support pregnant mothers to visit the health facility. These efforts have paid off. “We only have two or three emergency deliveries in a year and I have never seen a single maternal death in the past five years,” sister Elsa said.

The Ursuline Sisters Health Facility serves more than 8,000 people in six villages with approximately 250 births per year. Some villagers need to travel for more than three hours to access the health facility. The work of the mother’s safety committee is therefore extremely important. The committee mobilises the community to assist in the transportation of the pregnant women to the health facility. Community members use stretchers on mules to transport pregnant women or collect contributions from the community to cover the transportation fee. Sister Elsa says the community members are now convinced of the importance of child birth under skilled attendants. “We aim for zero child deliveries at home,” she said.

UNICEF supports the Government of the State of Eritrea in the expansion and promotion of antenatal care, skilled and institutional deliveries and postnatal care services. The percentage of births delivered in health facilities nationwide has increased from 17 percent in 1995 to 28 percent in 2002, and 34 percent in 2010. This has significantly contributed to the decrease in maternal deaths. Maternal mortality which is measured by the number of deaths per 100,000 live births, has decreased from 998 in 1991 to 486 in 2010. Scaling up interventions such as birth waiting rooms will assist greatly in reducing the number of deaths even further.
The introduction of the rota virus vaccine “Rotarix” for infants (below one year) in to the vaccine programme of Eritrea was launched at a ceremony in Edaga Hamus Hospital on 14 August 2014.

The event was attended by Honorable Minister of Health, Ms. Amina Nurhusien; Governor of the Central Zone, Major General Romodan Osman Awliyay; as well as several high level national officials, diplomats, representatives of WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, GAVI, partners, mothers and children.

“The launching of rotarix vaccination will be an important milestone in reducing infant morbidity and mortality due to gastroenteritis and acute diarrheal diseases in the country”, stated the Minister of Health during the ceremony. Diarrhoea is one of the top ten leading causes of death occurring in infants. In this regard, the introduction of rotarix vaccination in the routine immunization program will unquestionably contribute towards the reduction of morbidity and mortality of children less than one year of age.

In her concluding remarks, Ms. Amina Nurhusien reassured the Ministry of Health’s commitment to further strengthen its routine immunization program by the inclusion of the rotarix vaccine.

In his remarks at the occasion, Dr. Abdulmumini Usman, WHO Representative to Eritrea indicated that diarrhoea is a problem which is responsible for the deaths of about a million children worldwide, and rota virus is responsible for more than half. Dr. Usman having appreciated the bold decision taken by the government to introduce the vaccine, he further highlighted the importance of the event, “This day is a significant day in the history of immunization in Eritrea demonstrating the commitment of the Government of Eritrea in its policy to protect its citizens”.

Hon. Minister of Health, Amina Nurhusien making her remarks (left) and Dr. Abdulmumini Usman, (right), WHO Representative to Eritrea delivering his speech.
Distribution of goats and sheep create excitement in Umkulu Camp and inspires refugees to improve their livelihoods.

The project started with the selection and purchase of the animals from the Asmara livestock market, where Sudanese and Nubian type sheep and goats were selected for their resistance and durability in the arid lowlands. The 35 families received one female goat and one female sheep for breeding; while 14 beneficiary households received an additional male goat or sheep for mating.

To date, the project has been successful with a very low mortality rate, thanks to close monitoring conducted on a regular basis. The beneficiaries have reported that some goats and sheep have already given birth and started producing milk. Instructions have been given to the refugees for safe consumption of milk, which will be consumed by children and the elderly.

The refugees have shown great appreciation for this project; in fact, it has been reported that other refugees in Umkulu Camp were inspired by the project and have bought their own cattle in order to start breeding and producing milk.

The project, launched by the UNHCR in which 35 households of approximately 150 individuals residing in Umkulu camp received goats and sheep to support their livelihoods. The catalyst for this second livelihood project was the success of the first pilot project. UNHCR conducted a poultry project in 2013 with great success. The distribution of the shaver Black chickens brought a lot of optimism and interest to the Somali refugees and the host community in poultry activity.

The primary aim of the project is to help the poorest and most vulnerable groups of the refugee community in getting nutritious food and, secondarily, to generate income to improve their standard of living. Goats and sheep were chosen due to their durability, value, and ease of handling. They not only provide meat and milk to the owners, but they also offer excellent trading opportunities.

35 households were chosen among persons with specific needs, such as single women at risk and heads of households, chronically ill, single caregivers, single grandparent caregivers, unaccompanied elders, single moderate disabled and families in which one of the family members has a severe disability.

Recipients were given advance training on breeding and management practices of goats and sheep. The training was provided by UNHCR and ORA in collaboration with a specialist from the Ministry of Agriculture.

UNHCR Eritrea and its governmental partner are working to facilitate the establishment of refugee self-help groups. These groups will help the beneficiaries to share experiences and provide mutual help for sustainability, while also strengthening ties among beneficiaries. The successes in Umkulu Camp show that refugees have the capacity to improve their livelihoods, socio-economic integration and self-reliance.

UN Eritrea Newsletter
Eritrea CERF Funding 2006-2014

Since 2006, partners in Eritrea received US$34 million in total from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF). The funds have been directed towards programmes in nutrition, health, water, sanitation and hygiene and food security sectors. In 2013, US$ 6.3 million was allocated for nutrition, health and livelihoods activities. Another US$ 2.5 million has been set aside in mid-2014 to support nutrition, health and food security interventions in Southern Red Sea (SRS), Northern Red Sea (NRS), Debub, Gash Barka and Anseba regions. All recent CERF interventions have been closely aligned and coordinated with the Strategic Partnerships Cooperation Framework (2013-2016).

**TOTAL ALLOCATIONS**

- **$US$34.2 million**
- **RAPID RESPONSE ALLOCATIONS**
  - **$US$10.1 million**
- **UNDERFUNDED EMERGENCIES ALLOCATIONS**
  - **$US$24.1 million**

**SECTOR GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION**

**ALLOCATIONS BY SECTOR (in million US$)**

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<td>Agriculture</td>
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<td>WASH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mine Action</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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**ALLOCATIONS BY AGENCY (in million US$)**

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**NUMBER OF PROJECTS FUNDED BY SECTOR**

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<td>Health and Nutrition</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
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*United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) is managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). CERF receives contributions year-round from United Nations Member States and other regional bodies, private sector, foundations and individuals. For more information on CERF visit cef.org.*

Creation date: 30 Nov 2014

Sources: cef.org

Feedback: ocha@un.org, cef@un.org, cefun.org, www.reliefweb.int
World Population Day 2014: Investing in Young People

Eritrea’s young people was the focus of this year’s World Population Day celebrations in Asmara, under this year’s theme of “Investing in Young People”.

UNFPA Eritrea marked the event in collaboration with the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS) at Bologna Club in Asmara. Participants of the event included Government and PFDJ officials, heads of UN agencies in Asmara as well as leaders and members of the NUEYS. In her opening speech, Ms. Christine N. Umutoni, UN Resident & Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Representative, emphasised on this year’s theme which calls for the need to invest in young people and their future and quoted the SG, Ban-ki Moon’s message “action is urgently needed to any young people lack resources they need to lift themselves out of poverty. I am particularly concerned about adolescent girls who may face discrimination, sexual violence, early marriage and unwanted pregnancies.” She also commended the NUEYS’s efforts to eradicate the challenges the youth in Eritrea are facing.

Mr. Dan Odallo, UNFPA Representative in Eritrea, on his part, after commending the efforts of the NUEYS, conveyed the message of Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and UNFPA Executive Director, who stressed the need for more investment and positive engagement with the youth of this world. “Today’s 1.8 billion young people are a powerful force, individually, and collectively. They are shaping social and economic realities, challenging norms and values and building the foundation of the world’s future, yet too many young people continue to grapple with poverty, inequality and human rights violations that prevent them from reaching their personal and collective potential”. He also stated that “we know that healthy, educated, productive and fully engaged young people can help break the cycle of intergenerational poverty and are more resilient in the face of individual and social challenges, therefore as skilled and informed citizens, they can contribute more fully to their communities and nation”.

The chairperson of the NUEYS, Mr Salih Ahmedin also took to the stage and expressed his gratitude for the support and partnership of UNFPA in the past and readiness to work closely in their future invaders, towards their common goal of working for the betterment of Eritrean Youth. He further stressed the challenges young people in Eritrea face “Young people of developing world in general and that of Africa in particular has become victims of war, disease and harmful practices.”

The attendants of the event also witnessed various entertainment organised by the NUEYS including music, drama and debate competition focusing on the issue of youth, early marriage of girls, as well as various obstacles young Eritreans routinely face and the way forward in tackling these issues. The day was concluded with a lunch where all the participants of the event enjoyed by having light discussion amongst each other, reflecting on the message of the day.
UNICEF partners with national media and youth journalists to conduct child-sensitive photography training

August 6, Asmara

Eritrean journalists including youth journalists from the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS) participated in a training on child-sensitive photo journalism. The training was conducted by Giacomo Pirozzi, who has worked extensively with UNICEF, photographing children and conducting workshops worldwide on photography and child rights.

The training covered basic photography tips to improve images, child sensitive issues and guidelines for photographing children and protecting identities. Over 30 national and youth journalists took part in the training. The youngest participant was 15 years.

“This training is very important as it covers photojournalism specifically addressing child rights and particulars that are unique to photographing children,” said Dr. Suleiman Braimoh, Representative, UNICEF Eritrea. “One of the guiding principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child is to always seek the best interests of the child and this training is yet another way in which UNICEF is sharing this information with its partners,” he added.

At the end of the day’s training, the participants all received certificates of participation. “I am happy I had the opportunity to attend this training because I am now interested in photography and want to take photos that tell a person’s story,” said 16 year old Hanae Mohammed who is a youth journalist with NUEYS.

The consultant also visited Zoba Anseba and photographed UNICEF-supported, Government programmes in Health and Nutrition; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; Child Protection and Basic Education. UNICEF Eritrea’s programme staff and communication staff of other UN agencies also benefitted from Giacomo Pirozzi’s knowledge and experience. He facilitated a training on photography and the rights of children for them as well and presented UNICEF guidelines for photographing children.

Giacomo Pirozzi, consultant with UNICEF listens to a young participant during photography training on child rights and child sensitive issues in Asmara, Eritrea. The training was organized by the Ministry of Information, NUEYS and UNICEF. Photo: UNICEF Eritrea/2014/ Azmera

UNICEF staff listen intently to Giacomo Pirozzi as he presents information on child-sensitive photography and guide-
The objectives of the orientation sessions were to one, mobilise commitment and support of UN leadership and management to the implementation of UN Cares in the UN system in Eritrea, and two, to build capacity of the UN Cares inter-agency team to improve coordination of implementation of the programme. Mr. Onyango-Maina met with the UN Country Team (UNCT), Joint UN Team for HIV/AIDS (JUNTA), and the Operations Management Team (OMT).

He conducted a capacity building workshop for the UN Cares team for better implementation of UN Cares in Eritrea, and conducted orientation workshop for all UN Staff.

At the orientation sessions, there were a series of presentations on UN Cares by Mr Onyango-Maina and Mrs. Senait Tesfamicael from UNAIDS. In addition, the participants showed great interest through active participation, asking questions and discussing important points.

In his presentation, Mr Onyango-Maina said that UN Cares programme in Eritrea provides information, support and commodities related to the health and wellness of the UN Personnel and their dependants. He also talked on Adolescents and Sexual Reproductive Health. Mr Onyango-Maina put stress on confidentiality that is to handle staff’s medical diagnosis and reporting with high confidentiality.

Further-more, he reminded staff to take the 90 minutes mandatory E-course on HIV.

At the orientation, it was mentioned that though the prevalence rate in Eritrea is declining, the UN Agen-

In line with this, the UN Cares Inter-Agency Team identified implementation gaps, challenges, priorities and the way forward on how to best implement the programme in the country.

UN Cares in Eritrea is providing HIV Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) Kits to UN personnel and their dependents. Staff members are expected to use all precautionary measures to avoid any possible exposure to HIV. Post- Exposure Prophylaxis Kits are intended for use by HIV-negative persons in the event of accidental exposure to HIV. The UN PEP Kits are available to UN personnel in Eritrea and their immediate dependents who may have been accidentally exposed to HIV, irrespective of the means of exposure. In the coming months and the year ahead, UN Cares in Eritrea will have several important activities focusing on UN Personnel and their

**What is UN Cares?**

UN Cares is designed to reduce the impact of HIV on the UN workplace by supporting “universal access” to a comprehensive range of benefits for all UN personnel and their families. These benefits – known as the UN Cares 10 Minimum Standards – include information and education, voluntary counseling and testing, access to male and female condoms, and emergency prevention measures in case of accidental exposure, among others. The Standards also call for increased measures to stop stigma and discrimination.
The objective of the 7th NUEW congress, which took place from 15-17 September 2014, was to take stock of what the union had achieved in the past 10 years as well as conduct the election of both the leadership and representatives of NUEW. Simultaneously, a one day symposium with the theme Justice is our motto and Equality is our goal was also organised to contribute to the post-Beijing movement and share experiences.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Ms. Leul Gebreab, the outgoing president of the NUEW, highlighted the role of Eritrean women in the national struggle for self-determination and post-independence reconstruction and development efforts; hand in hand with their male counterparts.

She further stated that, the organisation has grown to around 300 thousand members and this year’s congress plans to address the challenges the organisation has faced in the past 10 years, as well as building on the success it has achieved.

His excellency President Isaias, for his part further stressed the significance of Eritrean women in their support for and partaking in the independence struggle and underlined that the role of women in Eritrea’s past, present and future need to be reinforced as a vital asset.

UN in Eritrea has a longstanding history of partnership with NUEW, starting in 2004. Together the UN and NUEW work for the empowerment of women, the mainstreaming of gender equality and fighting harmful practices such as FGM and early marriage.

UN agencies in Eritrea provided technical and financial support to the NUEW to organise the 7th national congress and international symposium, and is committed to working with the NUEW towards its ultimate goal of gender equality in Eritrea.
World Food Day, was celebrated at Halhale National Agricultural Research Center, with the partnership of the Eritrean Ministry of Agriculture and FAO. This year’s international celebration, on Thursday, October 16, focused on ‘Family Farming: feeding the world, caring for the earth’. The UN has designated 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming.

World Food Day is an annual observance of the FAO of the United Nations (UN), which seeks to bring focus to man’s perpetual struggle against hunger and malnutrition. Celebrated since 1979, it turns the spotlight on agricultural food production and seeks to stimulate national, bilateral, multilateral and non-governmental efforts to this end; and promotes the transfer of technologies to developing countries. To this end therefore, the Ministry of Agriculture in conjunction with FAO, organized this year’s event focusing on Family Farming, protection of the land, as well as the introduction of new varieties of food sources for the Eritrean population.

The event got underway with the welcoming speech from the Minister of Agriculture of Eritrean, His Excellency Mr Arefaine Berhe, followed by the speech from the Resident/ Humanitarian coordinator for the UN in Eritrea, Ms Christine Umutoni, who conveyed the day’s message from the Secretary General of the United Nation, Mr Ban Ki moon in which he urged “member states of the UN to act decisively to eradicate poverty and build a sustainable, peaceful, prosperous and equitable future for all”.

The FAO Representative in Eritrea, Dr. Ousmane Guindo, also made a statement commending the partnership of the Government of Eritrea and the Ministry of Agriculture in particular to support the work of FAO towards the common goal of poverty elevation of the people of Eritrea. Dr Ousmane also delivered the message from the Director General of the FAO, Jose Graziano da Silva, who in his World Food Day communication, said that throughout the world, family farmers play a crucial socio-economic, environmental and cultural role which, amid serious challenges, needs to be cherished and strengthened through innovation.

The participants of the event also witnessed, an exhibition of various Agricultural products which showed innovative ways of improved production as well as the introduction of various food products that are not common in Eritrea but have high potential in its endeavor of securing food security. These products included various types of cheese, honey, sweet potato, sea food and mushrooms, to mention a few.

The event was finalised with the lunch ceremony organised by the Ministry of Agriculture, where the participants also had an opportunity to reflect in the days event and sample some of the products produced at the research facility.
UNHCR Eritrea and the Office for Refugee Affairs (ORA) together with refugees, celebrated the World Teacher’s Day on 2 October at the Umkulu Refugee Camp in Massawa, Eritrea.

Since 1994, this day has been acknowledged each year on October 5th to commemorate teachers’ contribution to society, worldwide.

UNHCR Eritrea commemorated this day by awarding Certificates of Recognition to 31 teachers (26 from Umkulu Primary/Junior School and 5 from Semhar Secondary School) who attended the Summer Course for Teachers organized by the University of Asmara and funded by UNHCR. On this occasion UNHCR also awarded gifts to 4 Somali students who performed exceptionally well in the national exams, each of whom are proof of the wonderful work that is being done by the teachers in Eritrea.

UNHCR globally places great importance on the provision of quality education, given that education is a basic right for all, including refugees. It is vital in maintaining dignity and restoring hope to people and it constitutes a foundation upon which they can build a better future. In an effort to support teachers and the right to education, UNHCR has developed a four year strategy that aims to develop refugees’ knowledge and skill sets in order to enable them to live healthy and productive lives and to promote self-reliance, as well as sustainable, peaceful coexistence.

UNHCR Eritrea, in collaboration with ORA, has increased the monitoring of school retention and drop-out rates in Umkulu Camp, alongside efforts to increase the educational capacity of the teachers in the camp. Providing easy access to education and an environment conducive to learning are just two examples of measures that can be taken to increase the impact teachers have on children.

The event was honored by the presence of the Lt. Col. Rezene Tecle, Head of ORA and the new UNHCR Representative, Mr. Ron Mponda, who motivated the young teachers and presented awards to 4 exceptionally successful Somali students.

During his speech, Mr. Mponda highlighted that the value of education should never be underestimated. He added, “Teachers have the ability to shape the lives of the next generation, not only giving children the necessary tools to be motivated, successful adults, but also giving them the capacity to think freely and creatively.”
Securing Biodiversity through Protecting Areas

Eritrea houses a large variety of globally significant biodiversity. With a newly launched project, GEF, UNDP and the Government is increasing efforts to protect these valuable natural resources.

The ultimate objective of the project is to establish national conservation areas covering nearly one million hectares of currently un-protected terrestrial and marine ecosystems.

Eritrea has earlier tried to establish a modern system of protective areas, but to date, it has no formally protected terrestrial or marine areas. UNDP/the Global Environmental Facility and the Government’s new project aims to establish management systems for protected areas and contribute to restoration of the ecosystem, sustainable land management and the protection of species and habitats.

Nature and wildlife in Eritrea

Eritrea has a very diverse flora and fauna, both at land and at sea. The country has a unique northern African elephant population, and the world’s only viable population of free ranging African wild ass (donkey). The nation has thousands of kilometres of coastal areas where you find diverse mangroves, coral reefs and sea grass. The Red Sea is thought to have the world’s highest diversity of species west of Indonesia, with over 1100 fish species and 44 types of corals recorded.

The extensive mangrove forests along the coastal zone provides breeding habitat for many bird species e.g. the flamingos, other migratory birds and contributes to mitigation of global climate change.

Threats to biodiversity

The primary threat to wildlife in Eritrea is habitat loss, where both traditional practices, such as unsustainable grazing, cultivation and forestry, and emerging drivers such as mining and tourism is contributing. A century ago, 30% of Eritrea was covered by forest, but less than 1% of this remained in 1995. Today, commercial fishing coupled by effects of climate change also poses significant threat to Eritrea’s biodiversity.

Because indigenous people regularly depend on the eco-systems for survival, part of the long-term solution to biodiversity loss includes finding livelihood options for local communities that sustains, rather than degrades the ecosystem, but at the same time provides for a better quality of life.

The project has identified a number of areas to focus on, as these offer outstanding opportunities to conserve globally significant biodiversity. These are the Semeneawi and Debubawu Bahri (the Green Belt), the Buri Peninsula, the Hawakil Bay, the Irrori or Wengobo plains and Bera’ sole Bay.
ERITREA: Strategic Partnership Cooperation Framework (SPCF) 2013-2016 Funding (as of September 2014)

REQUIRED
$187.6 million

FUNDED
$60.3 million or 32%

UNMET
$127.3 million

Funding and requirements by SPCF outcome area in millions of USD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcome Area</th>
<th>Available Funding</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Sustainability</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>65.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Nutrition</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>40.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Food Security and Livelihood</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>40.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>9.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity Development</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>8.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>8.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disaster Risk Management</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Implementation pending

Percentage of available funding against requirements

Produced by OCHA based on submissions from UN agencies
MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Women waiting with their children for vaccinations and health services in Massawa Hospital, Mother and Child Health Center, September 2014.

UN Day Celebrations 24 October 2014

This newsletter is produced by the UN Communications Group

United Nations Offices
Hday Street
Asmara, Eritrea
E:mail: dpi.er@undp.org
Tel: +291 151166 Follow us on Facebook/Twitter: UN Eritrea