

## VARIOUS ACTIVITIES BY DIASPORA NATIONALS



Australia - New Zealand

Eritrean nationals in the US, Australia and New Zealand, Sweden, and Qatar have conducted various activities reflecting their attachment to their homeland.

According to reports, the Swedish branch of the YPFDJ organization conducted its congress from 26 to 28 June under the theme "Our Unity Our Strength: Our Participation Our Future."

Indicating that the objective of the congress was to recruit and nurture capable national youth, Mr. Filmon Teklai, chairman of the board of the organization, called on the youth to play a leading role in the successful implementation of the mission of the Fourth Front.

At the event, seminars focusing on "Basic Strategic Victories of the EPLF" and "Epochal Mission of the Youth" were conducted. Educational briefings on administration and projects were also provided.

The National Committee, PFDJ, the National Union of Eritrean Women, Eritrean community in Sweden, and Central Board of the YPFDJ in Europe also delivered messages of solidarity. The congress also elected a new executive committee.

Likewise, the Jeddah branch of the National Union of Eritrean Women conducted its 5th congress on 25 June under the theme "Our Values Our Shield."

At the congress, Ms. Nura Al-Haj Ali, chairperson of the union branch, presented an activity report highlighting the strengths and challenges encountered.

The participants conducted discussion on the report presented and elected a new executive committee.

In the same vein, 'Adal' kindergarten, under the auspices of the Eritrean community in Qatar, graduated children in its first commencement on 26 June, in the presence of Mr. Ali Ibrahim, Eritrea's Ambassador to Qatar, and Ms. Nura Hussein, head of the National Union of Eritrean Women branch.

At a commemorative event organized in connection with Martyrs Day, Eritrean nationals residing in Australia and New Zealand expressed their pledge to support families of martyrs.



Qatar

Accordingly, nationals in Melbourne contributed 9 thousand 340 Australian Dollars; nationals in Sydney 4 thousand 775 Australian Dollars; nationals in Hobart 1 thousand 170 Australian Dollars; nationals in Adelaide 3 thousand 65 Australian Dollars; nationals in Perth 18 thousand 540 Australian Dollars; nationals in Wellington, New Zealand, 3 thousand 960 New Zealand Dollars; and nationals in Auckland, New Zealand, 2 thousand New Zealand Dollars. They also pledged to assume responsibility for supporting 30 families of martyrs and to extend financial contributions in support of an additional 53 families of martyrs.

At a commemorative event organized in connection with Martyrs Day, nationals in Orange County in the US expressed readiness to strengthen participation in national development programs and in support of families of martyrs.

### PROGRAMS FOR SUPPORTING FAMILIES OF MARTYRS CONTINUE IN EARNEST

Programs for supporting families of martyrs are continuing in earnest in Akordet sub-zone.

Mr. Hagos Tekle, secretary of the PFDJ in Akordet sub-zone, reported that area administrations in Akordet city contributed 88 thousand Nakfa, Government workers contributed over 113 thousand Nakfa, Ingerne administrative area contributed 7 thousand Nakfa, and youth in Akordet contributed 15 thousand Nakfa in support of families of martyrs.

Mr. Isak Tium, administrator of the sub-zone, underlining that supporting families of martyrs is the responsibility of every citizen, urged the public, partners, and administrative organs at all levels to strengthen their participation in the initiative to support families of martyrs.

## STUDENTS' SUMMER WORK PROGRAM TO BEGIN NATIONWIDE

Mr. Fitwi Woldegergis, Director of the Students' Summer Work Program, indicated that the program is set to be conducted from 6 July to 15 August in five regions of the country.

The program, which is being conducted for the 28th time, will involve over 30 thousand students, 37% of them female, along with around one thousand teachers, agricultural experts, barefoot doctors, and coordinators from 160 centers.

Mr. Fitwi further indicated that 97% of the participants will engage in water and soil conservation and afforestation activities, while others will participate in environmental sanitation, documentation, traffic safety, renovation of dirt roads, as well as the construction of school compounds.

Within the program, over 1.4 million tree seedlings will be planted, and activities including the construction and renovation of terraces and water catchment schemes will be implemented.



Students in the cities of Asmara, Keren, Mendefera, and Barentu will also participate in traffic safety programs.

Due to climatic conditions, the program in the Southern Red Sea Region already commenced on 8 June with the participation of about 600 students.

Since the commencement of the Students' Summer Work Program in 1994, encouraging activities have been conducted, including water and soil conservation and the planting of tree seedlings, among others.

## HALAY TECHNICAL SCHOOL GRADUATES 44 STUDENTS

Halay Technical School has graduated 44 students, including 18 females, who completed two years of certificate training in computer maintenance, networking, and metal works.

At the graduation ceremony held on 2 July, Mr. Raguel Tekle, director of the school, said that, as a result of the substantial investment the Government is making in vocational and technical training, capable youth equipped with various skills are being produced.



Noting that female participation in vocational and technical training is increasing from time to time, Mr. Raguel said that the school is working in earnest to meet the demand for vocational and technical human resources.

Mr. Tesfay Seium, Director General of Technical and Vocational Training at the Ministry of Education, indicating that efforts have been exerted to equip vocational schools with modern educational facilities, said that

Halay Technical School has already benefited from the opportunity.

Commending the commitment of the teachers and staff of the school, the representative of the graduates expressed conviction to play due part in the nation-building process with the knowledge they gained from the school.

According to documents from the school, Halay Technical School has graduated over 500 students since its establishment.



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# Briefing by Foreign Minister Osman Saleh to the Foreign Diplomatic Community in Eritrea

Ambassadors, Chargés d’Affaires, Distinguished United Nations Resident Coordinator, Ladies and Gentlemen,



Before proceeding, I wish to note that the Advisory Committee on Human Rights has fully briefed me on the substantive consultations recently held with representatives of the European Union, Member States, and the broader diplomatic community in Asmara and Geneva that are members of the Human Rights Council. These exchanges provided Eritrea with a renewed opportunity to articulate its principled position regarding the country-specific mandate of the Special Rapporteur.

Accordingly, I do not intend to revisit arguments exhaustively presented over the past fourteen years. Rather, my focus today centers on the broader political, institutional, and fiscal implications of maintaining a mechanism that has long

ceased to serve any constructive purpose, and has instead become a persistent obstacle to mutually beneficial relations between Eritrea and the European Union and the international community.

While we welcome the opportunity to engage with international partners on issues of mutual interest, Eritrea remains committed to interactions anchored on the tenets of sovereign equality, mutual respect, non-interference, and genuine cooperation. For fourteen years, Eritrea has maintained

ritual. This ongoing campaign has inflicted severe reputational damage by broadcasting a distorted, one-sided narrative through official United Nations channels, manufacturing a false global perception that overshadows our domestic realities. It has acted as a clearinghouse for state-sponsored defamation, inciting external hostility and systematically polarizing international forums. Furthermore, by painting Eritrea as a volatile, high-risk state, it has artificially stifled the country’s tourism investment climate, deterring foreign direct investment and impeding economic development.

Alarming, while the Human Rights Council consumes time and resources over this artificial mandate, it remains deliberately blind to genuine security threats massing on Eritrea’s borders.

Senior figures within Ethiopia’s ruling party are actively mobilizing heavy military formations along our sovereign borders and utilizing international platforms to deliver dangerous lectures targeting Eritrea’s sovereign coastal territories, seeking to normalize the reckless idea that sovereign boundaries in the Horn of Africa are negotiable under the guise of “maritime imperative.”

Equally concerning is the profound financial burden this mandate imposes. For fourteen consecutive years, the Human Rights Council and the OHCHR have funneled substantial financial and institutional resources into a failed mandate. The millions of dollars in cumulative Programme Budget Implications represent a significant expenditure of scarce UN resources at a time of acute liquidity constraints.

A rigorous evaluation underscores the stark opportunity cost of this institutional waste:

- The upwards of 8 million US dollars (more than 120 million Eritrean Nakfa) squandered on this bureaucratic exercise

could have been directed toward actionable cooperation or national capacity-building.

- Under Eritrea’s self-reliance model, an equivalent resource pool has successfully funded over 40 complete, solar-powered regional water networks, securing clean water for more than 100,000 citizens in 2021-2025, alongside vital hospital reconstructions.

The pen-holders face a

body mechanisms, and consensual technical cooperation, universal, cooperative instruments predicated on equal participation and consent. What we reject is the politicization and selective targeting of that system.

Therefore, the Government of Eritrea considers the debate over the legitimacy and utility of the Special Rapporteur’s mandate to be permanently closed.



definitive choice: they must choose between encouraging the financing of endless, sterile political confrontation or supporting tangible, state-led capacity building that directly enhances the lives of our people.

Let me dispel a persistent misconception: Eritrea does not reject engagement with the international human rights system. We remain fully committed to fulfilling our obligations through the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), treaty

The choice now rests with our partners. If they seek a mature, forward-looking relationship with Eritrea, it must be prepared to transcend the confrontational, country-specific mechanisms that have demonstrably failed. Eritrea stands ready to deepen cooperation through dialogue founded on sovereign equality and technical partnership, not through politicized instruments that have long exhausted their credibility.

Thank you.



a consistent, principled stance across the Human Rights Council, the General Assembly, and bilateral channels. Our position is settled. Continuing engagement bilaterally on the Special Rapporteur yields no constructive utility, and we will no longer expend diplomatic capital or finite institutional time debating a mechanism whose continuation has evidently become an end in itself.

The mandate has evolved into a textbook case of institutional inertia and a recurring political



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## NEWS

### SEMINARS AIMED AT ERADICATING HARMFUL PRACTICES

Seminars aimed at eradicating harmful practices have been conducted in 13 administrative areas in Forto-Sawa, Gash Barka Region, from 3 to 25 June.

Indicating that strong efforts are being exerted to eradicate harmful practices in the sub-zone by 2030, Mr. Idris Mohammed, head of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare branch in the sub-zone, said that the seminars being conducted from time to time are part of the effort.

Mr. Aregay Mebrahtu, acting administrator of the sub-zone, expressed the readiness of the sub-zonal administration to work in collaboration with partners to strengthen participation in the effort to eradicate harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and underage marriage, which negatively affect the health of women.

The participants of the seminars, noting that they understood the health consequences of female genital mutilation and underage marriage on women, expressed readiness to strengthen their participation in the effort to eradicate them.

## SpotLight

# Preserving Culture and Identity in an Interconnected World

Bana Negusse

Globalization is one of the defining forces of the twenty-first century. It shapes how people communicate, learn, trade, work, and understand the world around them. Yet despite its pervasive influence, globalization remains an elusive and often contested concept. For some, it represents unprecedented opportunities for cooperation, technological innovation, and human connection. For others, it signifies the expansion of economic inequality, cultural homogenization, and the growing influence of powerful global actors. Appreciating globalization therefore requires recognizing both its immense potential and its inherent contradictions.

In its broadest sense, globalization refers to the growing interconnectedness of societies across national borders. Advances in transportation, digital communication, artificial intelligence (AI), and information technologies have dramatically reduced the significance of physical distance, allowing ideas, information, goods, services, and people to move more freely than ever before. Scholars often describe this phenomenon as deterritorialization: the diminishing importance of geographical boundaries in shaping social relationships. Today, smartphones, social media platforms, AI-powered applications, video conferencing, and the internet enable individuals to communicate, learn, conduct business, and collaborate across continents in real time. For countries such as Eritrea, globalization is no longer an abstract concept; it is an everyday reality experienced through the technologies that increasingly shape modern life.

Yet globalization is not understood solely through this optimistic lens. Many scholars have argued that it is better understood as the worldwide expansion of capitalism, in which powerful economic and political actors extend their influence by integrating markets, promoting consumer culture, and shaping global norms in ways that often benefit the wealthy and powerful. From this perspective, globalization is not a neutral process but one that reinforces existing inequalities while projecting particular economic, political, and cultural values

across the globe.

In the past, this critical interpretation has been reflected in concepts such as “Americanization,” “Westernization,” “McDonaldization,” “Coca-Colonization,” and “cultural imperialism.” These terms describe concerns that increasing global integration gradually erodes cultural diversity, replacing distinct local traditions with standardized patterns of consumption, entertainment, and lifestyles. Following the wave of political decolonization after the Second World War, many scholars argued that although formal colonial rule had largely ended, new forms of influence persisted. Instead of relying primarily on mili-



tary occupation or direct political control, powerful nations increasingly exercised influence through media, commerce, technology, education, and culture, creating subtler – but no less significant – forms of global dominance.

Today, globalization touches virtually every society. No country exists entirely outside its influence. The question is therefore not whether globalization affects a nation, but how deeply, through which channels, and with what consequences. In the twenty-first century, these channels extend far beyond trade and traditional mass media. Smartphones, social media, streaming platforms, artificial intelligence, and digital networks have become some of the most powerful vehicles through which ideas, values, lifestyles, and information circulate across borders.

For Eritrea, these questions are especially significant. Eritrean society has long been anchored in values such as community, solidarity, mutual responsibility, and collective identity. These principles have historically shaped family life, neighborhood relations, and national resilience.

Yet globalization often promotes a different set of ideals, centered on individual achievement, consumerism, instant gratification, relentless competition, and material success. As these competing value systems increasingly intersect, important questions emerge about the future direction of Eritrean society.

How, for instance, might Eritrea’s longstanding culture of sharing and communal responsibility evolve in an age that increasingly celebrates individual consumption and personal gain? What happens to a society where elders have traditionally occupied positions of wisdom and respect when global advertising and entertainment

industries consistently glorify youth, physical appearance, and the pursuit of remaining “forever young”? Likewise, how will Eritrea’s deeply rooted understanding of *nihna*, which refers to the collective sense of “we”, adapt to a global media environment that often elevates individual fame, personal branding, and celebrity culture above communal identity?

The experiences of younger generations illustrate these changes particularly well. Previous generations of Eritrean children spent much of their free time outdoors – playing football, riding bicycles, inventing games with simple materials, and developing friendships through face-to-face interaction. While these experiences remain important, many young people today increasingly divide their lives between the physical and digital worlds. Smartphones, social media, gaming, streaming services, and AI-powered educational tools have become integral parts of daily life. These technologies provide unprecedented access to knowledge, creativity, language learning, and global perspectives. At the same time, they encourage

more sedentary lifestyles and expose young people to an endless stream of cultural influences that shape their aspirations, identities, and understanding of the world.

Also notable is how digital media have become among the most influential agents of socialization in contemporary society. Increasingly, it is not television but social media feeds, recommendation algorithms, streaming platforms, and artificial intelligence that shape how people consume information and interpret reality. These technologies influence beliefs, aspirations, political attitudes, and perceptions of success, beauty, and identity. While they have democratized access to knowledge and educational opportunities, they can also amplify misinformation, reinforce stereotypes, deepen social polarization, and reward sensational or emotionally charged content. Long-standing concerns regarding media representations remain relevant: women are still frequently portrayed in limiting or objectifying ways, while unrealistic standards of beauty, wealth, and success continue to dominate much of the global digital landscape. Such influences are especially significant for younger audiences whose values and identities are still developing.

Globalization has also strengthened the relationship between Eritrea and its worldwide diaspora. Eritreans living abroad contribute not only through remittances but also through professional expertise, entrepreneurship, academic knowledge, investment, and cultural exchange. Advances in digital communication have made it possible for families separated by continents to remain closely connected. At the same time, ideas, experiences, and innovations circulate more easily between Eritrea and Eritrean communities worldwide. Properly harnessed, these connections can serve as valuable resources for national development while reinforcing, rather than weakening, Eritrean identity.

The emergence of artificial intelligence introduces another important dimension to globalization. AI is rapidly transforming education, healthcare, agriculture, business, research, and public administration. It offers remarkable opportunities to expand access to knowledge, improve productivity, and solve

complex problems. Yet AI also raises important questions about whose languages, histories, and cultural perspectives are represented in these technologies. As AI increasingly shapes how people search for information, communicate, and make decisions, ensuring that Eritrea’s languages, history, and cultural heritage are properly represented in the digital ecosystem will be an important part of preserving national identity in the decades ahead.

All of this is not to say that cultural imperialism or homogenization is inevitable. Societies are not passive recipients of outside influences. They actively interpret, adapt, reject, and reshape them according to their own histories, traditions, and values. Rather than simply absorbing global culture, they possess the capacity to transform it into something uniquely their own.

The concept of glocalization, or indigenization, captures this possibility. Rather than importing foreign ideas wholesale, communities selectively incorporate global influences while preserving their own cultural foundations. The result is not cultural disappearance but cultural adaptation.

Around the world, many societies have demonstrated that global engagement and cultural preservation can coexist. Eritrea is similarly well positioned to benefit from technological innovation, artificial intelligence, educational exchange, entrepreneurship, and the knowledge and experience of its global diaspora, while continuing to celebrate the traditions, languages, social institutions, and values that form the foundation of its national identity. In this way, globalization can become not a force of cultural erosion, but an opportunity for cultural renewal and resilience.

Overall, globalization is neither inherently beneficial nor inherently harmful. Its ultimate impact depends on how societies respond to it. As Eritrea becomes increasingly connected to the wider world, its rich cultural heritage need not be diminished. Instead, by remaining confident in its identity while embracing the opportunities of an interconnected world, Eritrea can ensure that modernization complements rather than compromises the values that make the nation strong and unique.



# The Gazelle's Grace: Eritrea's Timeless Beauty

By: Kidane Shimendi

Eritrea's boundless beauty is forged by the ethos of "Unity in Diversity," a principle that harmonizes the profound solidarity of nine distinct ethnic groups with the nation's stunning natural landscapes. This fusion creates a timeless aesthetic where cultural heritage and the natural world are deeply intertwined. Among the many elements drawing local and international tourists to Eritrea's rich cultural canvas, few are as captivating as the symbolic relationship between the gazelle and Eritrean traditions. This connection is most vividly expressed in the traditional choreography of the country's nine ethnic groups.

For centuries across Africa and the Middle East, the gazelle has

is derived from the Arabic root *ghazal*, which refers to sweet, lyrical love poetry. Consequently, across various cultures, writers and lovers have long used the gazelle as a powerful metaphor for the women they adore.

Historically, Eritrea was home to a diverse array of wildlife until the colonial period caused environmental degradation, disrupted animal migration, and led to localized extinctions. Following independence, however, the government's dedicated environmental recovery efforts have paved the way for many wild animals to return. Though slow, their growing numbers are highly encouraging. Among these returning species is the Heuglin's gazelle, scientifically known as *Eudorcas tilonura*, also known as the Eritrean gazelle.

decades until it was recently rediscovered in the Dige sub-zone and the eastern coastal mountains.

In Eritrea, the iconic beauty of the gazelle is celebrated by all nine ethnic groups, particularly through dance movements that mimic the animal's behavior during periods of excitement or heightened alert. A prime example is *stotting*—the behavior where a gazelle springs high into the air with all four legs stiff, creating an illusion of complete weightlessness when excited or sensing danger. This thrilling energy is beautifully channeled across Eritrea's diverse choreographies.

In Saho choreography, male dancers keep their upper bodies perfectly upright while exploding into rapid, high vertical hops on alternating legs. Making contact with the ground for only a microsecond, they perfectly mimic the spring-loaded power of a bounding gazelle. This contrasts beautifully with the Kunama dances, which feature sudden, explosive bounds and intricate, rapid footwork that imitate a gazelle sharply shifting directions to outmaneuver a predator in the wild. Meanwhile, the famous Tigrinya dance style, *Guayla* (or *Quda*), features dancers moving together in a unified circle characterized by a hyper-precise, rapid vibration of the chest and shoulders. This distinct muscular movement reflects the high-alert, twitching energy of a wild gazelle scanning the horizon.

The communal spirit of the herd is also captured visually through dance. When a group of Nara dancers shifts their body rhythm in a sudden, uniform direction, they evoke the striking visual of a unified herd of gazelles cutting across an open plain simultaneously. In a more peaceful cadence, the Tigre



been celebrated as the ultimate symbol of beauty, grace, and elegance. This enduring status in ancient poetry and love literature stems from several distinct physical and behavioral qualities. First, the animal possesses an aesthetic form marked by slender, elongated legs and a delicate neck that grants it an air of natural royalty. At the same time, its well-balanced, S-curved horns create striking lines of poise and symmetry. Second, the gazelle's large, dark, and glossy eyes convey a profound sense of innocence, depth, and gentle vulnerability.

Third, it is universally praised for its fluid agility and weightless movement, able to leap high into the air or shift directions mid-run with effortless ease. This ability to navigate treacherous terrain flawlessly makes its agility a beautiful metaphor for grace under pressure. Finally, the gazelle maintains a regal presence through its constant poise and alertness, remaining hyper-aware of its surroundings by lifting its head high and keeping its spine straight in a proud posture that projects dignity and quiet confidence. Etymologically, the word "gazelle"

Today, Eritrea is home to three distinct gazelle species, each thriving in its own unique habitat. The most common of these is the Dorcas Gazelle (*Gazella dorcas*), found predominantly across the coastal plains and the arid lowlands of the Gash-Barka region. Along the Red Sea coast, the southwestern mainland, and the Dahlak Archipelago, one finds the Soemmerring's Gazelle (*Nanger soemmerringii*). Notably, the population on Dahlak Kebir Island has uniquely adapted over



generations, developing a distinct dwarf body size. The third species is the Heuglin's Gazelle. This endangered animal was feared missing from the region for several

possess smooth, gliding steps that transition seamlessly into rhythmic upper-body sways, mirroring a gazelle herd drifting untroubled through the lowlands. The Bidaw-



et are also known for fluid, sweeping spinal waves, in which the dancers' long, drawn-out horizontal movements reflect the graceful, unhurried stride of a solitary gazelle traversing vast open spaces.

Seasonal celebrations also draw directly from nature. The Afar are famous for a joyous dance style called *Galawi Yabal*, performed during the rainy season when the land turns green. Dancers bounce enthusiastically and kick up dust in pure excitement, capturing the exact, erratic bounding energy of wild gazelles celebrating fresh water and sweet grass. Gendered expressions of grace also mimic the animal; in Bilen choreography, women gracefully swing their long, braided hair, known as *Shelil*, while tilting their heads in perfect rhythm with the beat of the drums, evoking the proud yet gentle head gestures of grazing gazelles. Finally, the *Rashaida* practice a powerful dance featuring deliberate, high-stepping jumps accompanied by the rhythmic clashing of swords. Dancers keep their spines perfectly straight and their heads held high, channeling the regal, defensive posture of a dominant gazelle protecting its herd.

Beyond physical movement, the gazelle is deeply embedded in Eritrean love songs and oral literature. A premier example is the famous

song titled *Raymoc*. Derived from the Bidawyet language, *Raymoc* is a compound word combining *Ray*, meaning neck, and *Moc*, meaning gazelle. Together, the "neck of the gazelle" serves as a powerful symbol of love, beauty, gracefulness, creativity, and deep respect. This metaphor remains highly popular among both the Bidawyet and Tigre ethnic groups. Throughout Eritrean culture, the long, elegant neck of the gazelle remains the gold standard of physical beauty. This visual legacy is why Eritrean women across various cultures dance with such grace, shaking and tilting their necks in movements that directly echo the animal's natural poise.

In conclusion, Eritrea's boundless beauty is anchored in its "Unity in Diversity," which bridges rich cultural expressions and the wonders of the natural world. Watching the nine ethnic groups express love, grace, and resilience through movements that mirror the agile gazelle reveals a profound, historical bond between the Eritrean people and their environment. This relationship goes far beyond dance; it is woven into the very fabric of national identity and shapes how the people see themselves. To experience the cultural rhythms of Eritrea is to travel through a timeless landscape where life, nature, and community are celebrated in their truest, most beautiful forms.



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**Organizational Setting**

The primary purpose of FAO Country Offices, led by an FAO Representative, is to support governments in formulating policies, programs, and projects aimed at achieving food security and reducing hunger and malnutrition. These Offices work to enhance the agricultural, fisheries, and forestry sectors while ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources to achieve sustainable agrifood systems.

FAO plays a pivotal role in advancing agricultural development and food security in Eritrea. Through strategic collaborations with various line ministries, including the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR), Ministry of Land, Water and Environment (MoLWE), Ministry of Finance and National Development and the Ministry of Local Government, FAO's technical support focuses on enhancing the resilience of agriculture-based rural livelihoods, which encompasses a diverse range of stakeholders, including farmers, herders, and fishing communities. FAO's interventions aim to improve productivity, sustainable agricultural practices, and food security to enhance community livelihoods in alignment with the Government of the State of Eritrea's Agriculture Sector Development Plan 2024-2028.

The position is based at the FAO Representation in Asmara, Eritrea.

**Reporting Lines**

The Project Coordinator will operate under the overall guidance of the FAO Representative and direct supervision of the Assistant FAO Representative (Programme), closely cooperating with the programmatic and operational teams.

**Tasks and responsibilities**

The Project Coordinator will provide essential leadership and coordination for program and project operations as outlined in the Terms of Reference.

The incumbent will carry out the following duties:

- **Program and Project Coordination:** Lead the planning and implementation of project activities, ensuring alignment with FAO's strategic objectives, the FAO Project Cycle Guidelines and guidance for Project Coordinator, and the needs of stakeholders.
- **Budget Management:** Monitor project budgets, ensuring proper allocation and compliance with financial rules and procedures; address and resolve any budget-related issues proactively.
- **Data Management:** Collect and analyse data related to FAO activities, including agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; prepare and format reports and presentations for stakeholders.
- **Technical Support:** Assist in the development and implementation of work and travel plans; ensure timely completion of project activities and proper documentation of results.
- **Team Collaboration:** Facilitate effective communication within the project team and liaise with relevant FAO units (Procurement, Finance, HR) to support project operations.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Coordinate activities related to stakeholder engagement and awareness campaigns, ensuring alignment with program objectives.
- **Event Organization:** Plan and organize technical workshops, training sessions, and field missions, ensuring logistical arrangements and successful execution.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Support the implementation of monitoring and evaluation frameworks to assess project outcomes and impact, ensuring continuous improvement.
- **Documentation Management:** Maintain organized and systematic records of project documentation, ensuring accessibility for team members, FAO record keeping, and stakeholders.

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- Procurement Support: Oversee the procurement requests for project inputs, ensuring specifications and requirements are clearly defined, and processed.
- Technical Assistance: Provide and develop support in preparing Letters of Agreement (LoA) and other contractual arrangements with project partners.
- Administrative Duties: Draft reports, correspondence, and other documents related to project activities; maintain records of project activities and expenditures.
- Other Duties: Execute any other related tasks as required by management.

### Minimum Requirement

- Education: A university degree in agriculture, agro-forestry, fisheries, agricultural economics, rural development, development studies, and project management, or a related field.
- Experience: A minimum of five years of relevant experience in project management, particularly in agriculture or food security-related initiatives, programming and program implementation, and technical cooperation.
- Language Skills: Proficiency in English (level C)
- IT Skills: Proficient in MS Office applications and familiarity with project management software.
- National of Eritrea.
- Candidate should provide evidence of completion/exemption from National Services.

### FAO Core Competencies

- Results Focus
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Building Effective Relationships
- Knowledge Sharing and Continuous Improvement

### TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

- Project Management: Proven experience in managing projects and programs focused on agriculture and food security.
- Analytical Skills: Strong ability to analyse data and prepare reports, ensuring accuracy and clarity.
- Communication Skills: Excellent oral and written communication skills, with the ability to engage effectively with diverse stakeholders.
- Interpersonal Skills: Ability to work collaboratively in a multicultural and multidisciplinary environment.

### Selection Criteria

- Academic qualifications relevant to the project management position.
- Extent of relevant experience in coordinating and supporting project operations and management.
- Demonstrated communication skills (oral and written) in English and local languages.
- Ability to work effectively with multidisciplinary teams and foster a collaborative environment.

FAO seeks gender, geographical and linguistic diversity in its staff and international consultants in order to best serve FAO Members in all regions.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- FAO does not charge a fee at any stage of the recruitment process (application, interview meeting, processing)
- Applications received after the closing date will not be accepted
- Please note that FAO only considers higher educational qualifications obtained from an institution accredited/recognized in the World Higher Education Database (WHED), a list updated by the International Association of Universities (IAU) / United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The list can be accessed at <http://www.whed.net/>
- For additional employment opportunities visit the FAO employment website: <http://www.fao.org/employment/home/en/>
- Appointment will be subject to certification that the candidate is medically fit for appointment, accreditation, any residency or visa requirements, and security clearances.

### HOW TO APPLY

- To apply, visit the recruitment website at Jobs at FAO and complete your online profile. We strongly recommend that your profile is accurate, complete and includes your employment records, academic qualifications, and language skills
- Candidates are requested to attach a letter of motivation to the online profile
- Once your profile is completed, please apply, and submit your application
- Candidates may be requested to provide performance assessments and authorization to conduct verification checks of past and present work, character, education, military and police records to ascertain any and all information which may be pertinent to the employment qualifications
- Incomplete applications will not be considered
- Personal information provided on your application may be shared within FAO and with other companies acting on FAO's behalf to provide employment support services such as pre-screening of applications, assessment tests, background checks and other related services. You will be asked to provide your consent before submitting your application. You may withdraw consent at any time, by withdrawing your application, in such case FAO will no longer be able to consider your application
- Only applications received through the FAO recruitment portal will be considered
- Your application will be screened based on the information provided in your online profile
- We encourage applicants to submit the application well before the deadline date.

If you need help or have queries, please create a one-time registration with FAO's client support team for further assistance: <https://fao.service-now.com/csp>

FAO IS A NON-SMOKING ENVIRONMENT

# OPINION

## Eritrea's Small Dam Strategy: Building Water Security and Climate Resilience

*Kidanemariam Feday*

Across the Horn of Africa, where drought and irregular rainfall increasingly define daily life, water has become the most strategic resource of the 21st century. In this context, Eritrea's steady investment in Small, Medium, and Strategic (SMS) dams stands out as a quiet but significant national achievement. Rather than relying on building a few large mega-projects, Eritrea has pursued a different path: creating a water security system through hundreds of small water-harvesting structures built across its diverse regions. As a result, it is becoming one of the most consistent small dam builders in the Horn of Africa.

Eritrea's experience in building SMS dams since independence reflects a long-term national response to one of its defining development challenges: water scarcity in a highly variable, arid climate. In addressing the challenge, it did not depend on a limited number of large-scale water projects. Instead, it has, over the years, developed a widely distributed network of around 850 water-harvesting structures, including micro-dams, small and medium reservoirs, check dams, and subsurface systems. Eritrea's approach is rooted in the practical need to capture the water from the intense but short rainfall seasons and keep it within local environments where it can directly support livelihoods, agriculture, and rural communities.

One of the defining features of Eritrea's dam-building efforts has been its national participation model. The model creates conditions for government institutions, local communities, engineering and defense units, and regional administrations to work together to build dams

and soil and water conservation projects. This collective approach has enabled the construction of water harvesting infrastructure across the country, including in remote areas. It has also created a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for water resources.

Within the broader African context, Eritrea's path of dam development is characterized by continuity, geographic spread, and adaptation to dry-land conditions. While many countries tend to concentrate water investment on a few large systems linked to major rivers or centralized irrigation schemes, Eritrea has emphasized decentralized water storage embedded within rural landscapes. This has resulted in infrastructure that is closely integrated with communities, particularly in regions such as Gash-Barka, Debub, and Anseba, where water availability is seasonal and directly determines ag-



ricultural productivity and livestock survival. Compared with several other African countries known for their semi-arid environments, Eritrea's approach is notable for its sustained and systematic expansion of small and medium water-retention systems over time, built through coordinated national and community participation.

The impact of this system is



most visible in everyday rural life. Improved access to nearby water sources has reduced the distance and effort required for household water collection in many communities, contributing to better living conditions and improved public health. In agri-

restoration of degraded catchments. These environmental gains reinforce agricultural productivity and enhance the long-term sustainability of rural land use systems.

To further enhance the benefits of the infrastructure, effective utilization and management of every dam is essential. A systematic and computerized data management system for water resources can significantly improve planning, monitoring, and maintenance. Such a system would help track water levels, sediment buildup, seasonal inflows, and usage patterns, enabling more informed decision-making at both local and national levels. With better data integration, water distribution and maintenance schedules can be optimized, ensuring that each dam functions at its highest potential throughout the year.

Equally important is sustained community awareness and participation in soil and water conservation practices. Training and engagement programs can strengthen local responsibility for protecting catchment areas that feed the dams. Activities such as terracing on mountain slopes, already practiced effectively through student summer programs and community mobilization, play a crucial role in reducing runoff velocity and preventing soil loss. These initiatives also help increase groundwater recharge and extend the lifespan of downstream reservoirs by reducing sediment inflow.

The construction of gabions along waterways and in erosion-prone zones is another important complementary measure.

Gabions help control gully erosion, stabilize riverbanks, and significantly reduce siltation in dams. By minimizing sediment accumulation, they extend the operational life of reservoirs and reduce maintenance costs, making the entire water system more efficient and sustainable.

Taken together, these complementary strategies strengthen the overall impact of Eritrea's dam network. The combination of infrastructure development, data-driven management, community participation, and soil conservation practices creates a more resilient and adaptive water system.

It demonstrates that water security is not achieved solely through construction, but through continuous stewardship, informed planning, and collective responsibility. In this sense, Eritrea's experience illustrates how a country experiencing a challenging climate can progressively build stability by integrating engineering solutions with environmental management and community engagement, laying a foundation for long-term resilience and self-reliance.

Eritrea's journey in dam development is not defined by monumental mega-structures but by persistence, adaptation, and cumulative impact. It reflects a long-term national effort to transform a difficult climate into a manageable one through distributed water infrastructure and collective action. In a region where climate pressures are increasing, this approach offers a clear message: resilience is built not just in large projects but in many small, well-placed ones that work together.

