



## MINISTER OSMAN SALEH HELD TALKS WITH RUSSIAN DELEGATION

Foreign Minister Osman Saleh met and held talks, on 28 February, with Russian Federation's delegation from Sverdlovsk region led by Mr. Sergey Bidonko, Deputy Governor.

The two sides discussed investment opportunity and cooperation prospects in manufacturing, energy, water infrastructure, health, pharmaceuticals as well as culture and sports.

The meeting was attended by Presidential Advisor, Mr. Yemane Gebreab, and the Russian Federation Ambassador to Eritrea,

Mr. Azim Yarakhmedov.

Mr. Sergey Bidonko is visiting Eritrea for the second time and that attests to the growing relations between Russia and Eritrea and the region.

The Russian delegation also held similar meetings with the Ministers of Health, Tourism and the Director General of Mines.

During its stay in Eritrea, the Russian delegation will visit development and tourism sites in Keren, Massawa and Segeneiti.

A Russian youth football team, which accompanied

the delegation, also played a friendly match with its Eritrean counterpart in Asmara.

## POTABLE WATER PROJECT IN KEREN

A 31 million Nakfa potable water project in Keren city has been finalized. The project that was implemented in cooperation with the Keren Municipality and stakeholders included installation of pipelines, digging wells as well as construction of reservoirs and water distribution centers.

The administrator of the city, Mr. Zerzghi Dawit, said that sustainable effort has been made to alleviate potable water problem in the city and called for judicious usage.

Commending the strong participation of the residents in the implementation of the project, Mr. Abraha Girmatsion, Head of water services, indicated that the project included two water wells, one reservoir, as well as 11 km-long water pipelines.

Mr. Abraha said that the number of wells has increased from 10 to 24, the number of reservoirs from 2 to 4 and that 80% of the residents will become beneficiaries of potable water supply.

## WORKSHOP ON ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

The Ministry of Health in cooperation with various government institutions and stakeholders organized a consensus building workshop on 27 February here in Asmara to discuss the National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture, said that Antimicrobials play critical role in the treatment of animal and plant diseases and ensuring

food security. Minister Arefaine went on to say that the misuse of the drugs and pesticides develops resistance on animals and plants and that has attracted the attention of professionals to look into better options, which is Integrated Pest Management to crop protection than pesticides use in order to keep pests and diseases below economically harmful levels.

**C**ontinued on page 2



## MORE PUBLIC DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITIES

Eritrean nationals residing in Germany and Oakland, USA, conducted various public diplomacy activities.

According to reports, the nationals from various cities of Germany organized a seminar on 23 February in the city of Giessen under the theme "Constructive Engagement among the Peoples of Our Region".

At the seminar briefings on the

objective situation in the homeland were presented accompanied with video shows and photo exhibitions depicting the resilience and steadfastness the Eritrean people demonstrated in the last 20 years. The event was also highlighted with various cultural and artistic performances.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Yohannes Woldu, Charge d'Affairs at the Eritrean Embassy in Germany, said that the resilience and

steadfastness of the Eritrean people has been vital in the unfolding peace and cooperation between Eritrea and Ethiopia and called for strengthened participation to the successful implementation of national development program.

In related news, Eritrean nationals residing in Oakland, USA, conducted a seminar on 24 February on the objective situation in the homeland as well as the timely regional and international developments.





# Eritrea's Statement at the UNSC on Silencing the Guns in Africa

Statement delivered by Mr. Amanuel Giorgio, Charge d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the UN, during the UN Security Council Open Debate on "Silencing the guns in Africa" under the agenda item "Cooperation between the United Nations and Regional and Sub-regional organizations"

**Mr. President,**

Let me take this opportunity to thank Equatorial Guinea for organizing this open debate themed "Silencing the guns in Africa", an important and timely topic for our continent. My thanks also go to H.E. Simeon Oyono Esono Angiie, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Equatorial Guinea, for presiding over this session of the Council.

Let me also seize this opportunity to express thanks to the Under-Secretary General for Political Affairs, Ms. Rosemary DiCarlo, and the AU High Representative for silencing the guns in Africa, H.E. Mr. Ramtane Lamamra.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Benin, H.E. Ambassador Jean-Claude do Rego, on behalf of the African Group.

**Mr. President,**

Africa is endowed with huge human and natural potential that can transform the lives of its citizens and the world at large.

The wave of decolonization in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century brought

hope for a collective work in the continent to ensure peace, justice and development, as well as safeguarding the independence and interest of African nations.

In these intervening years, conflicts, political instability and undue external influence and interventions undermined national, sub-regional and continental efforts to translate the huge endowment into durable peace, sustained and inclusive development.

In Africa, from the East to the West and in the North, extremism, and terrorism are spreading, taking advantage of state fragility and insecurity. The result is a deteriorating condition for millions of Africans, intergenerational poverty and inequality, migration, environmental degradation and recurrent droughts.

Nothing is more descriptive of the continent's situation than the fact that over 75% of the Security Council's agenda is focused on Africa.

Without discounting the complex challenges for causes and dynamics of inter states and intra-state of conflicts, Eritrea is a firm believer in Africa's potential to silencing the guns and affording its citizens the life that they deserve. It requires political will to reclaim the priorities and the narration of the continent.

The need for the nations of the African Continent to have the political space in charting their own development and political paths is critical. What Africa needs is less external interventions and more partnerships. The region has to strengthen its own mechanisms for prevention, peaceful resolution of conflicts and peace building in order to avoid violent conflicts and prevent post-conflict states from sliding back to conflicts.

Moreover, while the role of the United Nations Security Council in maintenance of peace and security remains critical, the United Nations Security Council needs to revisit its approaches and interventions in Africa. There is a need for a paradigm shift. The same approaches time and again will not help achieve better results.

**Mr. President,**

The Horn of Africa region is one example of a region which experienced decades of human suffering as a result of conflicts, with peace having been elusive for many of its citizens. Yet, in recent months the historic peace deal between Eritrea and Ethiopia has resulted in rapid positive changes marking the dawn of a bright era in peace, partnership and development for the entire region as well as creating opportunities for peace across the region.

The new found peace has so far, resulted in the opening of border, movement of the two peoples, uniting of families, resumption of trade, start of communication links, cultural exchanges and more. An important take away from the new developments in the Horn of Africa is the importance of leadership, political will and ownership of conflicting parties to resolve their conflict by themselves.

The recent peace has also opened doors for the consolidation of peace in the rest of the region. In the tripartite agreement signed between Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, the countries agreed to cooperate in advancing the goals of their people, promoting regional peace and security, building close political, economic, social, and cultural and security ties. Moreover, during a separate meeting between the Presidents of Djibouti and Eritrea, they pledged to open a new chapter of cooperation in their relations. These developments are the result of a courageous choice made to close the era of conflict and zero sum game. The new peaceful dynamics in the Horn of Africa will be a huge boost to the ambitious objectives of silencing the Guns by 2020.

The citizens of the Horn of Africa have embarked on an arduous journey of transforming the region for present and future generations. Determined to get it right this time around and make up for lost decades and missed opportunities for peace and economic progress, there is a sense of great responsibility to ensure what has been achieved so far is inclusive and sustainable.

**Mr. President,**

In conclusion, while we hail

the rapid progress in the past few months, we are mindful of the challenges ahead in the creation of durable peace and also sustainable development in the region as envisioned in agenda 2063. We will be counting

on your solidarity to sustain the peace while yearning the same for the rest of the African region.

*I thank you!*  
27 February 2019,  
New York

## LOCAL NEWS

**C**ontinued from page 1

Noting that the workshop is part of the Global Initiative to reduce Antimicrobial Resistance, Mr. Berhane Gebretensae, Director General of Health Services in the Ministry of Health, said that the National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance was the outcome of the hard collaboration work of various ministries and partners mainly, the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Land,

Water and Environment, Marine Resources and the World Health Organization.

Pointing out the significance of the National Action Plan on Antimicrobial Resistance in ensuring the health of human and animals as well as in environmental conservation, Mr. Tesfai Gebreselasie, Minister of Water, Land and Environment, called for integrated effort in realizing the national action plan.

## TRAINING ON CARTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

A Ten-day training on Cartographic Information System has been provided to 30 staff members of the Ministry of Agriculture central office.

The training included basic Cartographic Information System, data analysis, refining information and cartography preparation.

During the graduation ceremony, Mr. Hirui Asgedom, Director General of Department of Agriculture and Inspection, said that cartographic information system has significant contribution in the development of agricultural sector and added that similar training program will be organized to staff members engaged in agricultural activities up to village levels.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Arefaine Berhe, Minister of Agriculture, said that cartographic information system has important contribution in designing viable agricultural policy as well as presenting concise reports and follow-up.

Minister Arefaine also called on the trainees to practice the knowledge they acquired and play due part in the development of agriculture.



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# Development

## Towards Achieving Health Security: MoH launches NHP

### PART I

**Habtom Tesfamichael**

The vision of the Eritrean Government as stated in the Macro-Policy and the Charter of the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) is to achieve rapid, balanced, home grown and sustainable economic growth with social equity and justice, anchored on the principle of self-reliance. The same vision is further reinforced in the Eritrea National Indicative Development Plan 2014-2018.

As reflected in its Macro-Policy, the Charter and the National Development Plan, the Government of the State of Eritrea recognizes that a healthy population is necessary for the establishment of a dynamic, productive and resilient society.

The National Health Policy of Eritrea promotes the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of *health for all* as one of the fundamental rights of every citizen. The policy prioritizes the health and wellbeing of all, through universal access to affordable quality, essential health services delivered through resilient and responsive health systems.

In September 2015, the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as the successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents an unprecedented undertaking of the global community to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development worldwide by 2030. Its 17 goals and 169 associated targets represent a commitment to improving, by 2030, the livelihood of people in a sustainable manner. Eritrea has formally ratified these goals so that they will guide the development agenda in the country.

The single health goal SDG-3 relates to direct actions that influence health within the SDGs. However, achieving health and well-being are also closely intertwined with other SDGs: including the 13 targets of SDG

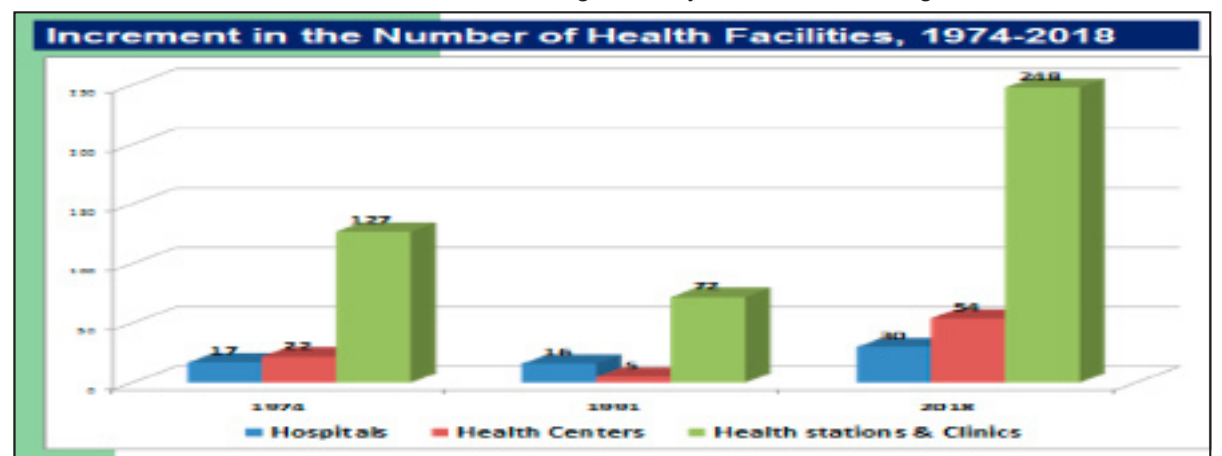
3, nearly 50 of the 169 targets of the 17 SDGs have a direct impact on health and wellbeing. Goal 3, "ensuring healthy lives and promoting wellbeing for all at all ages" has nine targets that cover the unfinished MDGs agenda, newly formulated targets and targets that facilitate implementation. Umbrella target 3.8, "Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services, medicines and vaccines for all" underpins the achievement of all the health targets and Goal 3.

In addition to the 2030 Agenda, whose goals and targets link well with Eritrea's Self-reliance Policy and Development Agenda, Eritrea is also signatory to several other health and health-related global and regional commitments.

The 2010 Eritrean National Health Policy (NHP-2010) has served well in guiding the approach for the health sector in its five-year strategic and annual operational plans at the sector and program levels. Now, almost ten years after the NHP-2010 began to be implemented, the national and global contexts have changed in three major ways, which created the need for reviewing its progress and determine the next health policy direction that shall respond to Eritrea's national development aspirations.

First, Eritrea is now embarking on a new era of peace and rapid all-round development, following the end of the two decades of war and no-peace-no-war situation with Ethiopia and the era of unjust and unfair sanctions. Second, the priorities of health care are changing. Although

maternal and child mortality as well as morbidity and mortality due to communicable diseases such as malaria, HIV-AIDS and



tuberculosis have rapidly declined, there has been an increase in the incidences of non-communicable diseases, injuries, mental disorders and some infectious diseases of national and international concern. The third important change, which is global, has to do with health issues associated with key changes in people's life styles and work habits, leading to changes in the understanding and management of health. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have placed health actions at the center of sustainable development, which created the need of aligning national health policies, strategic plans and operational plans with the global reforms.

The Government of Eritrea has made its health policy reviews in 2019 and renewed its 2010 national health policy (NHP-2010) to accelerate actions to improve the health of its population by aligning them with the anticipated rapid national development aspirations, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 (the Africa we want).

The renewed robust National

Health Policy is intended to respond to the growing calls for strengthening health systems and renewing Primary Health

the old run down facilities.

Despite the quantitative masking, over all the total number

Care (PHC): universal health coverage, people-centered care, health security, public health and health in all policies. The policy serves to guide and steer the entire health sector and go beyond the boundaries of health systems, addressing the social determinants of health and the interaction between the health sector and other sectors in society.

As Eritrea aims to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC), progressive realization on several fronts is very encouraging. The following indicators demonstrate that Eritrea has been moving towards the attainment of UHC.

As revealed in the graph, the number of hospitals in Eritrea increased from 16 in 1991 to 30 while the number of health centers increased from 5 to 54 and the number of health stations (including clinics and MCH centers) increased from 72 to 248. However, this quantitative increase, as big as it is, grossly underestimates the efforts made in the construction of health facilities because many of the new health facilities constructed have replaced

of health facilities increased from 127 in 1991 to 332 in 2018, which is 160 percent (2.6 fold). Since the construction of health facilities began in Eritrea at the time of the Italian Occupation in the 1890's, the number of health facilities that have been constructed in the past twenty seven years were 2.6 times the number of health facilities that were constructed in the whole century prior to Eritrea's liberation in 1991.

As a result of the concerted efforts made to expand health services by building health facilities and equipping them with the necessary equipment and skilled health personnel, access to health care within 10 km radius increased from 46 percent in 1991 to 80 percent at present (2019). Currently, over 60 percent of the population has access to health facilities within a 5 km radius.

There are notable successes in the areas of service provision which include at least one antenatal coverage that stands at 96% and institutional delivery (delivery in a health facility), that stands at 62%. Immunization coverage for Penta and Measles, including Pneumococcal conjugate 3<sup>rd</sup> dose (PCV3), stands at 98%. Drastic reductions were also seen in harmful practices, including early marriage and female genital mutilation. In the area of hygiene and sanitation, which was lagging behind, successes are reported with already 695 (26.1%) of the



**C**ontinued on page 6





# I see Ads, Ads everywhere

Natnael Yebio W.

Today, the craze of advertisement is on the increase. The art of advertisement is, in fact, a modern development. It has revolutionized the modern trade. Nowadays we have newspaper advertising, magazine ads, radio, television, online, Direct mail and mobile ads.

Advertisements have now developed both as art and science. Several countries across the globe now have universities with academic courses leading to some degree or diploma in the art of advertisement. No wonder these graduates from the universities are coming out with newer ways of advertising.

*Red Bull gives you.....*

Now, most of us know the next word that comes after that. That is the power of creative advertising. “Red Bull gives you wings” has been the trade mark advertisement slogan for Red Bull energy drink for quite a while.

Advertisement is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Fancy a load of green bucks to pocket? Advertisement is your answer, goes a saying.

Mankind must have begun to advertise his wares or even services while still living in caves. At nights, he slept well, tucked under a warm blanket made of bison's hide, and if his wife, lying by his side, shared warmth, then she must have gotten up early next morning and went about telling the unfortunate neighborhood wives that her husband was the best tanner (Or blanket maker) in the village.

In the middle-ages, inns and taverns were packed with people probably because the beer or wine knocked the customers flat, and the good news was noised among the scoundrels and crooks of the village. Let's drink and be merry, for tomorrow we might die, they sang. And the song attracted more and more hooligans. That's what we call free advertisement.

But real business advertisement had to wait for the advent of the industrial revolution where things were mass produced and had to be sold fast. The emergence of the consumer society was an indirect result of mass advertisement.

In traditional Eritrea, modern advertisement techniques were introduced by the Italians who sold everything from guns and cigarettes to wines and automobiles

to people and tried to attract customers through flashing sign boards and blaring loud-speakers. But Eritreans, with their low living standards, were more interested in trifle things that glittered and gave them a sense of temporary wealth and well-being and in liquors and alcoholic beverages that helped them to forget the presence of the invader.

This writer found out the local beer factory of those days (1950) used all kinds of cheap advertisement to promote its products: *Chi Beve Birra Melotti, Campa Cento Anni* (Drink Mellotti Beer and live to be a hundred). In those days businessmen misled people with impunity. People thought that only by respecting one's parents (referring to the Ten Commandments) was one's life prolonged in this world. If drinking beer could do as well, it did so with pain and misery.

The Pandora box of misinformation was now open. Cognac 44 cleaned blood. Araqi (anis) neutralized the malaria germ in the blood. Marsala wine reactivated the failing heart, and Cognac all'uovo restored active sex life.

What about Fernit? It was a cure against all types of stomach pains. And Vermouth? It helped increase the red blood cells, etc. All this was in newspapers or magazine. So I have been told. There was also an advertising agency in Asmara by the name, Agenzia Regina which took care of such matters.

In the absence of radio and television in the early 1960s and due to the fact that many Eritreans could not afford to buy radio, much less TV sets, the usual practice of publicizing one's wares was through the use of bullhorns carried by ambulant advertisement men. “Today Tarzan, king of the jungle will be screened in Cinema Dante.....etc.” and there were moments when some enterprising restaurant owners commissioned these men to holler their foods and services to the public.

My granddad tells me that most of the time the advertisement said



nothing about the nature of the film, much less about the contents. If the film in question was Indian, then they liked to tell about the number of songs it contained. Fourteen songs, each ten minutes long and you'll feel like singing mechanically at the end of the movie. Indian films were not known as musical at the time but for all intents and purposes they were.

Cinema halls themselves were also centers of advertisement. At the beginning or at the end of a feature film, 2-3 minutes long advertisement footage was screened for the spectators with samples of the product in question distributed to the viewers as they left the movie house.

In the print media, a picture (usually with Caucasians' features) was the preferred announcers for new products. They would tell you to buy such and such brand of hair cream, such and such type of wrist watches and car tires. As there was no harsh competition in those days, people simply bought the advertised product whatever the inherent defects or side effects.

I have the impression that Eritreans have not made much headway in advertisement skills. Whenever I see the pub-signs and shop-signs in Asmara, I always

feel that there is much room for improvement. Most shop-signs are badly written and the color, mostly violent, makes the shop look very cheap. If the sign is in English, that's where the problem lies.

Let's begin with *barbery*. What on earth does that mean? Well, it has nothing to do with North Africa or with the pirates who frequented its shores. It simply means barber shop. How is that? Well, if one can say butchery, grocery and pastry, why not *barbery*?

Okay, how about mini-supermarket? It means that although my super market is small, it is still a supermarket. Get it?

I get it. But this one, what does *Welcame* mean? It means “you are already welcomed” and therefore don't hesitate to enter the house. By the way, to many novice advertisers the present tense is *wellcome* not *welcome* and *congratulations* is mistakenly written without ‘s’ at the end.....

And the way the words in some wedding cards are composed makes you feel like reading the message over and over again just to be quite sure who is really getting married and what your real purpose is in going to the feast.

**C**ontinued on page 6





# Book Review

## Riqetka ETan - What Does Incense Reveal About Us?

Abraham Habte

I first heard of Mr. Ghirmai Abraham, the author of *Riqetka ETan*, a book of poetry released recently, when I heard his poem, *Kilte kienka, hade mukhuan* (You become two, you become one), about the peace and harmony in Eritrea recited on Eritrean Television some years ago. In the poem, which alludes to Eritrean Orthodox Tewahdo theology, in which God is taught as a triune, (and manifests himself as one, and three: as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit), Mr. Ghirmai says: "Asmara, innocent like a newborn baby, ties/ The mosque, and the church, into one, with the cord of love" and then he proceeds and asks, "So, do you get jealous Mecca? And, you, Vatican?"

Through the poem, Mr. Ghirmai makes an important statement about Eritrea, represented by Asmara, and the harmony of the two religions (Christianity and Islam) in the country, "whose floor is bedecked with love, and where Eritrea's children rest". He notes in Eritrea, unlike in other countries, religion is not used to divide people, and that no wars are fought in the name of *Allah* or *Amlakh* (God, in Tigrigna). In what is characteristically his style, he delivers a truth, without delivering a sermon on the issues he discusses: Mr. Ghirmai makes us see what he thinks is a wealth we have not thought of as valuable.

*Riqetka ETan* is a collection of 87 poems, on love (and with a special emphasis one maternal love and love between a man and a woman), friendship, art, choice and destiny, regret, truth, loneliness, and other issues.

But some issues are treated with special emphasis for he gives them more than a passing treatment. Friendship is not a trivial matter, senior Eritrean citizens are often heard saying. "In our generation, friends made oaths so that they do not forget each other as long as they walked on earth," they often tell you, if you are a young person, and in their eyes did not take friendship seriously. It looks as if Mr. Ghirmai wants to stress this fact for he writes repeatedly about friendship. Through the poems, he criticizes people who take it very lightly. Through *Nfequr Arkey* (To My Dear Friend), a man tells his friend to go "for you cannot escape from the compound of my heart." Through another, he praises true friendship. In it, a man tells his friend: "My friend, O my friend/ You make me present/ When I am absent/ My friend, my friend, O my friend, You are my all, my friend".

He writes in similar ways about love. Reading his poems on love, one has the impression that he has so much to say about the subject, but has not said it all despite his attempts to do so. In short, one understands his poems about love as attempts, and

not as successful accomplishments despite their beauty. Why write many poems about love if one has said it all (that one wanted to say)?

In one poem, a young man sings of his love, who lives in a neighboring village:

"The fool think, I choose between loves/

He ignores the girls in his village, they sneer at me.

But, it was Love, while I looked after cattle at the meadow/

That slipped her into my heart."

In another, a misunderstood young man sings of a young woman, who fails to understand him. He wishes "to snatch her heart and drown it into her empty personality", and give it back after she sees her folly and returns to him. In a different poem, Mr. Ghirmai writes about a man who ignores "the stars that beg for his love", but he himself begs from those that do not give. "You look up to the sky," Mr. Ghirmai tells his readers. "And see millions of stars, but he says, 'My star' and is stuck with his only one."

But it is not only ideas (but also people) that preoccupy Mr. Ghirmai's imagination. His poems give the poor and, especially, their children special emphasis, and he

seems to understand their problems with a special perception, writing with eloquence about their roles in life, their problems, and their pride in poems like *Wedi Qonanit* and *Blay Kidan, Aydeqesun Gena*.

*Aydeqesun Gena* and *Ajoka Piccolo* remind us Mr. Ghirmai's his short story, *Misgar Wuhuj*, (Crossing the River). In it he narrates a young boy's attempt to help his mother, who struggles to raise her only child, the main character of the story. Through these poems, he comes back and revisits the theme. In *Aydeqesun Gena* (They are Still worrying), he has us read about some little children who have lost their drunkard father. In *Ajoka Piccolo* (Don't Worry, Young Boy), we feel sorry for the little boy, who lost the money he earned by selling cigarettes and other items.

In some cases, Mr. Ghirmai praises the contribution of the working poor, making us see the worth of their labour, and indirectly, makes us proud of our contributions. He helps us see labour (whatever kind it is) is a respectable activity, and that no job we do should make us feel ashamed.

"Light has covered your father's face

Ask your mother what has happened

Scratching her hair with her finger

She will mention a name, the name of her hairdresser

You are right, you have made no mistake

I am the son of a hairdresser

The son of the woman that dressed your mother in beauty."

But Mr. Ghirmai doesn't write like other poets. Without sounding preachy, he takes subjects for religious sermons and makes us see the truth of the heart. In one poem, he makes it clear that forgiveness oils human relationships. In another, that the living owe so much to the dead who gave their lives so that the living may enjoy theirs.

In most of his poems, he uses words very economically, wasting none unnecessarily. However, it is the use of imagery that sets him

different from other Tigrigna poets. In almost every poem, he effectively uses an image that expresses this or that thought. He successfully employs images of the *kirar*, the star, and of course, the burning incense, which symbolises the highest in us.

It is hard to choose your favourite poem from among the collection. The book is full of enjoyable poetry. You think that you like one better than the others, and then you remember that you enjoyed another poem as equally. You start rereading, if you could find a poem that is more enjoyable than the others. After so many readings, you find out that you have come to no conclusion. If I have to choose, *Kondokon (Is It Because)* which is about raising children, which is of interest to me as an educator, and of course, *Riqetka ETan*, which I have translated below:

### Your Fineness, Incense

"From a coarse lump to a melted thing

From a melted thing to a smoking thing

You become thinner, and thinner

Without a ladder

You climb the skies

Where do you go

That you, finally disappear, Incense?

"From fineness to fineness

As everything descends [from the skies]

You defy gravity

Is it a bird that arouses your envy

Or an eagle

Or is it a star or the clouds?

That unlike us, you traverse the skies?

"Why don't you give us a ride

Us that have become a lump

Who like a stone laid

On a solid foundation

Sit back and in our laziness

Have done nothing worthwhile

"Why don't you give us a ride Us, who think of you only as a smell

Us that have killed [our] senses

And think with our noses.

"Here we are

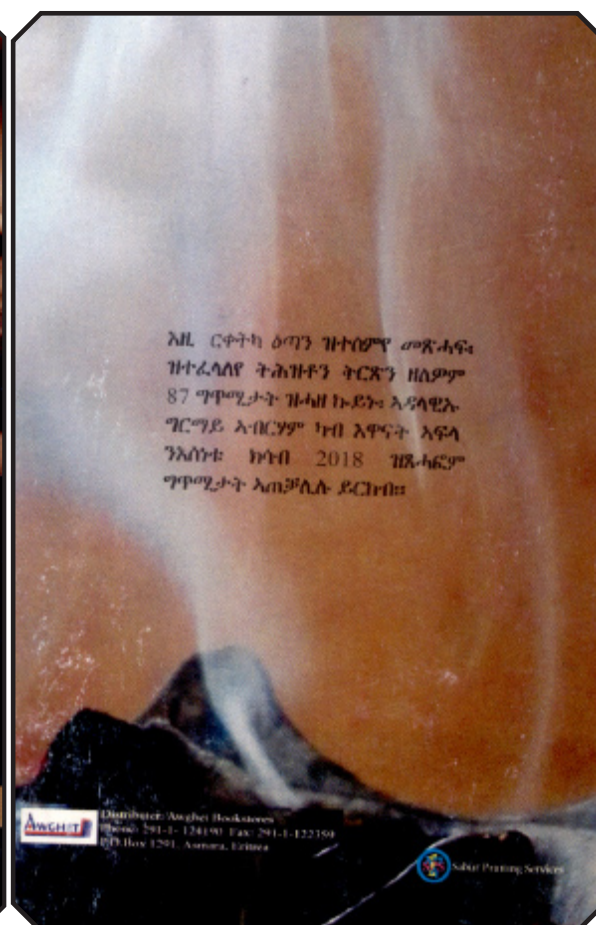
We have adorned the room with

Wet, green grass

And not very different from it

We are strewn on the floor."

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# Towards achieving Health . . .

**C**ontinued from page 3

2,666 rural villages in the country having been declared "Open-Defecation-Free". Efforts towards declaring Eritrea open-defecation-free are being scaled up, and Eritrea is planning to end open defecation by 2022.

The Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) has been notably successful in Eritrea, achieving virtually universal (98%) immunization coverage rates. Subsequently, Eritrea was awarded by Global Alliance for Vaccine Initiative (GAVI) on October 17, 2009 in Hanoi, Vietnam, for its high and sustained immunization coverage. In 2016, the Immunization program was also awarded the 2016 UNICEF award in recognition of Eritrea's outstanding achievement in vaccine management.

Eritrea's immunization coverage is virtually universal; hence, it is highly equitably accessible to all children and women in the reproductive age group. The country has been polio-free since 2008 and has maintained its maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT) elimination status validated in 2002. There has been no confirmed measles outbreak among children since 2005.

In 2017, virtually all women (96%) attended Antenatal care visits during their most recent pregnancy. This has shown significant improvement from 48% in 1995 to 70% in 2002 to 90% in 2010, to 93% in 2013 and to 96% in 2017. Moreover, around 60% of the mothers received ANC service four or more times.

A study in 2017 revealed that among mothers of children 0-11 months, 62% gave birth in a health facility. The finding of the 2017 EPI coverage survey was also similar. Health facility delivery in 1991 was very low at 6%, which progressively showed tenfold increase to 62% by 2017.

Trends in both HIV and AIDS cases in Eritrea are favorable, suggesting stabilization at a low prevalence level and reversal of HIV infection in the general population, with a prevalence of less than one percent since before 2010.

The prevalence of HIV in the general population was 0.93% in 2010 and the prevalence among women of 15-19 years was 0.2% and peaks, at 2.9%, for women in their late thirties (EPHS 2010).

The 2017 National Antenatal Sentinel Surveillance (ANC) Survey revealed that, overall, HIV prevalence among pregnant women aged 15-49 attending ANC for their first pregnancy in 2017 was estimated to be 0.65%. Trend analysis of the Antenatal Sentinel Surveillance results revealed that the HIV infection rate among pregnant women in Eritrea has shown steady and significant decline in the last 15 years. The prevalence has significantly declined from 2.4% in 2003 to 0.65% in 2017 at an average annual declining rate of 5.2%.

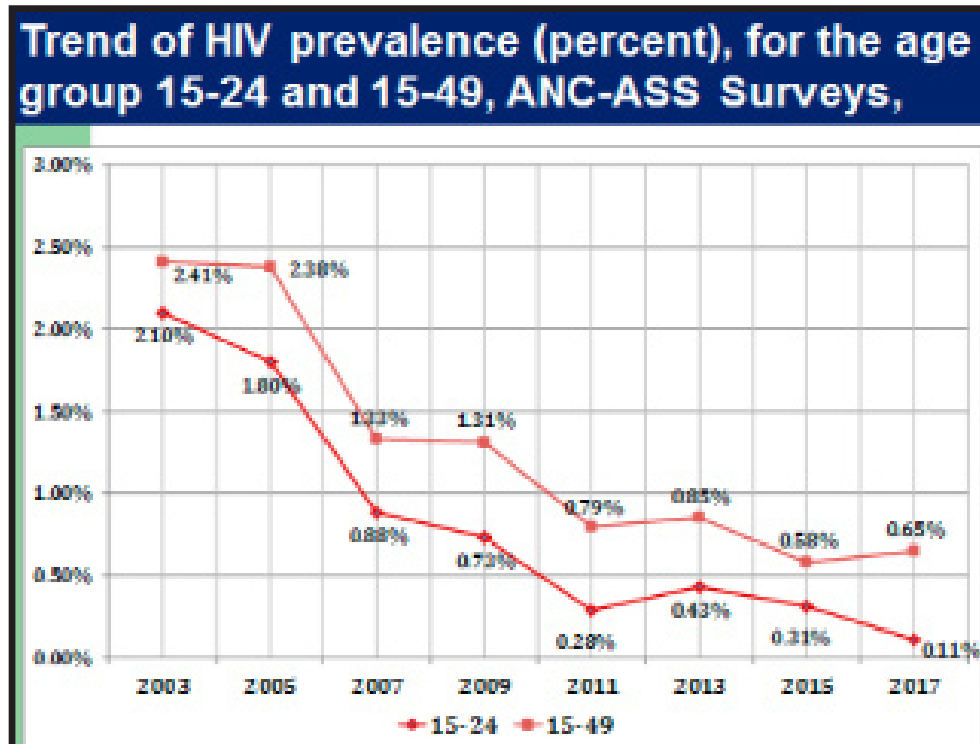
Prevalence among the youth aged 15-24 can be taken as a good proxy for the level of new HIV infection or level of HIV incidence in a country. The study estimated that the prevalence among this group of youth was 0.11% and this has shown significant and steady decline during the last 14 years where it was 2% in 2003. Moreover, in malaria control Eritrea is working towards pre-elimination phase.

The people of rural Eritrea have practised open defecation for hundreds of years. This is probably the result of lack of awareness about safe hygiene, coupled with the vast space around homes and villages. In the late

years in 1990 to 65 years in 2016 (62.9 years for males and 67.1 years for females), while the healthy life expectancy at birth was estimated at 57.4 years in 2016.

Eritrea was among the ten countries in the WHO Africa region that have achieved MDG4 in 2015, by reducing under-five mortality by two-third. If current trends continue, Eritrea is also one of the countries that are expected to achieve under-five mortality SDG Target before 2030.

Eritrea's achievement in all three health MDGs, namely MDG-4 on the reduction of child mortality, MDG5- on the reduction of



1800s, the Italian colonial administration required that sanitary facilities be included in new housing projects, particularly in urban areas. There was little enforcement in the rural communities.

Eritrea drew a roadmap to end open defecation. The road map presents Eritrea's strategy to end open defecation by 2022. It was discussed at the first National Sanitation Conference held in Asmara from 11 to 12 December 2018. The meeting was attended by more than 500 participants, including students and community members from villages that were declared open-defecation-free.

These efforts and achievements and many other aspects of Universal Health Coverage resulted in continuous improvements of impact indicators such as under-five mortality, maternal mortality and life expectancy.

From 1991 to 2015, maternal mortality ratio was reduced by 69%; Neonatal mortality rate was reduced by 45% and Under-five mortality rate was reduced by 69%. These remarkable achievements are among the few best in Africa. As shown in the World Health Statistics Annual Reports (WHO, 2016), during the same period, the average reductions in Africa were 45%, 38% and 54% for maternal, neonatal and under-five mortality respectively. Life expectancy at birth, which is considered as a summative health indicator, increased by 35%, from 48

maternal mortality, and MDG-6 on the control of communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, has been one of the most remarkable achievements in Africa Region.

Although non-communicable diseases were historically viewed as a burden to industrialized nations, they are already altering the health of the globe dramatically. This trend is already evident in Eritrea as the prevalence of non-communicable diseases and injuries is increasing, already posing a challenge on our health service delivery.

There are now emerging issues related to communicable and non-communicable diseases which include cardiovascular diseases, cancer, respiratory diseases, psychiatric conditions, congenital anomalies leading to a 'double burden of diseases'. There is no evidence of reductions in the trend of these diseases. Road traffic injuries are high, mainly affecting the productive and young population, with increasing mortality levels over the years.

Although the effect of communicable diseases will still remain significant, emerging trends point that non-communicable conditions and injuries will, in the foreseeable future, be the leading contributors to high burden of disease in the country. Another key cross-cutting intervention that shall be focused by the health sector and other stakeholders is the high rates of malnutrition.

*I see  
Ads, ...*

**C**ontinued from page 4

Speaking of local shops, most conduct their business using very dim lights. I once asked a shop owner why he used 25 volts lamp when he could have used 90 volts to light his window display and attract more potential buyers. Rising electric bill was his problem. I am sure that with a dimly lit room that looked like a tavern, he must have lost a lot of money by mistakenly trying to save some.

And when you buy a gift item, many shopkeepers don't gift wrap it for you. They could have advertised their merchandize by such means as using papers printed with the name of their establishments, but they seem to have misunderstood the secret.

Telephone advertisement is one thing that most Eritrean business men are overlooking. Companies with prestigious names are hiring secretaries who answer the phone in the rudest manner.

You dial a number trying to contact such and such company. Riiing! Riiing! And then on the other end of the line you hear the most absurd reply ever uttered by a human voice: who is that?

When one day I got such kind of reply, I said to the secretary on the other end of the line to first say good morning or good afternoon and then mention the name of the company. In fact I told her that by repeatedly mentioning the name of her firm, she is inadvertently publicizing her company without spending a single cent. The more the name of the firm is said on the phone, the more the firm will remain in the unconscious mind of even the people who call by mistake, people who may one day be led unconsciously to that firm to buy products and services.

Advertisement is an art. It is said that the French are very much skilled in this type of art. So much so that at one time they used to give French schools in Asmara videocassettes with nothing else but business ads collected for comprehension lessons.

The old type ads that tell you that you will fly like superman if you eat this type of banana or you will turn into a superman if you eat this brand of canned spinach is now over.

After independence, a certain Eritrean business man, who was obsessed with the 1950s- type of advertisement, tried to promote his imported powdered milk as a source of tremendous energy comparable to that of the elephant. He must have watched a lot of Popeye re-runs in his life.

Luckily for the public, he was asked by the concerned authority to stop such kind of cheap advertisement and to use more creative and original ideas instead.



Country Office of Eritrea

# OFFICE OF THE WHO REPRESENTATIVE FOR ERITREA

P.O.BOX 5561 Asmara Eritrea –Tel. 291 1 200634, FAX 291 1 125155

Vacancy No. 2019/1

The World Health Organization (WHO) in Eritrea is inviting applications from suitably qualified National candidate for 1 (**ONE**) position Operation Officer ( OO)

**Title of Post:** National Operation Officer  
**Duration:** 2 Years Fixed Term  
**Salary Grade Level:** NOB (UN salary scale Eritrea)

## Major Duties:

Under the direct supervision of the WHO Representative and the overall guidance of the Inter-country Management Support Manager:

The National Operations Officer coordinates work to be implemented in and outside Global System Management (GSM) by the WHO Country Office, along the lines of end-to-end processes for all functional areas. This position is instrumental in the provision of direct support and services to the WCOs concerned and the incumbent will lead a multi-functional team. He/she will use GSM related documents, WHO Policies, Rules and Regulations as guidance, consult and interact with other team members within the Regional Office Management Support Unit (RSU), Inter-country Support Units (ISU), Country Management Support Units (CSU), the Headquarters and the Global Service Centre.

The incumbent oversees a team performing functions on the basis of the end-to-end process as designed in GSM. He/She coordinates different areas of activities such as Programme Management, Procurement and Inventories Management, Travel and Meetings Management, Human Resources Management, and Work plan/Award Management; Prepares regular management reports on implementation of WCO work plans including contribution to the preparation of statutory reports and acts as focal point for internal and external audits.

## Functional Skills and Knowledge:

- Good knowledge of WHO Results-Based Management framework and related business processes.
- Knowledge of Oracle projects and Oracle Financials or similar ERP applications and systems.
- Sound knowledge of the Organization's policies and practices, as well as project management principles and their application within WHO;
- Ability to act independently and exercise sound judgement;
- High level of organizational and analytical ability, combined with good oral and written communication skills;
- Proven ability to maintain and establish excellent interpersonal working relations and to work with competing priorities under pressure

## Education (Qualifications)

**Essential:** - University degree in Management, Public

Administration, Law, Social Sciences and/or related field or Public Health.

**Desirable:** - Post graduate diploma or professional certification in project management or related field.

**Other Skills (e.g. IT):** - Excellent knowledge of Microsoft applications (e.g. Excel, Word, PowerPoint, etc) with an emphasis on Excel or a similar workbook application.

**Experience:** At least 2 to 5 years of professional experience with an emphasis on programme management, Budgeting, Human Resources Management, Procurement and/or Travel.

**Desirable:** Good knowledge of WHO programme management and end-to-end business processes as designed in the Global Management System; Experience in project management, ideally in the UN System and/or a public health context; Good knowledge of GSM System or similar ERP Systems; Experience with staff training in the use of management information systems.

**Language:** Excellent knowledge of written and spoken English. Intermediate knowledge in French is Desirable.

**National Service:** **Candidate must provide evidence of discharge/release from National Service.**

Only qualified candidates will be short listed and invited for interview. Please mail a recent CV and photocopies of academic qualifications including telephone numbers and post office box indicating vacancy number 2019/01 in a sealed envelope addressed to:

**The WHO Administrative officer**  
**Adi Yacob Street No 173**  
**P.O.Box 5561**  
**Geza Banda**  
**Asmara**

**It is also a mandatory to all applicants to apply through WHO website as per the below link**

**<https://careers.who.int/careersection/ex/jobsearch.ftl>**

**Closing date of application:** Two weeks from the date of Advertisement.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT WHO IS A NON-SMOKING ENVIRONMENT**





Q and A

# Eritrea Profile, the Eritrean English Editorial Journey of 25 Years

With love, a biweekly letter, from the crew of Eritrea Profile to the people of Eritrea and the world.

Billion Temesghen

On March 1994 the first issue of the only English newspaper was published and remains to be a memorable day in the Profile was launched to serve as a profile of Eritrea, its people introduce Eritrea to the outside world, which knew little about today, Eritrea Profile has upgraded its objectives beyond giving counter the widely spread unjust narratives about Eritrea and readership of at least 80000 per issue Eritrea Profile has a wide We talk to one of its founders and its former editor-in-chief, Kiflom Adgoy, a Senior Editor.



in Eritrea, Eritrea Profile, recollections of many. Eritrea and its history. Its aim was to it. And when times changed, a profile of the country to its people. With an electronic reception.

who gave it its name, Mr

Because you are one of the founders of Eritrea Profile it is an honour to have you here with us on the newspaper's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Thank you for having me and thank you for your time. On this special occasion I'd like to pass my greetings to the staff of Eritrea Profile and its readers. My name is Kiflom Adgoy and I am a senior editor. In former days I served as the Editor-in-Chief of the Ethiopian Herald, the national daily of Ethiopia. I worked there for over ten years and when Eritrea got its Independence, I moved back to the homeland and immediately joined the then newly established Eritrean

Ministry of Information in the first week of January 1994. Alongside my colleagues we put forward the idea of launching a weekly English newspaper which at that time was absent.

Therefore, with Abinet Issaias, first editor-in-chief of Eritrea Profile, we worked in creating an English newspaper and then together saw its debut on the first of March 1994.

What were the objectives of Eritrea Profile at the time of its launch?

The aim was to project a precise image of Eritrea to the outside world

so that there would be a righteous source of information to whoever wishes to get acquainted with Eritrea. I take due pride in its launching because, as the name of the paper suggests, giving a profile of Eritrea is what the paper was and is all about. I honoured the task. It was so at the beginning and it is still moving forward with the same aim to this day thanks to you, our young journalists, who have understood the aim of the newspaper, your newspaper, and are working diligently towards projecting the right profile of Eritrea throughout all times.

Thank you! Can you please tell us what the early days of Eritrea Profile were like?

At the beginning Abinet served as the editor-in-chief and me as deputy. The beginning was humble. We started with a small staff and had few columns. By the day the readership of the newspaper grew and likewise our working radius expanded one step at a time. In the subsequent years I took on the editor's role which lasted from 1998 up to 2004. Like I said the mission of Eritrea Profile was, and stands still, to project the correct image of Eritrea and we proceeded, of course, on this way.

How do you remember your days working for Eritrea Profile?

I remember them with due pride. As the sole English newspaper the task is great. To give the right image of the country to a world that had limited knowledge about Eritrea was a task that the staff and I embarked on gracefully. Back then, when our country first got its freedom, telling the history of our people and the heavy sacrifices we paid for our Independence, rightfully, felt like an enormous duty.

I believe that to this day Eritrea Profile has played its due role in giving righteous information about the on goings in Eritrea. So, I treasure my days in Eritrea Profile with pride. Moreover, how you, our young ones, are running the newspaper today makes me even more proud as I feel like the original task is being achieved with every issue.

Mr Kiflom, still, you kept on

counter wrong information spread through foreign news outlets. However, Eritrea Profile, thanks to its staff, still manages to pawn those incorrect sources of information by serving as a truthful editorial.

In your opinion, what are the areas in which Eritrea Profile needs to improve?

The question of deploying sufficient manpower to upgrade



MoI, Press Department at present

contributing in the making of the newspaper in several ways. You even edited the news for us and from time to time shared your opinion related to our work. For this reason it is easy to say that you have been alongside Eritrea Profile, one way or another, for most of its part. How do you feel about being around for so long?

The merit goes to you, the young staff of Eritrea Profile, as you always strive to make your newspaper worth being printed and distributed. I feel happy that my humble contributions on and off are appreciated. I am happy to be helpful. What I admire most of the newspaper is that the spirit of optimism always prevails in how you conduct your journalism. Certainly, it must be a heavy task to

the standard of this important paper remains not fully accomplished to this very day. You, the young people, should look forward to mobilizing all possible resources to upgrade the quality of the newspaper.

Anything you would like to say at the end?

I want to thank the current staff of Eritrea Profile for your hard work. I do understand the difficulties you might face and so I would like to encourage you to do more and work persistently for the betterment of the newspaper and, above all, to give an accurate profile of Eritrea. Greetings to the readers of Eritrea Profile and the Eritrean people! Congratulations!



Some of the early publications of Eritrea Profile