

## INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY OBSERVED NATIONWIDE

International Workers Day was observed at the Expo Compound under the theme “Productivity through Conscious Participation.” The event was attended by Ministers, senior Government and PFDJ officials, members of the diplomatic community, representatives of UN offices in Eritrea, and other invited guests.

Mr. Kibreab Kidane, Deputy Secretary-General of the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers, stated that global labor conditions are changing due to technological advancements, climate change, migration, war, and the displacement of people.

He indicated that since organization is a fundamental component of labor relations, the National Confederation

of Eritrean Workers has been actively engaged in organizing workers into the confederation, restructuring workers’ federations, and conducting awareness-raising programs. He further noted that while much remains to be done, the number of workers joining the confederation continues to grow steadily.

Mr. Solomon Kifle, a legal advisor on labor law for employers, stated that when employers establish strong relationships with their workers, it fosters a sense of ownership and leads to visible progress within the institutions where they are employed.

Mr. Woldeyesus Elisa, Director General of Labor at the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, emphasized that May



Day is an international day of workers’ unity. He noted that the day serves as a moment to celebrate achievements, confront challenges, seek solutions, and promote favorable working conditions for workers.

The event also featured cultural and artistic performances highlighting the significance of the day.

In other related news, the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers organized a series of activities in connection with International Workers Day under the theme “Productivity through Conscious Participation.” The activities included general

knowledge, literature, and photo competitions among government workers. These focused on themes such as labor and productivity, the history of the Eritrean labor movement and global labor struggles, the political and revolutionary history of Eritrea, and general global awareness.

Awards were presented to the winners of the various competitions.

Additionally, approximately 600 workers from various institutions took part in water and soil conservation efforts on 25 and 29 April at Dembe Zawul.

In the same context, 200



workers from 18 institutions voluntarily donated 140 units of blood to support the National Blood Transfusion Service.

International Workers Day is being celebrated for the 135th time globally and for the 34th time at the national level.



## INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY CELEBRATION IN NRS

International Workers Day was celebrated in the port city of Massawa at the Northern Red Sea region level under the theme “Productivity through Conscious Participation.” The event

featured sports competitions, public campaigns, and seminars among other activities.

Mr. Habtemariam Tesfamicael, head of the National

Confederation of Eritrean Workers branch in the region, said that May Day is a day when workers raise their voices and renew their pledge to work hard and increase productivity. He also

gave a briefing on the historical struggle of Eritrean workers.

The branch office of the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare and the office of the PFDJ also delivered messages of solidarity.

Ms. Asmeret Abraha, Governor of the region, highlighted the significant role Eritrean workers played during the armed struggle for independence, in safeguarding national sovereignty, and in the implementation of national development programs. She also called for strengthening unity and awareness, and for citizens to play their part in national affairs.

International Workers Day was also celebrated across the country, featuring various activities.



### A NEW DAM UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN AFAMBO

A new dam with a capacity of 280 thousand cubic meters is under construction in the Afambo administrative area, Central Denkalia sub-zone. The project is being implemented through joint efforts by the Ministry of Agriculture, the Southern Red Sea Region administration, and members of the Defense Forces.

Eng. Merahwi Yishak, coordinator of the program, stated that the dam will significantly contribute to replenishing underground water resources and ensuring a sustainable water supply for residents, livestock, and agricultural development.

Mr. Ali Mohammed Sumenai, a resident of the area, noted that due to the existing water shortages, the initiative has brought a sense of relief and satisfaction to the community.

The dam is expected to serve residents of the villages of Kimira, Afambo, Nabro, and Asabui.

# Development

## Africa Vaccination Week: Applauding Eritrea's Commitment to Universal Vaccination

**Habtom Tesfamichael**

Africa Vaccination Week (AVW), an annual observance held during the final week of April in conjunction with World Immunization Week, stands as a significant initiative that has garnered the endorsement of member states within the World Health Organization (WHO) African Region since its inception in 2010. The central objective of this week is to fortify immunization programs throughout the African continent by elevating public understanding regarding the paramount importance of vaccination for individuals across all age groups.

AVW serves as a platform to maintain the prominence of immunization on both national and regional agendas, cultivate collaborative partnerships, advocate for vaccination as an inherent human right, and facilitate the delivery of essential, life-saving vaccines to safeguard communities from diseases that can be prevented through immunization. The overarching theme for the year 2025, "Immunization for all is humanly possible," emphasizes the attainability of the aspiration to ensure that every person has access to crucial vaccines.

Mirroring this continental emphasis, Eritrea has recently

as nutrition programs, thereby establishing a holistic approach to the promotion of public well-being.

The fundamental aim of the immunization program is to substantially elevate vaccination coverage among children under the age of five years and women in their childbearing years. This objective is pursued through the reinforcement of routine immunization schedules and the implementation of robust return visit programs, with the ultimate goal of diminishing the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases that are responsible for causing death and disability in children.

indeed humanly possible.

### Understanding Vaccines and Their Management

Vaccines are biological preparations that typically contain weakened or inactivated (killed) forms of the microorganisms that cause disease. When administered to a healthy individual, these preparations stimulate the body's immune system to develop protection against various potentially life-threatening diseases. Proper handling is of paramount importance for their effectiveness; vaccines can lose their potency if they are exposed to extreme temperatures, either too hot or too cold. They necessitate a reliable energy source for refrigeration to maintain a consistent temperature and must be handled with care

throughout their logistical journey. Specifically, vaccines must be stored and transported within a strict temperature range of 2°C to 8°C – a system known as the "cold chain" – from the manufacturing facility, through all stages of storage, until they reach the point of administration to the individuals who will receive them.

Historically, in 1974, the WHO introduced vaccines that provided protection against six major diseases -- polio, measles, Tuberculosis, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, and diphtheria. Recognizing the imperative for broader protection against a wider range of diseases, the WHO set a goal post -1990- to introduce additional vaccines

*Continued on page 6*



commemorated AVW under the guiding principle of "Vaccination Week: Immunization for All is Humanly Possible," thereby underscoring its leading role in the ongoing battle against diseases that can be controlled through vaccination. The nation has been diligently and effectively working towards the eradication of both existing and newly emerging diseases by consistently adhering to the most current information and guidelines provided by the WHO and UNICEF. These concerted efforts are specifically directed towards children and women of childbearing age, particularly girls within the age range of 9 to 14 years, for the administration of relevant vaccines.

Eritrea's immunization program is strategically and comprehensively integrated within the Family and Community Health (FCH) Protection Unit. This unit operates in close coordination with reproductive health services, child and adult health services, as well

Eritrea stands out as one of the highest-performing nations within the eastern and southern African region, having successfully sustained a high immunization coverage rate exceeding 95%, even during the challenging period of the COVID-19 pandemic, a time when many other countries witnessed a decline in their immunization performance. Furthermore, Eritrea has consistently maintained its certification as being polio-free, is actively progressing towards the elimination of measles, and has also introduced the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, which will reach young girls, the future mothers, aged 9 to 14 years.

Eritrea is currently engaged in efforts to introduce new vaccines into its immunization schedule. The preparation for the introduction of the Hepatitis B birth dose that is scheduled for August is underway, further demonstrating that achieving universal access to vaccines is

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## from Social Media



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For some political groups in Ethiopia these days, their perilous obsession continues to revolve around futile packaging - sometimes too crass and couched in aggressive sabre-rattling; at other times advocated with seemingly historical/legal sophistry - to rationalize the toxic agenda of coveting and grabbing the sovereign territory of a neighbouring nation.

Let us stress, for the umpteenth time, that this is a political blasphemy of the highest order, and a red line that should never be contemplated or crossed.

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**Yemane G. Meskel**   
@hawelti

The infectious delusion - bordering on hysteria - that seems to have gripped these days amateur pundits and infantile political groups in our region is astounding by any standards.

Fact is, the peoples of our region do not have the appetite for, and do not certainly deserve, reckless agendas that flout fundamental pillars of international law to precipitate another spiral of senseless conflict and turmoil.

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## SpotLight

# Advancing Food Security and Agricultural Development in Eritrea

Bana Negusse

Food security and sustainable agricultural development are essential for reducing poverty, improving livelihoods, and building climate resilience, especially in vulnerable regions across the developing world. This article explores how Eritrea has prioritized these goals through strategic investments, policies, and programs to transform its agricultural sector.

### Building a climate-resilient agricultural infrastructure

Since achieving its independence in 1991, Eritrea has placed food security, agriculture, and poverty reduction at the core of its national development priorities. As with many other developing nations, agriculture remains a national vital sector, serving as the primary source of livelihood for approximately 65–70 percent of the population. With nearly two-thirds of Eritreans residing in rural areas, farming, animal husbandry, and fishing form the backbone of the rural economy. While urbanization is gradually increasing, population density remains relatively low, at about 35 people per square kilometer, well below both global and Sub-Saharan Africa averages. In Eritrea, most agricultural producers are smallholder farmers.

Geographically located in the Sahel region and within the Horn of Africa, Eritrea is characterized by an arid and semi-arid climate with erratic and limited rainfall. This makes the country particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. As a result, a key strategic priority has been



to reduce reliance on rain-fed agriculture and modernize the sector to enhance productivity and climate resilience.

Over the past three decades, the Eritrean government has invested significantly in building infrastructure to support agricultural development. Across all regions, numerous dams, water reservoirs, terraces, and catchments have been constructed to increase water availability for irrigation and domestic use. Around many of the major dams, the government has developed access roads and storage facilities – both dry and cold – which have helped improve efficiency, expand access, and boost general productivity.

### Empowering farmers through innovation and support

To further support farmers, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) implements various initiatives to improve agricultural efficiency and output. These include water harvesting, expanding arable land, introducing improved seed varieties, promoting modern farming techniques, combating soil erosion, and encouraging

environmentally friendly fertilizers and pesticides. In addition, integrated household packages are promoted to supplement rural incomes.

Livestock health is another area of focus. Farmers nationwide benefit from a national program that provides free and compulsory vaccinations for major animal and zoonotic diseases. Since 2013, an average of 2.5 million livestock have been vaccinated annually, significantly reducing disease and mortality rates.

Capacity-building is also central to the sector's advancement. Technical experts and extension agents from the MoA and the Hamelmalo College of Agriculture regularly conduct hands-on training and consultations nationwide. Again, these services are delivered free of charge. A particularly successful initiative is the establishment of “farmer field schools,” which create platforms for farmers to meet with agricultural experts and peers to exchange knowledge and best practices.

Eritrea launched the Minimum Integrated Household Agricultural Package (MIHAP) in 2013, demonstrating its commitment to inclusion, sustainability, and poverty reduction. Under this initiative, each rural household receives a comprehensive package that includes: one improved dairy cow or 12 goats, 25 chickens, two beehives, 20 trees (fruit, leguminous, and firewood varieties), a vegetable garden, crop land, and access to modern agricultural inputs and training. Thousands of households – and many headed by women – have benefited from this support

package, leading to improved food and nutrition security, reduced poverty, and enhanced self-sufficiency.

### Toward a sustainable and inclusive agricultural future

In recent years, Eritrea has also developed plans to promote

Conference to focus on seven selected commodities critical to national food systems. Under the theme “Enhancing Agri-Business for Sustainable Food Systems,” the conference served as a vital platform for dialogue and collaboration among a broad spectrum of stakeholders, aiming to drive innovation and coordinated action across the national agri-business value chain.

### Conclusion

Despite several challenges, Eritrea has made meaningful progress in agricultural development and food security. This was partly reflected in the country's inaugural Voluntary National Review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), presented at the United Nations in 2022, which noted improvements in agricultural



urban and peri-urban agriculture through innovative methods such as vertical farming, rooftop gardening, hydroponics, and aquaponics. These integrated systems aim to diversify diets and improve nutrition by combining nutrient-dense crops with short-cycle livestock like chickens, rabbits, and pigs.

Furthermore, collaboration with regional and international partners, such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), continues to play an essential role in strengthening research, regulation, extension services, and capacity-building. For instance, just last week, in a positive step to boost sustainable agriculture, the MoA, in cooperation with the FAO, hosted a National Agri-Business

productivity and nutrition outcomes. Importantly, both poverty and food insecurity levels are believed to have declined over the past 30 years.

Looking ahead, Eritrea's ongoing dedication to agricultural development and its strategic investments in infrastructure, innovation, and sustainable practices places the country on a promising trajectory towards achieving long-term food security. With continued focus on climate resilience, capacity-building, and inclusive initiatives, Eritrea is well-positioned to meet its population's needs and emerge as a model for agricultural transformation in the region. By building on these foundational efforts, the nation is set to ensure a future of food security, economic stability, and self-sufficiency for all its citizens.





# Molqui: Where Eritrea's Native Trees Flourish

Mussie Efriem

Eritrea, situated in the northeastern Horn of Africa, boasts a diverse terrain spanning approximately 124,432 square kilometers. Its varied topography encompasses elevations ranging from 100 meters below sea level to 3,180 meters above sea level. This extreme altitudinal gradient fosters a multitude of biological niches. In the higher elevations, persistent mists create conditions ideal for moisture-dependent flora, resulting in cooler temperatures and lush vegetation. Conversely, the lower-lying areas are typically characterized by hot, arid climates. The coastal strip experiences a hot climate, and the high salt content of the soil and water shapes its unique plant life. Notably, the Bada depression plunges significantly below sea level, ranking among the planet's hottest places with saline soils. This extensive spectrum of environmental conditions underpins a rich variety of plant and animal life, contributing to Eritrea's significant tree diversity.

At the time of Eritrea's independence, its forests were severely degraded. However, a strong emphasis was immediately placed on reforestation through seedling planting and implementing soil and water conservation practices driven by governmental and community initiatives. In recent years, a concerted effort to protect Eritrea's native tree species and its wildlife has yielded tangible and heartening results. The diligent work of dedicated authorities has fostered an environment where these indigenous trees survive and visibly thrive. This resurgence is more than just an increase in numbers; it catalyzes enhanced biodiversity across



the Eritrean landscape. As native tree populations expand, they create a wider array of habitats, providing sustenance and shelter for a greater variety of animal species, thus enriching the overall ecological balance. The impact of these thriving indigenous trees extends far beyond local biodiversity. Their well-developed root systems enhance the land's capacity to adapt to varying environmental conditions. They improve soil structure, allowing for better water infiltration and retention—a critical advantage in a region often facing water scarcity. Furthermore, these native trees are vital allies in the global effort to combat climate change.

Notably, the Molqui subzone stands out as a thriving area for indigenous tree recovery, a success largely attributed to the strong cultural tradition within its communities of actively protecting trees, allowing for their natural regeneration, and establishing the subzone as a vital hub for native flora. Contributing significantly to this flourishing vegetation is an innovative and mutually beneficial practice involving bee colonies. Farmers from various parts of the country

have strategically placed beehives within the subzone, capitalizing on the nectar-rich blossoms of the indigenous trees. This initiative creates a powerful synergy: the bees find a plentiful food source in the flourishing native flora, ensuring the health and productivity of their colonies. In return, these industrious insects become vital pollinators, diligently facilitating the natural reproduction and expansion of the trees and plants that sustain them. This symbiotic relationship acts as a natural engine for ecological growth and resilience. The fact that mountains surround 70% of the Molqui subzone is ecologically significant.

Mountains often create diverse microclimates and harbor more flora than flatter terrains. This geographical feature likely contributes to the abundance of flowering plants available for bees. The varied altitudes and aspects can extend the flowering seasons of different plant species, providing a more consistent nectar flow throughout the year. The subzone's provision of a variety of trees and shrubs offering nectar from January to December strongly indicates its suitability for beekeeping.

This continuous availability of nectar from various seasonal and permanent vegetation is crucial for maintaining healthy and productive bee colonies year-round, allowing for multiple varieties of honey harvests. Despite this favorable environment, the fact that only around 2400 beehives exist in the subzone highlights a significant opportunity for expansion. The attraction of beekeepers from other parts of the country, particularly the highlands, to the Molqui subzone underscores its reputation as a prime beekeeping area. Their presence serves as a practical demonstration of the subzone's potential and acts as a motivating factor for residents. This exemplary effect can be a powerful catalyst for adopting beekeeping within the local community. Positioning the Molqui subzone as a link or intersection between the western lowlands and the semi-highlands is key. This transitional zone likely benefits from the floral characteristics of both ecological regions, potentially resulting in a longer and more diverse blooming period compared to areas solely within the lowlands or highlands.

The Ministry of Agriculture's (MoA) campaign to encourage farmers to adopt low-cost, homemade beekeeping methods is a positive step towards realizing the subzone's potential. By promoting accessible techniques, the MoA is likely reducing the barriers to entry for new beekeepers, leading to an increase in the number of residents engaging in this activity. This grassroots movement, combined with the existing natural advantages, could significantly boost honey production and benefit the community economically.

The Molqui subzone stands out as a region endowed with significant economic potential, primarily stemming from its wealth in valuable indigenous trees, most notably the *Boswellia papyrifera*. This particular species has historically positioned Eritrea as a renowned source of high-quality frankincense. For centuries, the fragrant resin harvested from these trees has been a prized commodity, diligently exported via the Red Sea to various corners of the world. This historical trade underscores the economic importance of *Boswellia papyrifera* to Eritrea and highlights the cultural significance of its high-quality frankincense. The enduring legacy of Eritrean frankincense speaks to the potential for sustainable economic development rooted in its rich biodiversity.

The precious resin of frankincense is not simply plucked; its extraction is a carefully staged endeavor that unfolds over several weeks. The initial step, crucial for initiating the flow, involves making precise incisions into the bark of the *Boswellia* tree. This controlled wounding allows the milky resin, rich with aromatic compounds, to seep outwards and coat the tree's exterior slowly. As this liquid treasure encounters the open air, a remarkable transformation begins. The resin gradually solidifies when exposed to oxygen, forming the characteristic hardened droplets or "tears" of frankincense. The passage of time plays a vital role in this natural alchemy; the longer the resin remains exposed, the more time it has to crystallize and harden, influencing its final form and potentially its aromatic profile.

Continued from page 7



Required Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Technical Expertise: In-depth knowledge of underground mining equipment and systems.</li><li>○ Planning Tools: Proficiency in maintenance planning such as SAP, Pronto, JD Edwards, or similar platforms.</li><li>○ Problem-Solving Skills: Ability to troubleshoot complex issues in challenging underground environments.</li><li>○ Certifications: Beneficial certifications include CMRP (Certified Maintenance and Reliability Professional) , and Lean Six Sigma</li></ul>
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# OPINION

## May Day: Celebrating the Resilience of Eritrean Workers

Simon Weldemikael

May Day is a national public holiday in Eritrea that is celebrated on May 1st. It provides a significant occasion to honor Eritrean workers' hard work, perseverance, and contributions to the nation's existence and development. It is also used as an opportunity to reflect on Eritrea's labor history, celebrate its achievements, and address ongoing challenges workers face.

The story of Eritrean workers is deeply tied to the country's struggle for liberation and sovereignty. During Eritrea's armed struggle for independence, workers were not merely laborers but revolutionaries. They contributed immensely to the resistance movement, supporting logistical efforts and maintaining essential industries despite ongoing conflict.

Historically, Eritrean workers have played a crucial role in the nation's development and resilience. Their contribution has proved to be a vital force in realizing Eritrea's independence and national development. Eritrean workers take pride in their contribution to the country's progress, viewing work as an economic necessity and part of nation-building. They have played a critical role in shaping the country's economic and social progress, from their contributions during the liberation struggle to their ongoing efforts in agriculture, industry, education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

During the struggle for independence, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) recognized workers as a vital force in the liberation struggle, and their participation in the armed struggle transformed the technical capacity of the Eritrean revolution.

The EPLF worked hard in forming mass organizations, including associations of workers, farmers, women, and students. It outlined its vision for workers in its National Democratic Program, which was officially announced during the EPLF's first organizational congress in 1977. The program recognized workers as a fundamental pillar of Eritrea's liberation struggle and post-independence economic development. Alongside the

broader goals of national liberation, it gave prominence to safeguarding workers' social rights.

Labor rights are a cornerstone of nation-building, crucial to economic growth, social stability, and overall national development. Providing workers with fair working conditions, legal protections, and economic opportunities contributes to industrial growth, innovation, and improved living standards. Ensuring fair wages, safe workplaces, and equal opportunities empowers workers, strengthening economic and social foundations for long-term national progress.

The National Union of Eritrean Workers (NUEW) was established in 1979 under the auspices of the EPLF to organize and mobilize Eritrean workers to support the national struggle while advocating for labor rights. Following



protections to prevent workplace fatalities and injuries. It mandates employers to maintain hazard-free working conditions and defines workers' and employers' rights and responsibilities to ensure social justice and a humane workplace environment.

The Proclamation provides

Throughout Eritrea's history, labor movements have played a transformative role in shaping the struggle for freedom and social justice. The labor movement in Eritrea has a long and proud history that dates back to the 1950s when Eritrea was unjustly federated with Ethiopia. Eritrean workers' association, which was one of

Despite the progress made in securing workers' wellbeing, health and safety, challenges remain. That is why both private and public sectors must continuously enhance workplace safety protocols to create injury-free work environments. Strict adherence to the Labor Proclamation is essential to ensuring workers' rights, dignity, and well-being. A strong labor force is not just beneficial for the economy; it is the backbone of a just and thriving society.

Honoring Eritrean workers on May Day means reaffirming the commitment to a stronger, fairer, and safer workforce for future generations. As Eritrea celebrates May Day, it is important to honor the resilience, dedication, and achievements of Eritrean workers and renew the resolve to protect workers' well-being, rights, and safety, ensuring a thriving and just society. The day serves as a powerful reminder of the sacrifices and contributions of Eritrean workers throughout Eritrea's history, from their vital role in the liberation struggle to their ongoing commitment to nation building, economic development, and social justice.

Recognizing the sacrifices and achievements of Eritrean workers means continuing the fight for stronger labor rights, upholding workplace protections, and fostering national unity. In this sense, May Day should be used not only as an occasion for reflection on what transpired in the past but also a call for action for a fairer, more just, and empowered workforce for future generations because a workforce that is respected, empowered, and fairly treated is the foundation of national progress and social justice.



Eritrea's independence in 1991, the organization was renamed the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW), continuing its mission of promoting workers' rights, fair labor practices, and workplace protections across the country. The NCEW is Eritrea's principal labor organization, advocating for workers' rights, fair employment conditions, and social justice. Its mission is centered on protecting workers, ensuring fair labor policies, and fostering national development.

Eritrea has established legislative frameworks that emphasize fair labor practices, workplace safety, and economic justice to safeguard workers' rights. Labor Proclamation No. 118/2001 provides comprehensive legal

employment, fair wages, protection against discrimination, training, working hours, rest periods, workplace health and safety, and social security. Eritrea's new Civil Code also reinforces workers' protection, emphasizing dignity, non-discrimination, and occupational health responsibilities. A safe and fair workplace is not a privilege; it is a right.

the earliest labor organizations in Africa, was formed in 1952. It was led by Woldeab Woldemariam, a prominent nationalist leader and labor rights advocate. Although the prevailing political situation at the time hindered the full development of the association, its foundation paved the way for future labor organizations in Eritrea. The NCEW, which was formed decades later, drew inspiration from it.



# Africa Vaccination Week: Applauding Eritrea's Commitment to . . .

Continued from page 2



**Mrs. Dahab Solomon**

to assist countries in achieving an immunization coverage rate of over 80%. A substantial impetus to these efforts was provided in 1999 with the establishment of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), which began to facilitate access to newer vaccines for lower-income countries. Currently, Eritrea is administering a total of 14 vaccines, which are given either orally or through injection. These include vaccines that protect against measles, polio, TB, Pertussis (Cough), Tetanus, Diphtheria, Hepatitis B, meningitis, pneumonia, Rotavirus, and Human Papillomavirus (HPV) for the prevention of cervical cancer. Health guidelines affirm that the simultaneous administration of two or more vaccines is safe and effective.

Following vaccination, a child might experience mild and temporary side effects, such as a low-grade fever or slight itching at the site of the injection. These reactions are generally not severe and typically resolve quickly without intervention. However, it is important to consult the nearest health facility if the symptoms persist or cause concern. In the Eritrean context, a child is considered to be fully vaccinated after receiving the rubella and measles vaccines, which are administered to children when they are 18 months of age. Achieving high vaccination rates, ideally 80% or more of the population, can lead to a phenomenon known as “herd immunity,” which significantly reduces the overall incidence of targeted diseases within the community.

## Robust Program Activities and Infrastructure

To ensure the continued success of the immunization program, intensive training is given to enhance the skills and knowledge of health practitioners, often through collaborative efforts with various stakeholders. Continuous awareness-raising campaigns are conducted throughout

communities to educate the public about the benefits and importance of vaccination. Furthermore, assessments are carried out every two years to inspect the operational activities of health facilities and to evaluate the condition of vaccination equipment. Any malfunctioning electric or solar-powered refrigerators and other essential instruments are promptly repaired to maintain the integrity of the cold chain. Notably, all health facilities across Eritrea are now equipped with reliable solar or electric-powered refrigerators, which is crucial for ensuring the consistent maintenance of the vital vaccine cold chain.

## Celebrating Progress and Reinforcing Commitment in Eritrea

The national commemoration of AVW in Eritrea took place on April 29th at the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers hall, under the locally adapted theme of “Vaccination everyone’s right; let’s all use it for our safety”. The event brought together key representatives from the Ministry of Health (MoH), the WHO, UNICEF, and regional health organizations.

Mrs. Dahab Solomon, Head of the FCH Unit in the Central region, initiated the remarks by emphatically stating, “Eritrea is an exemplary country in vaccination programs.” She underscored the sustained and dedicated efforts of the Central region, which have resulted in an impressive 99% immunization coverage achieved through the integration of daily vaccination services with other essential health interventions, such as pre- and post-natal care and malnutrition screening. Mrs. Dahab emphasized the critical importance of ongoing vigilance, including the implementation of regular inspections to prevent the cross-border transmission of diseases (at the border areas) and to identify any remaining gaps in immunization coverage, concluding with a strong call to maintain the current momentum towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Mr. Ghebru Hurui, the regional EPI coordinator of the Central region, subsequently presented a detailed overview of the regional immunization performance within the central region. He meticulously highlighted the administration and significant achievements of the immunization program in this densely populated area.



**Mrs. Nande Putta**

He pointed out that as one of the most densely populated areas in the nation, the Central region benefits from a relatively well-established network of healthcare facilities that are dedicated to carrying out immunization activities. The robust infrastructure in the Central region includes three community hospitals, six health centers, and twenty-six strategically located health posts designed to effectively serve the population. Furthermore, specialized vaccination stations have been established at Orotta Children’s Hospital and Orotta Maternity Hospital to cater to specific needs. Immunization services are consistently available six days a week across all these facilities, with a designated vaccination representative overseeing the administration of vaccines at each site.

As a direct result of these concerted efforts, Mr. Ghebru reported a consistent year-on-year increase in the coverage of fully immunized children, reaching an impressive rate of 99.6% in the year 2024. This significant achievement serves as a clear reflection of the program’s overall effectiveness and the growing acceptance of vaccination within the community.

Mrs. Nande Putta, Chief of Child Survival and UNICEF officer in Eritrea, began her address by expressing gratitude to the MoH branches in the six regional administrative zones for their ongoing efforts in undertaking an intensified immunization week. She highlighted their work in vaccinating children and actively seeking out those who have not yet received all the necessary vaccinations, which she emphasized as the core objective of AVW – ensuring that reaching everyone with vaccines is indeed humanly possible.

Mrs. Nande reaffirmed the unwavering commitment of the WHO, UNICEF, and other partner organizations working collaboratively with

the government of the State of Eritrea to ensure that every single child is reached with essential vaccines. She reiterated their dedication to ensuring that all the crucial elements that contribute to the success of vaccination programs are firmly in place. These elements include the establishment of a functional coaching system and the support of community health workers, such as the “barefoot doctors,” who possess the capacity and motivation to assist the health system in reaching every child. “This means working with you both from the technical standpoint and the logistical standpoint to ensure that all the necessary activities such as campaigns, mobile clinics, outreach campaigns, intensified routine immunization are conducted on time and to the fullest possible extent,” she stated.

Representing UNICEF Eritrea, Mr. Joel Motswagole echoed the strong sentiment of commitment, emphasizing that AVW provides a vital opportunity to reflect on both the progress that has been made and the challenges that still remain. He underscored that immunization is “a fundamental right, a shared responsibility and a vital investment in our future,” drawing attention to the staggering global impact where vaccines have saved an estimated 154 million lives over the past 50 years, leading to a drastic reduction in infant mortality rates. Mr. Motswagole highlighted the powerful global theme for 2025, “Immunization for all is humanly possible,”



**Mr. Joel Motswagole**

describing it as a compelling call to action to reach every child, particularly those who have not received any vaccines (zero-dose children), by strengthening existing health systems.

While acknowledging the major strides that Eritrea has made in the field of immunization, he noted that challenges persist in ensuring universal access to vaccines for all. He reaffirmed the strong and continued support of the WHO and its partners for Eritrea’s ongoing efforts and stressed the critical need to continue raising public awareness about the importance of vaccination and to actively dispel any myths and misinformation that may exist. Crucially, Mr. Joel called for a deep and sincere appreciation for the “tireless efforts of healthcare workers” who are on the front lines of delivering these essential health services. He concluded his remarks with a unifying call to action, urging everyone to “recommit ourselves to the cause of vaccination, ensuring that every child in Eritrea and across Africa can lead a life free from preventable diseases.”

## NEWS

### ANNUAL SPORTS EVENT OF EASTERN COMMAND CONCLUDES

The 18<sup>th</sup> annual sports event of the Eastern Command of the Eritrean Defense Forces, which was held over the past three months, concluded with a closing ceremony at Assab Stadium on 30 April. The event was attended by Brig. Gen. Abraham Andom, Commander of the Eastern Command, Ambassador Mohammed Seid Mantai, Governor of the region, other regional officials, Assab residents, and members of the Defense Forces.

According to Mr. Habtom Tesfamariam, Head of Information and Promotion of the Command, the sports event involved 1,275 participants from both genders and featured competitions in football, volleyball, basketball, chess, cycling, swimming, athletics, and other sports.

Speaking on the occasion, Brig. Gen. Abraham Andom emphasized that sports provide enjoyment to both players and spectators. He called for enhanced efforts to organize more cultural and sports events, citing their role in strengthening unity among members and fostering attachment to their units.

Awards were presented to the winners of the various competitions.



# Vacancy Announcement

Position:	Senior Maintenance Planning Engineer
Number required	01
Location:	Based at Koka Gold Mine.
Reporting to:	Maintenance Superintendent/ Mine Manager
Primary Responsibility & Scope of Work	This role is crucial for ensuring the smooth operation and reliability of mining equipment, contributing to the overall success of the mining maintenance department. The maintenance planning engineer requires a combination of technical expertise, strong leadership, and effective problem-solving skills to ensure the successful management of maintenance operations in mining environments.
Responsibilities	<div><div>1. Maintenance Planning:</div><div><div>Develop and implement maintenance plans for both underground and open pit mining operations.</div><div>Schedule preventive and corrective maintenance tasks to ensure equipment reliability and minimize downtime.</div><div>Coordinate with maintenance teams to execute planned maintenance activities efficiently.</div></div><div><div>2. Equipment Management:</div><div><div>Oversee mining equipment maintenance, including heavy machinery, light vehicles, and fixed installations.</div><div>Monitor equipment performance and identify areas for improvement.</div><div>Ensure compliance with the manufacturer’s standards and industry best practices.</div></div><div><div>3. Project Management:</div><div><div>Manage maintenance projects, including major component change-outs and equipment upgrades.</div><div>Prepare and manage budgets for maintenance activities and projects.</div><div>Track project progress and ensure timely completion within budget constraints.</div></div><div><div>4. Data Analysis and Reporting:</div><div><div>Maintain accurate records of maintenance activities and equipment performance.</div><div>Analyse maintenance data to identify trends and optimize maintenance strategies.</div><div>Prepare reports on maintenance metrics and project status for management review.</div></div><div><div>5. Safety and Compliance:</div><div><div>Ensure all maintenance activities comply with safety regulations and standards.</div><div>Conduct regular safety audits and risk assessments.</div><div>Implement and enforce safety protocols to protect personnel and equipment</div></div><div><div>6. Team Leadership:</div><div><div>Lead and mentor a team of maintenance planners and technicians.</div><div>Provide training and development opportunities to enhance team skills and knowledge.</div><div>Foster a collaborative and productive work environment.</div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div>
Qualification	<div><div>1. Education:</div><div><div>Bachelor’s degree in engineering (Mechanical, Electrical, or related).</div><div>An advanced degree (Master’s, MBA, or Project Management) is a plus.</div></div><div><div>2. Experience:</div><div><div>Minimum of 8-10 years of maintenance planning experience, focusing on mining operations.</div><div>Proven experience in both underground and open pit mining environments.</div><div>Demonstrated leadership experience in managing large projects and teams.</div><div>Experience with Pronto and related equipment maintenance scheduling software</div></div><div><div>3. Skills:</div><div><div>Strong leadership and team management skills.</div><div>Excellent problem-solving and analytical abilities.</div><div>Proficiency in maintenance management software and tools.</div><div>Knowledge of safety regulations and best practices in mining.</div></div><div><div>4. Personal Attributes:</div><div><div>Strong communication and interpersonal skills.</div><div>Ability to work under pressure and manage multiple priorities.</div><div>Commitment to continuous improvement and innovation.</div></div></div></div></div></div>
KEY Challenges	<div><div>1. Equipment Reliability:</div><div><div>Maintaining the reliability and performance of mining equipment, which can be subject to harsh conditions and heavy usage.</div><div>Addressing frequent breakdowns and ensuring timely repairs to minimize downtime</div></div><div><div>2. Transitioning Between Mining Types:</div><div><div>Managing the transition from open pit to underground mining involves different operational challenges and equipment requirements.</div><div>Training personnel to adapt to new environments and technologies.</div></div><div><div>3. Resource Allocation:</div><div><div>Efficiently allocating resources, including manpower and materials, to meet maintenance demands across both mining operations.</div><div>Balancing budget constraints while ensuring high standards of maintenance.</div></div><div><div>4. Communication and Coordination:</div><div><div>Coordinating maintenance activities across different teams and departments to ensure smooth operations.</div><div>Effective communication with stakeholders, including contractors and vendors.</div></div><div><div>5. Continuous Improvement:</div><div><div>Driving continuous improvement initiatives to enhance maintenance processes and</div><div>Staying updated with industry trends and best practices.</div></div></div></div></div></div></div>



Q and A

# Sawa and the Voices of Its Youth

Kidane Shimendi



Adil Ibrahim Ali

“As the time to leave for Sawa approached, my excitement grew. I have always admired the energy of Eritrean youth who are heading there with joy and returning transformed. Since joining the 37th round, my life has changed significantly—my self-confidence, discipline, academic performance, and national awareness have all improved. I’ve learned to manage time effectively and interact with students from all



Mohammed Eid Mohammed

Eritrean ethnic groups. I am from the Nara ethnic group, and I am gaining insight into our shared values and wisdom. Sawa fosters both physical and mental growth. The education here is excellent, with ample resources, time, and dedicated teachers. Truly, Sawa is a life-changing experience that every Eritrean youth should embrace for a brighter future.”

Adunya Bekit

“Sawa is where physical and mental maturity become inevitable. The lessons in time management, adaptability, and peer interaction are game changers. I am from the Bedawyet



Annaya Bekit

*Warsay Yikealo Secondary School, located in Sawa—130 kilometers west of Akordet in the Gash Barka region—is a prominent national institution where Eritrean students from across the country converge to complete their 12<sup>th</sup> grade, sit for the national matriculation examination, and fulfill their national service obligations. Since its establishment, the school has hosted approximately 300,000 students, from the 16th to the 37<sup>th</sup> round of national service. In this academic year alone, nearly 20,000 students are enrolled, with a roughly equal representation of male and female students. Below are reflections from several students on their experience and the transformative impact of life in Sawa.*



Halima Mohammed

ethnic group, and I’ve come to understand and appreciate Eritrea’s ethnic diversity and now consider my friends here a second family. We study our history and heritage deeply, which strengthens our national identity. We’re shaping a stronger future together through unity, resilience, discipline, creativity, and hard work—our core national values.”

Halima Mohammed Saleh

“Sawa is like chemistry—bringing together diverse Eritrean youth to create a unified, well-rounded generation. The values we develop—resilience, discipline, unity, and nationalism—are invaluable. Educationally, everything is in place: from dedicated teachers to materials and supportive learning environments. It’s hard to express how deeply I love Sawa in words. Everyone should experience it firsthand.”

Hanan Haj-Omer

“Sawa has transformed me—teaching patience, discipline, and the power of unity. It’s like forging a dull blade into a sharp one. Students from six regions with varied cultures and beliefs come together here, and through shared purpose, we turn diversity into strength. In collaboration with other institutions, the school provides every opportunity to succeed. I’ve become more confident, self-reliant, and driven. I truly wish every Eritrean youth could experience this.”

Makda Gebrezgabiher

“Sawa represents maturity and achievement—it’s a bridge to

success. It teaches you how to coexist with people from different backgrounds, all to build our nation. We learn vital life skills like time management, discipline, and teamwork. As a young woman, I’m proud of the equal participation and representation here. Sawa is where you grow, and I encourage all youth to participate in this transformative journey.”

Michael Ambasajer

“My time in Sawa has changed me more than any other period in my life. I come from the Kunama ethnic group, but I’ve learned Tigrinya, Arabic, and English, which has expanded my social interaction and understanding. Learning about Eritrean history



and our cultural diversity sparked my curiosity and deepened my national pride. Group study, discipline, and teamwork have greatly influenced my academic progress. I now have the confidence to work with others and solve problems—skills I consider essential to achieving any goal.”

Mohammed Eid Mohammed

“Sawa gave me new family and



Makda Gebrezgabiher



Micael Ambasajer

friends from across Eritrea. I’ve grown physically and mentally, learning to be independent, responsible, and solution-oriented. I’ve gained knowledge in study techniques, time management, national history, and more. Tutorial sessions in our dorms have helped us revise past lessons and prepare for exams. I’m no

longer the same Mohammed my family knew; I’ve become more confident, persistent, and self-reliant. Sawa has truly been a life-changing opportunity.”

Noah Mekonen – 1<sup>st</sup>-Ranked Student of the 37<sup>th</sup> Round

“I can’t list all the benefits I’ve gained from Sawa. From time management and self-discipline to national consciousness and confidence, Sawa has shaped every part of my life. I’ve made friends from every corner of Eritrea and learned new languages. Academically, our days are dedicated to learning in school and afternoon study sessions in our dorms. The collective effort helped me achieve the highest average in the 37th round. Sawa is truly the gateway to a successful future.”

Yordanos Gugul

“Sawa exemplifies the



Noah Mekonen

importance of national service in nation-building. It has shaped my

confidence, discipline, and problem-solving skills. I come from the Kunama ethnic group, but I’ve made friends from all nine ethnic groups and learned new languages like Afar. Before Sawa, I didn’t understand Eritrea’s full beauty and diversity. Now, I share knowledge and love with peers as we study, train, and grow together. The environment here is nurturing, and the group learning culture is key to success in our exams. Sawa is fundamental to



Hanan Hajomer

our national progress—it is the backbone of our future.”

Conclusion

The voices of these students reflect the transformative power of Sawa—not just as an academic institution, but as a symbol of national unity, resilience, and empowerment. Sawa continues to shape Eritrea’s youth into well-rounded, capable citizens, ready to contribute to their nation’s development with knowledge, confidence, and purpose.



Yordanos Gugul