

WORLD HEALTH DAY OBSERVED AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL



World Health Day, observed annually on 7 April, was commemorated at the national level in Asmara under the theme “Healthy Beginnings—Hopeful Futures.” Ministers, senior Government officials, and heads of UN offices in Eritrea attended the event.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Andebrhan Tesfatsion, Acting Director General of Public Health at the Ministry of Health, stated that World Health Day’s objective is to serve as a reminder to ensure “Universal Health Care for All, Everywhere.”

Dr. Andebrhan noted that, due to strong efforts, prenatal treatment coverage has reached 98%, and



the number of pregnant women giving birth at health facilities has increased by 80%. Vaccination coverage has also reached 98%. As a result, he stated, the maternal and child mortality rates have been significantly reduced globally.

Dr. Nonso Ejikor, Acting Representative of the World Health Organization in Eritrea, commended the Eritrean Government for its efforts to improve healthcare services in collaboration with partners. He expressed his pride in being involved in such a working environment.

Dr. Ejikor further noted that globally, nearly 300,000 women die each year from pregnancy-related causes. More than 2.3 million

newborns die within their first month of life, and 1.9 million are stillborn—many in low-resource settings.

The event featured various programs highlighting the day’s significance and a general knowledge competition.

According to a report from the Ministry of Health, over 60% of the Eritrean population receives healthcare services within five kilometers of their residence.

World Health Day is being observed for the 77th time at the international level and for the 29th time at the national level.

TRAINING ON DOCUMENTATION AND MATERIAL MANAGEMENT

The Ministry of Agriculture has trained 56 members in the Central Region on documentation and material management.

Mr. Efreem Kiflu, Head of Administration and Finance at the Ministry of Agriculture, indicated that the training’s objective was to strengthen coordination between various Ministry organs and ensure the effective distribution and preservation of agricultural products.

Mr. Solomon Kokeb, from the Agriculture and Land Department in the region, gave an extensive briefing on the efforts made to preserve and distribute improved seeds to farmers and pesticides and fertilizers. He also called on the trainees to apply the knowledge gained from the training to improve the efficiency of the Ministry’s activities in their respective workplaces.

Mr. Yosief Tewolde, also from the Ministry of Agriculture, noted that the training program consisted of 75% practical and 25% theoretical components. He urged the trainees to deliver effective and timely services at their places of assignment.



SPORTS MATERIAL SUPPORT TO HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AND RESEARCH

The National Olympics Committee of Eritrea has extended sports material support worth approximately \$40 thousand to higher education institutions and Research in an effort to strengthen their sports programs.

Mr. Michael Teklemichael, President of the National Olympics Committee, stated that the committee is actively working to establish strong partnerships with international stakeholders so that it can benefit from available opportunities and support.

Highlighting the materials’ contribution to the development of sports and the promotion of Olympic values, Mr. Michael urged colleges to play an active role in advancing sports activities in the country.

Ambassador Zemed Tekle, Commissioner of Culture and Sports, emphasized the importance of strengthening relations with higher education institutions and Research and commended the National Olympics Committee for its initiative.

Dr. Haile Mihtsun, Executive Director of the Higher Education Institutions and Research, stressed that the colleges’ objective is to promote sports beyond academic achievement. He called to organize regular sports events, using the newly provided support as a foundation.

Dr. Amine Teklay, Secretary General of the National Olympics Committee, stated that the donation includes materials for athletics, football, basketball, volleyball, and ground tennis to support the development of these five sports.



Nationals inside the country and abroad have contributed over 800,000 Nakfa to support the National Association of Eritrean War Disabled Veterans.

Mr. Fesehaye Tesfamichael, Chairman of the Association, reported that members of the Swedish branch, members of the National Union of Eritrean Women branch in Germany, and the ‘Tsinat’ and ‘Awet Nhafash’ groups contributed a total of 617,619 Nakfa.

The ‘Paltalk EPLF HIGDEF

Vision Room’ group in Denmark contributed 170,452 Nakfa to support female war-disabled veterans in Denden Camp, Asmara. Former ex-Comboni School students in Asmara contributed 23,000 Nakfa to support the Association.

At the handover ceremony on 4 April, support contributors stated that the contributions made by nationals both inside the country and abroad reflect their honor and respect for war-disabled veterans and their strong bond with their homeland.



Development

Elabered Estate: Increasing Food production Through Integrated Agriculture

Habtom Tesfamichael

Insufficient food production induced by environmental factors and policy failures is making many in Sub-Sahara African countries dependent on food imports or food assistance, which cripples their economy and productivity. Unable to feed their own people many are immersed in a vicious circle of debt and inability to assert themselves in the international arena despite their immense resources.

The government of Eritrea gives food security top priority. The government and people of Eritrea take food self-sufficiency so seriously that they seek to free themselves from food deficiency by upholding the principles of self-reliance and wise use of natural resources.

As in other African countries,



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in Eritrea, too, agriculture is the backbone of Eritrean economy, with the majority of its population engaged in subsistence farming, growing sorghum, barley, taff, maize, wheat, legumes and vegetables. Since most of the people earn their living by farming, improving the economics of agriculture is the way not only to poverty reduction and food self-sufficiency but also to development as a whole.

Sustained growth in agriculture is critical for food security for two reasons. First, growth in agricultural productivity translates into increased food supplies and lower food prices for consumers. And second, growth in agricultural productivity means higher incomes, and thus improved ability to purchase food and other basic necessities for many food insecure people, who earn their livelihood through agriculture.

In Eritrea, crop production depends heavily on rain that is variable and unevenly distributed. The critical need for food in developing countries can only be met by increasing food production through modern farming. That is why the primary goal of Eritrea is to guarantee food security by introducing modern technology, irrigation, terracing, soil and water conservation, with less dependence on rain-fed farming practices.

Modern and commercial agriculture was introduced to Eritrea by the Italians, but it was for the most part either abandoned by subsequent colonial administrations or ruined by war. Following Eritrea's independence, commercial farming began to expand to meet the demands of the growing urban population and to generate hard

currency by exporting cash crops.

One of the agro-industries that is functioning in Eritrea today is the Elabered Estate. Located 68 Km north-west of Asmara, it is operated by the Eritrean Crops and Livestock Corporation. It was initially established in 1893 by an Italian entrepreneur on around 12 Ha growing vegetables, sisal and tobacco, among others. It later grew into a complex agro-industry. It was heavily damaged during the war for independence and had to be rebuilt in 1998.

The Elabered Estate sits on about 1,200 ha of which 350 ha is under cultivation, 108 ha is used for various kinds of civil works, 22 ha is occupied by ponds, dams and canals, while the remaining 570 ha is primarily steep, covered with trees, vegetation and stones. It uses the Anseba River as the main source of water through diversion systems, and it applies a mechanized type of farming.

Of the 300 ha of arable land about 84 ha is cultivated with perennial crops while 86 ha is cultivated with vegetables and fodder crops. Portions of the remaining irrigable land have recently been developed while the rest are not utilized primarily for crop rotation and future expansion of fruit and vegetable farms. Out of the 570 ha about 100 ha serves as grazing land during the rainy season.

The farms at the Estate are currently covered with cereals, vegetables, fruit trees such as oranges, lemons, papayas, mangoes, guavas, avocados and olives, as well as animal food such as alpha-alpha.

The Estate has five departments: vegetables, fruits, crop disease prevention, livestock and dairy products and animal food. Fruits, vegetables and dairy products are supplied to Asmara daily. In addition to the milk sold locally, around 4,000 liters of milk is delivered weekly to Asmara. The milk processing plant at the Elabered Estate processes milk from Elabered and Halhale dairy farms. The tomato processing plant at the Estate is being renovated.

Currently, there is a lot of focus on the reproduction of animals at the Estate, where 300 cows, 100 sheep and 900 pigs are being raised. The dung of the animals is used as

For optimum results the Estate works in collaboration with institutions in the country, such as the Ministry of Agriculture, Hamelmalo Agricultural College, and the National Agricultural Research Institution of Halhale. Most of the Estate's staff have been trained at these institutions.

The Government established seed banks, research stations and laboratories with a view to assisting farmers. Applied research on livestock, forestry, horticulture and plant pests are in progress. It has created platforms for farmers to get training periodically with a view to helping them improve



fertilizer, helping save expenses.

One of the goals of the Elabered Estate is to stabilize market prices of agricultural products such

their entrepreneurial and farm management skills.

The agro food sector of the Estate



as vegetables, fruits, meat and dairy products. It has also created employment opportunities for hundreds of the local people, who work at the Estate's farms and food processing plants.

offers significant potential for expansion, and with the introduction of modern technology such as drip irrigation and sprinklers would enable the Estate to save water and intensify its production.



SpotLight

Improving Health and Wellbeing: Eritrea's Enduring Commitment

Dr. Fikrejesus Amahazion

Every year on April 7, the world unites to celebrate World Health Day, a global initiative that emphasizes the importance of health and well-being for all. Established in 1948 to mark the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO), a specialized agency of the United Nations, this day serves as a platform to recognize efforts in public health and inspire continued progress. This article takes World Health Day as an opportunity to explore Eritrea's enduring commitment to health, highlight the nation's ongoing efforts, and review its notable progress in improving the well-being of its people.

Eritrea's deep-rooted commitment to health

Eritrea's strong commitment to health is not new or recent development. It actually pre-dates the nation's independence. During the liberation war, which spanned three decades (1961-1991), the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) established a remarkably effective healthcare infrastructure. In response to the devastation of the existing health system, the EPLF built an extensive network of medical services that catered to both fighters and civilians, even in the most inaccessible regions. The EPLF's healthcare policy was guided by two key principles: ensuring healthcare access for the broader population, particularly for workers, peasants, and nomads, and prioritizing preventive care over curative treatment.

By the 1970s, the EPLF had developed numerous stationary and mobile clinics, regional hospitals, and a central hospital in Orotta. Notably, these facilities were complemented by an underground pharmaceutical plant that produced vital medical supplies. Additionally, the EPLF established advanced training programs for healthcare workers, including midwives, paramedics, and laboratory technicians.

The solid commitment to health continued following independence. Eritrea's national health policy aims to maximize the health and well-being of all citizens at all ages and seeks to ensure equity and access to essential health services, utilizing primary health care as a key strategy and consistent with universal health coverage (UHC) principles. Over

the years, a wide set of interventions have been implemented to expand access and improve care for all, and progress is being registered towards achievement of UHC. Importantly, health service continues to be heavily subsidized, with patients required to make only nominal payments (which are wholly waived in cases of financial need). As well, many essential health services are provided completely free of charge, while all patients with chronic diseases and other disorders are provided with free care and prescribed medications.

Moreover, accessibility, the expansion of health infrastructure, and human resource development have been areas of major focus. The country has constructed and renovated many health facilities, ranging from hospitals and health centres to health stations and clinics, resulting in a nearly fourfold increase from independence. Likewise, the total number of health professionals, including doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacists and pharmacy technicians, laboratory technicians, radiologists, physiotherapists, and other personnel, has substantially grown.

Crucially, distribution of health facilities has also dramatically improved, with more health workers now serving in rural and hard-to-reach areas. Today, approximately 80 percent of the Eritrean population lives within a 10 km radius of a health facility and 70 percent within a 5 km radius.

Child and maternal health

One area of significant improvement has been child and maternal health, with Eritrea transforming one of its greatest challenges into a major success story. The country's maternal mortality ratio has plummeted from



approximately 998 per 100,000 live births in 1990 – one of the highest in the world – to fewer than 200 today, reflecting an extraordinary reduction of over 80 percent. Similarly, the under-five mortality rate has decreased by roughly 75 percent since independence. Notably, Eritrea's average annual reduction rate for under-five mortality, estimated at 4.5 percent since 1990, ranks among the fastest globally. Overall, these achievements not only distinguish Eritrea within Africa and the broader developing world but also lay a strong foundation for continued progress in the years ahead.

Eritrea's substantial progress on reducing child and maternal mortality has been driven by a mix of factors that cut across several sectors. In addition to expanded health-related and general infrastructure, and more health personnel, Eritrea has demonstrated unwavering high-level political will and commitment, made steady advancements in women's education and empowerment, greatly improved access and service delivery, and carried out an array of high-impact, cost-effective lifesaving interventions, including establishing a robust childhood vaccination programme. The latter maintains a national coverage rate

of about 97-98 percent.

Controlling and eliminating one of the most devastating diseases: malaria

Eritrea, like many others across Africa, historically struggled with malaria, particularly in regions such as Gash Barka, Debub, and Semenawi Keih Bahri. However, it has made significant strides, especially since the establishment of the National Malaria Control Program in 1995.

The country's malaria control strategy has included widespread distribution of insecticide-treated nets, indoor residual spraying, larval source management, effective case management, and strong community engagement. These efforts have yielded notable results, with malaria incidence dropping from 157 cases per 1,000 people in 1998 to just 18 cases per 1,000 in 2018. Malaria-related deaths have declined drastically, from 405 in 1998 to only 4 in 2023. Notably, Eritrea's success has earned it recognition from the African Leaders Malaria Alliance for its commitment to malaria reduction.

Despite facing recent challenges, such as insecticide and drug resistance, Eritrea remains committed to eliminating malaria by 2030 through sustained interventions, improved diagnostic services, and enhanced research efforts. It also continues to refine its strategies, including developing epidemiological mapping and strengthening early diagnosis and treatment to maintain its progress toward a malaria-free future.

Combating the scourge that is HIV/AIDS

Through strong political commitment and leadership, the hard work of a highly dedicated

healthcare workforce, sustained implementation of high-impact interventions, and a well-coordinated multi-sectoral approach, Eritrea has achieved considerable success in slowing the spread of HIV and sustaining a decline in prevalence and incidence in the country. Equality, too, has been a focus, with the aim of ensuring that everyone in the nation, regardless of distinction or background, has equal access to HIV prevention, testing, treatment, and care.

Today, HIV prevalence among adults (aged 15-49 years) in the country is approximately 0.4 percent, down from about 1.5 percent at independence in 1991. In terms of incidence, it has declined from about 3.9 per 1,000 uninfected population (adults aged 15-49 years) in 1991 to less than 0.1. Meanwhile, the total number of AIDS-related deaths across all age groups in the country is estimated to be several hundred – and reducing annually.

The country's improvement on mother-to-child transmission is noteworthy. There has been a considerable expansion in access to prevention-related services and HIV testing during antenatal care visits for pregnant women is now almost universal, standing at about 99 percent. This is a substantial increase from approximately 83 percent in 2017. (Antenatal care visits among all pregnant women is also nearly universal.) In addition, through various public awareness campaigns and educational programs maternal knowledge about mother-to-child transmission continues to steadily rise nationwide, while there has been an increase in the number of pregnant women living with HIV being provided with safe, effective medicines (referred to as antiretrovirals). HIV medicines both reduce the risk of perinatal transmission of HIV and protect the mother's health. They are provided completely free of charge (including refills) and the number of sites in the country offering them has increased from 21 in 2013 to more than 50 at present. Crucially, they are located in all six regions of the country and contributing to improved access and reduced dropouts. Furthermore, comprehensive services for routine viral load monitoring and early infant diagnosis are conducted in a growing number of health facilities and also provided free of charge.



Continued on page 5



The Innovation Hub: A Center for Creativity and Progress

Sona Berhane

The Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub, widely referred to simply as the Innovation Hub, stands at the forefront of nurturing technological and inventive talent among Eritrean youth. Established in 2023, it represents a structured and systematic approach to fostering innovation beyond previous efforts, primarily event-based and lacking a sustained, long-term strategy. With a clear focus on grassroots development, the Innovation Hub aims to equip young minds with the technical skills and problem-solving abilities necessary to contribute meaningfully to the country's future.

The Hub's most recent achievement was the successful hosting of a national science and innovation fair, which took place on March 21–22 at the headquarters of the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS) within the premises of the Junior Club. This event allowed young inventors, students, and aspiring entrepreneurs to showcase their work, engage with stakeholders, and gain recognition for their contributions. The fair marked a significant milestone, as it was the first time all six Eritrea regions fully participated. A similar fair was held the previous year at Medeber, but only Zoba Maekel, Zoba Anseba, and Zoba Debub participants could participate. This year's expansion of participation signified the Hub's growing reach and the increasing importance of technological and scientific exploration among Eritrean youth.

For many years, NUEYS has played an active role in encouraging scientific curiosity among young Eritreans. Various science fairs and competitions have been organized in schools and colleges during the



annual Eritrean Festival and at more significant regional levels. These initiatives have always sought to inspire creativity and reward innovative thinking, yet they often lacked a centralized framework to ensure continuity and widespread impact. Recognizing the need for a more structured and sustained effort, the Innovation Hub was formally



established as a dedicated center for technological education and skill development. Unlike previous initiatives, the Hub provides young people with hands-on training, long-term mentorship, and access to educational resources, ensuring that innovation is encouraged and actively cultivated.

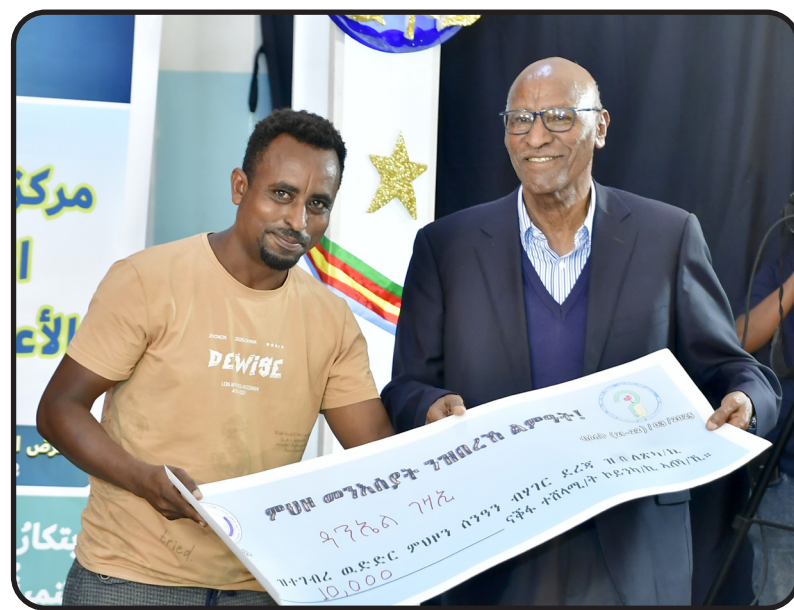
A strong emphasis on technical training is at the core of the Hub's mission. Young participants, primarily students from Grades 9 to 11, are introduced to

various fields crucial in today's technological landscape. The courses offered include electronics, Python programming, Scratch programming, robotics, and soldering – the latter involving the design and assembly of the exterior casing of electronic devices. Each course is designed to be theoretical and practical, allowing students to work on real-world applications while learning the underlying principles. The training program is structured into three levels, with each level spanning six months. While preference is given to students with above-average academic performance, the Hub does not exclude passionate or highly motivated individuals. The belief is that innovation is not solely the domain of those with high grades but those who demonstrate curiosity, perseverance, and a willingness to learn.

While considerable effort has

been put into fostering technological literacy in Eritrea, some challenges remain. One of these challenges is the issue of accessibility. In major urban centers, students have relatively more exposure to technology-related subjects, but those in remote areas often face significant barriers to accessing training programs or educational resources. The Innovation Hub was conceived in part to bridge this gap. While material resources remain somewhat limited, considerable efforts have been made to ensure that all six regions of the country have access to the necessary software and learning materials. By extending its reach into rural areas, the Hub seeks to ease access to technological education and provide equal opportunities to students regardless of their geographical location.

Although the Innovation Hub's primary focus is on nurturing young students, long-term plans are to extend its programs to include college graduates and young



professionals. While these plans are still in development, the Hub has already begun engaging with Eritrean experts and professionals in various fields, inviting them to deliver guest lectures and conduct short training sessions for engineers and working professionals. By fostering connections between experienced professionals and aspiring innovators, the Hub aims to create a mentorship and knowledge exchange network that can further accelerate technological advancement in the country.

The National Science and Innovation Fair served multiple purposes beyond providing a platform for young inventors to display their projects. One of its core objectives was to connect these young minds with key stakeholders from various sectors, including government ministries, professionals, and academic institutions. The fair also played a vital role in promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, encouraging students to think beyond the classroom and apply their knowledge to real-world challenges. Participants were selected based on criteria set by technical advisors, who evaluated projects based on originality, inventiveness, problem-solving potential, and socio-economic applicability. While there was no strict requirement that projects address local socio-economic issues, participants were encouraged to develop solutions that could contribute meaningfully to national development, particularly in agriculture, energy, health, mining, and technology sectors.

The impact of such initiatives extends far beyond the immediate participants. By fostering a culture of innovation from an early age, the Innovation Hub is helping to lay the

foundation for a more self-reliant and technologically driven Eritrea. The presence of stakeholders from various industries at the fair also created opportunities for collaboration, mentorship, and potential investment in young talent. Moreover, the engagement of government ministries – most notably the Ministry of Agriculture, which has been the primary collaborator of the Hub, along with the Ministry of Education – signals a growing recognition of the role that innovation must play in the country's future development.

The Innovation Hub envisions an even broader and more inclusive approach to technological education and innovation. The success of the 2025 Science and Innovation Fair has reinforced the importance of creating spaces where young minds can experiment, learn, and showcase their potential. With plans to further integrate college graduates and working professionals into its programs, the Hub is poised to become a key institution in shaping Eritrea's future innovators and entrepreneurs.

We live in a time where technological advancement is increasingly shaping the course of a nation's progress. So initiatives like the Innovation Hub serve as vital incubators for the next generation of problem-solvers and creators. By providing structured education, fostering collaboration, and promoting a spirit of inquiry and inventiveness, the Hub transforms the lives of individual students. It contributes to the broader goal of national development. Through continued investment, expanded accessibility, and strengthened partnerships, it has the potential to drive Eritrea toward a more innovative and technologically empowered future.



OPINION

The Untold Struggle

Simon Weldemikael

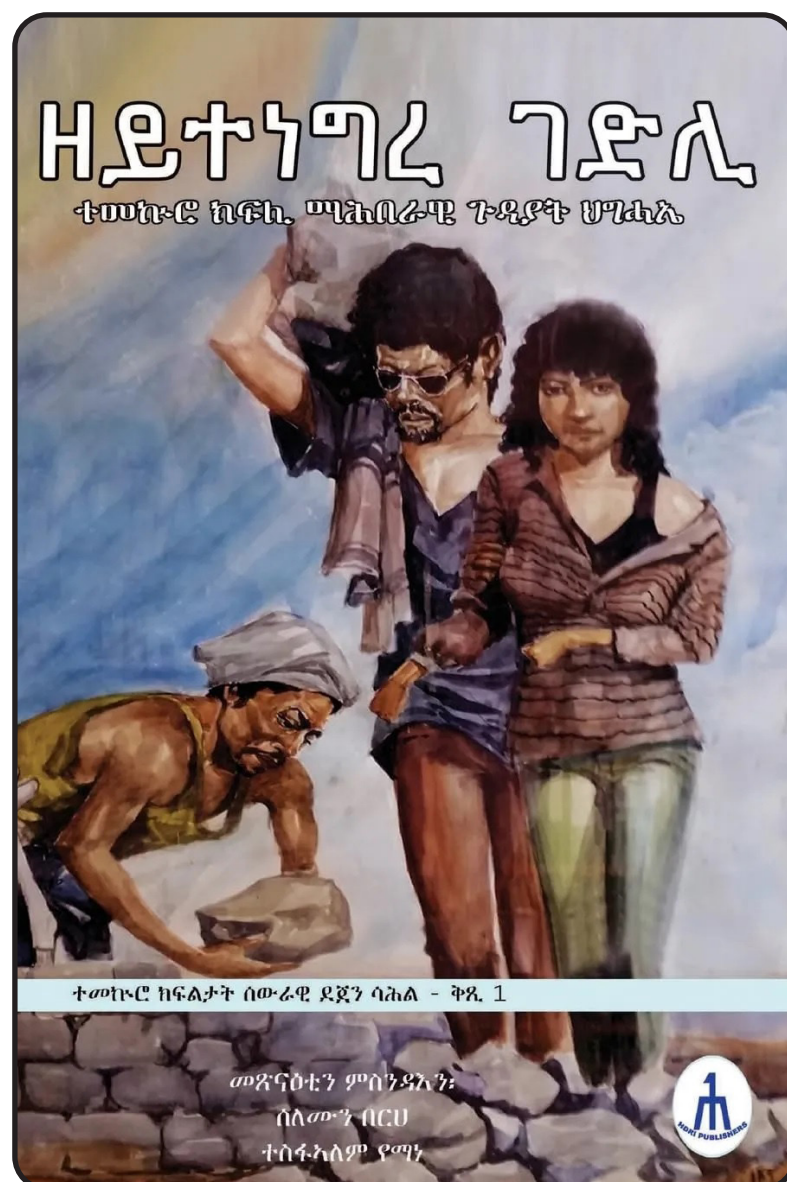
Much of what has been written about the Eritrean liberation struggle tends to focus on the political and military fronts although the struggle was fought on many fronts. In fact, the EPLF established many departments, including education and culture, information and propaganda, health care and economy, and social affairs, following its first congress held in January 1977 to be able to deal with multifaceted challenges. A lot might have been said about what these departments achieved during the struggle but not as much has been written. In an attempt to do justice to these departments, a book titled *ዘይተነግረ ገድሉ-ተመኩሮ ክፍሊ ማሕበራዊ ጉዳያት ህግሓኤ* (The Untold Struggle - the experience of the Department of Social affairs of the EPLF) was launched on Friday 28th.

Co-edited by Solomon Berhe, director-general of Press Department at the Ministry of Information and Tesfalem Yemane, member of the editorial board of Hadas Eretra newspaper, the book explores the social and humanitarian dimensions of the struggle and unpacks the efforts made by the Department of Social Affairs to provide support and relief to displaced communities, orphans, children and persons living with disabilities.

The social problems caused by war are enormous, and the Department of Social Affairs was set up to deal with the aftereffects of war, playing a key role in the liberation struggle by addressing humanitarian and social challenges that affected not only freedom fighters but also civilians.

The 557-page book is the first volume of a planned series of books that cover the experiences of the departments of the EPLF that were based at the EPLF's stronghold in Sahel. It tells the story of how the Department of Social Affairs developed during the struggle to become one of the major institutions in the liberation struggle. The 105 pictures and 6 maps included in the book help the reader to visualize the past.

In writing the book only primary sources have been used, and a lot of the information was gathered by interviewing former members of the Department of



Social Affairs of the EPLF. The book sheds light on profound themes such as social challenges, humanitarian care for vulnerable groups and others. It highlights the determination, innovation, resilience and sacrifices made by freedom fighters to alleviate the difficulties faced by displaced civilians, orphans, disabled fighters and children. It also describes the department's innovative approach to finding ways to help victims of war and the physically challenged become self-reliant and productive.

The book paints a vivid picture of the mass displacement caused by the war, with entire villages getting abandoned and families uprooted. For 16 years, the EPLF provided shelter and sustenance to a total of 10,736 people at its refugee camps in its rear area commonly known as Solomuna refugee camp.

The book discusses extensively the impact of war on children. Due to the war a number of children became orphans when their parents were martyred. Thousands of children with an age range of few months to seven were taken care of by the Department of Social Affairs until they were old enough to be transferred

to the Revolution School. The book sheds light on the services given by the caretakers and the resilience of the children.

The Department of Social Affairs had six units: refugees, children and orphans, disability, research and information, store and distribution, and healthcare. The book sheds light on the experiences of each unit during the liberation struggle, highlighting the resilience and the significant roles each played overcoming the challenges they faced. In October 1982, when the majority of the fighters living with disability were reassigned to the various departments of the EPLF, the disability unit had 180 persons to look after. The book shows that disabled fighters were integral members of the liberation movement and remained active contributors to the cause.

One of the achievements of the Department of Social Affairs was its success in giving training to the persons with disabilities to help them be independent and productive. Among others, it gave training to the blind on how to use the Braille. The stories of veteran freedom fighters Habteab Yifter and Fissehaye Kinfe, who both lost sight during the struggle, are

moving. Both of them learned how to use the braille during the armed struggle and were able to join the university after Eritrea's independence and earn a bachelor's degree. After graduation, Habteab became a teacher and Fissehaye a lawyer.

One of the themes in the book that was presented in detail was "Marriage" during the liberation struggle. The EPLF's decision to allow marriage was initially met with fierce opposition by the fighters who were concerned that it might divert the fighters' attention. For this reason, only one couple got married in 1977 and twenty in 1978. Over time,

the number picked up. From 1977 to 1993, a total of 32,824 fighters got married under the auspices of the Department of Social Affairs.

The historical significance of *ዘይተነግረ ገድሉ-ተመኩሮ ክፍሊ ማሕበራዊ ጉዳያት ህግሓኤ* lies in its ability to illuminate the untold stories and challenges of the Eritrean struggle for independence. The book helps readers of Eritrean history to have a holistic view of the liberation struggle. It serves as a vital resource for understanding the struggle for independence in its entirety. It captures the personal and collective experience from those who experienced the struggle firsthand. The book, a must-read, offers valuable lessons and insights, and it would be great if it is translated into other Eritrean and international languages.

Improving Health and Wellbeing ...

Continued from page 3

Of note, the HIV positivity rate among pregnant women in testing has been significantly reduced in recent years, while the mother-to-child transmission rate in Eritrea continues to steadily drop, and it is estimated to be less than 1.8 percent. Simply, in Eritrea fewer and fewer children – at present only a small handful – are being born with HIV. Remarkably, in recent years, the Ministry of Health has reported that no children have been born with HIV in the country. For context, globally it is estimated that in the absence of interventions, the rate of transmission of HIV from a mother living with HIV to her child during pregnancy, labor, delivery or breastfeeding ranges from 15 to 45 percent.

Ultimately, these developments are tangibly improving the health and life expectancy of pregnant women living with HIV and helping to ensure a bright life ahead for more newborns in the country. They have also positioned Eritrea to apply to the WHO for validation and ultimately certification of elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

Life expectancy

Probably the most powerful testament of Eritrea's healthcare advancements and progress is its remarkable increase in life

expectancy. Life expectancy is one of the most widely used indicators for assessing population health, human welfare, and a nation's economic and social development. Its significance is underscored by its inclusion in the UN's Human Development Index. Additionally, a wealth of empirical research has demonstrated its strong correlation with socioeconomic growth and development through multiple pathways and mechanisms.

Throughout history, global life expectancy has steadily risen, driven by advancements in healthcare, improved access to clean water, better sanitation and hygiene, reductions in disease epidemics, and enhanced safety measures. Today, the global average life expectancy exceeds 70 years – roughly double what it was just a few centuries ago.

Eritrea has experienced a dramatic rise in life expectancy, increasing from under 50 years at the time of its independence to approximately 67 years. This represents a significant achievement in a relatively short period. To put this progress into perspective, Eritrea now boasts the highest life expectancy in the Horn of Africa and ranks among the leaders on the continent. Once below the Sub-Saharan African average, the country has now surpassed it and continues to close the gap with the global average.



Specific Procurement Notice

Invitation for Bids [IFB]
Goods
(One-Envelope Bidding Process)

IFB Number: DSP/SPN/OCBI/04/2024
Purchaser: Ministry of Energy and Mines
Project: Dekemhare 30 MW Solar PV
Contract title: Professional Software
Country: State of Eritrea
Loan No. / Grant No.: TSF5900155017954/
ADF2100155042372
Procurement Method: Open Competitive Bidding
(International) (OCBI)
OCBI / LCB No: DSP/OCBI/PS/04/2024
Issued on: Mar 22, 2025

- The Government of the state of Eritrea has received financing from the African Development Fund (ADF) hereinafter called the Bank toward the cost of Dekemhare Solar PV Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the Contract for the Procurement of Professional Software. For this contract, the Grant Recipient shall process the payments using the Direct Payment disbursement method, as defined in the Bank's Disbursement Guidelines and procedures for Investment Project Financing.
- The Ministry of Energy and Mines (MoEM) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the Procurement of Professional Software.
- Bidding will be conducted through the Open Competitive Bidding (International), (OCBI) method as specified in the Bank's [Procurement Framework](#) dated 2015, and IFB is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement Framework.
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the Ministry of Energy and Mines (MoEM), Mr Tefferi Abraha - e-mail tefferiab.pce@gmail.com during working days (Monday to Friday) and office hours 0900 to 1700 hours at the address given at the bottom of the SPN/ IFBs below.
- The bidding document in English may be obtained free of charge by interested eligible Bidders upon registry at the e-mail address given at the bottom of the SPN/ IFBs below.
- Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 AM local time on May 19, 2025. Soft (electronic) copies will be required in addition to hard copies. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend at the address given at the bottom of the SPN/ IFBs below on 11:00 AM local time on May 19,2025.
- All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of USD 5,000.
- Attention is drawn to the Procurement Framework requiring the recipient to disclose information on the successful bidder's beneficial ownership, as part of the Contract Award Notice, using the Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Form as included in the bidding document.
- The address referred to above is:
Client: Ministry of Energy and Mines
Attention: Mr. Tefferi Abraha
Director, Energy Resources Development and Project Manager
Address:
Street: Denden Street, No. 176
Postal Address: 5285
Postal Code: 174
City: Asmara
Country: State of Eritrea
Telephone: Tel: +291-112-5972
Mobile: +291-717-5327
E-mail address: tefferiab.pce@gmail.com

Specific Procurement Notice

Invitation for Bids [IFB]
Goods
(One-Envelope Bidding Process)

IFB Number: DSP/SPN/OCBI/03/2024
Purchaser: Ministry of Energy and Mines
Project: Dekemhare 30 MW Solar PV Project
Contract title: Professional Tools and Equipment
Country: State of Eritrea
LoanNo./GrantNo.: TSF5900155017954/ADF2100155042372
Procurement Method: Open Competitive Bidding
(International) (OCBI)
OCBI / LCB No: DSP/OCBI/PTE/03/2024
Issued on: Mar 22,2025

- The Government of the state of Eritrea has received financing from the African Development Fund (ADF) hereinafter called the Bank toward the cost of Dekemhare Solar PV Project and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the Contract for the Procurement of Professional Tools and Equipment. For this contract, the Grant Recipient shall process the payments using the Direct Payment disbursement method, as defined in the Bank's Disbursement Guidelines and procedures for Investment Project Financing.
- The Ministry of Energy and Mines (MoEM) now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the Procurement of Professional Tools and Equipment.
- Bidding will be conducted through the Open Competitive Bidding (International), (OCBI) method as specified in the Bank's [Procurement Framework](#) dated 2015, and IFB is open to all eligible Bidders as defined in the Procurement Framework.
- Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the Ministry of Energy and Mines(MoEM), Mr Tefferi Abraha - e-mail tefferiab.pce@gmail.com during working days (Monday to Friday) and office hours 0900 to 1700 hours at the address given at the bottom of the SPN/ IFBs below.
- The bidding document in English may be obtained free of charge by interested eligible Bidders upon registry at the e-mail address given at the bottom of the SPN/ IFBs below
- Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 AM local time on May 26, 2025. Soft (electronic) copies will be required in addition to hard copies. Late Bids will be rejected. Bids will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend at the address given at the bottom of the SPN/ IFBs below on 11:00 AM local time on May 26, 2025.
- All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security of USD 10,000.
- Attention is drawn to the Procurement Framework requiring the recipient to disclose information on the successful bidder's beneficial ownership, as part of the Contract Award Notice, using the Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Form as included in the bidding document.
- The address referred to above is:
Client: Ministry of Energy and Mines
Attention: Mr. Tefferi Abraha
Director, Energy Resources Development and Project Manager
Address:
Street: Denden Street, No. 176
Postal Address: 5285
Postal Code: 174
City: Asmara
Country: State of Eritrea
Telephone: Tel: +291-112-5972
Mobile: +291-717-5327
E-mail address: tefferiab.pce@gmail.com



ASMARA MINING SHARE COMPANY
Abo Street, No. 178, House No. 16
Gejeret, P.O. Box 10688
Tel. ++291-1-153986
Asmara, Eritrea

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Asmara Mining Share Company is inviting applicants for the following position;

Senior Maintenance Supervisor
Number required – (02)
Type of contract – Definite (2 years)

Major Duties and responsibilities

- Assist the Maintenance Superintendent to recruit, train and mentor a Maintenance team who will deliver quality maintenance services to the mobile equipment and fixed plant. In doing so, ensuring KPI’s that facilitate the delivery of sustained and productive operations.
- The role will organize day-to-day workshop and maintenance activities. Furthermore, the incumbent will oversee and inspect maintenance works to ensure the safe and effective repair and servicing of mobile and fixed plant equipment.

TASK DESCRIPTION Expanded TO CORE PERFORMANCE AREAS

- Planning, prioritizing, assigning, supervising, reviewing, and participating in all tasks related to maintenance.
- Developing methods and schedules for equipment maintenance
- Responsibly handling emergency situations or after-hours calls for repair and maintenance
- Taking part in developing maintenance policies and standards for the organization
- Coordinating training sessions in maintenance, safety procedures, and methods
- Planning daily tasks and delegating them to Maintenance Technicians and other professionals
- Maintaining preventive maintenance standards for an organization’s equipment
- Routinely inspecting various elements of the mechanical circuit.
- Keep in check and regulate budget and track maintenance expenditures.
- Regularly check and inspect the material and tools inventory and place orders when needed.
- Ensure compliance with quality, health and safety rules, guidelines, and regulations.
- Inspect and oversee equipment to resolve mechanical problems.
- Develop and maintain a planning and scheduling routine and preventive maintenance of equipment, prioritizing and estimating work and technical assistance when developing job plans.
- Manage, motivate, develop, and provide direct leadership to maintenance staff.
- Perform periodic inspections of recently maintained equipment to observe the quality of the maintenance performed and the operating condition of the equipment.

Profile: Qualifications and Experience

Formal Education, Certifications or Equivalent

- Trade Qualifications as a Diesel Mechanic or equivalent
- Working Experience – Nature & Length
- 10 years’ experience in large scale open-pit mines in the areas of Mobile Maintenance,
 - Underground maintenance experience is desirable.
 - 5 years’ experience as a Mobile Maintenance Supervisor
 - Familiarity with relevant health and safety standards and regulations.

- Ability to co-ordinate shift crews and effectively manage shift breaks and the servicing of all mobile equipment in collaboration with the production team
- Proficient spreadsheet, presentation, work processing and database skills
- Basic knowledge of CMMS systems
- Comply with all HS&E policies, procedures and instructions. This includes the correct use of safety devices and protective equipment, prompt reporting of any hazardous situations, which they cannot themselves correct, making the necessary changes to eliminate or control the hazard and reporting immediately any accident or injury which arises in the course of their work.
- Experience working in Africa

Technical Skills

- Leadership skills in a multi-disciplinary environment.
- Strong Supervisory skills.
- Train and develop local staff
- Analytical skills
- Attention to detail
- Report-Writing skills
- Decision making skills
- Plan, organize and execution skills
- Understand Machine capabilities and productivities.
- Problem solving skills
- valid Driver’s License

Behavioral Skills

- Safety leadership by example
- Ability to work in developing countries
- Good Interpersonal skills
- Ability to work under pressure with challenging targets
- Commitment to deliver on agreed targets - Results oriented
- High level of initiative
- Ability to multitask
- Demonstrated team building and mentoring skills
- Demonstrated training and people development skills
- Strong interpersonal relationship-building skills and adaptability to work with people of different cultures.

General Information and other requirements:

- ☐ **Place of Work:** **AMSC Site**
- ☐ **Type of contract:** **Definite Period (2 years)**
- ☐ **Salary:** **As per the Company salary scale**

Additional requirements for Nationals:

- Having fulfilled his/her National Service obligation and provide evidence of release paper from the Ministry of Defense.
- Present clearance paper from current/last employer.
- Testimonial documents to be attached (CV, work experience credentials, a copy of your National Identity Card, etc.).
- Only shortlisted applicants would be considered as potential candidates for an interview.
- Application documents will not be returned to the sender.
- All applications should be sent through the post office.
- Deadline for application: 7 days from the day of publication in the Newspaper.

- ☐ **Address: Please mail your applications to;**
Asmara Mining Share Company,
P. O. Box 10688 Asmara, Eritrea
- ☐ **Applicants shall be required to send a copy to:**
Mineral Resources Management
P.O. Box – 272
Asmara
- ☐ **Note to Eritrean applicants:**
Please send a copy of your application to
Aliens Employment Permit Affairs,
P. O. Box 7940 Asmara, Eritrea

Development

Bereket Tekeste: Pioneer of the 'Small and Productive Farm Plot' Strategy

Born in 1967 in the village of Belezza, just ten kilometers north of Asmara, Bereket Tekeste's life began immersed in the rhythms of rural Eritrea. Raised in a farming family, his childhood was spent learning the age-old animal husbandry and cultivation skills. After completing his basic education in Belezza, Adi Nefas, and Embaderho and reaching the 10th grade at Asmara Comprehensive Secondary School, Bereket's path led him back to the land. Even as a fourteen-year-old, he possessed an observant mind, already discerning the limitations of traditional farming methods.

Bereket's early life also carried the scars of Eritrea's struggle for independence. In 1979, during the siege of Asmara, twelve-year-old Bereket sustained a jaw



Mr. Bereket Tekeste

formal recruitment, Bereket's thirst for practical knowledge led him to request a ten-day internship. This initiative took him to Kehawta, where he began his hands-on training, immersing himself in the world of poultry farming.

"To deepen my understanding, I sought further practical guidance in

me to implement effective farming practices," Bereket explains.

Despite the doubts voiced by farmers accustomed to traditional practices, Bereket remained steadfast in his dedication to a small and productive cultivation approach. "I recall a field from my past where water scarcity was a constant problem," he shares. "I proposed terracing to my father – a novel idea then. He eventually agreed, and we embarked on extensive terracing. This simple modification transformed our farm's water management. Terracing effectively conserved and retained the precious water from the two to three pre-summer (Akeza) rains. By May and June, the impact was undeniable – our crop yields significantly improved. This practical lesson, the power of simple yet effective techniques, stayed with me."

"Reflecting on the Ministry of Agriculture's encouragement of row planting and application of organic fertilizers, and contrasting it with our continued reliance on outdated farming methods, I saw an opportunity," Bereket explains. His experiment involved planting just 100 grams of seed in a tiny three-by-two-meter plot. The result was astounding: 9.1 kg harvested from a mere six square meters. This remarkable yield ignited his passion and validated the potential of row planting. Then, he expanded his experiment to a 1000 square meters plot of land and harvested around 9 quintals. This achievement was a pivotal moment, and I was deeply honored to receive an award at the 'International Conference on Wheat and Maize.'"

"The small area I planted in properly lined rows yielded awe-inspiring results. Experts confirmed the high yield, but the most significant encouragement came from the Minister of Agriculture himself, H.E. Arefaine Berhe. Starting from such a humble space,



injury while attempting to disarm explosives planted by the Ethiopian army in the Belezza area. Tragically, an explosive device detonated prematurely, injuring Bereket and a companion. He survived, bearing a physical reminder of his early years of life under colonialism.

Therefore, before becoming a champion of small-scale, transforming farming, Bereket explored diverse agricultural paths. In 1997, following his national service, he transitioned to civilian life and ventured into entrepreneurship. His keen eye for opportunity led him to trade dried palm leaves from Mogolo.

During high school, a fascination with poultry and egg farming had taken root, although circumstances hadn't allowed him to pursue it then. In 1998, fueled by renewed determination, he finally resolved to delve into chicken rearing. Seeking guidance, he consulted Ms. Almaz Ghezae, who was then an expert at the Ministry of Agriculture and is now the general manager of Kehawta Poultry Center. Though recommended for

Sembel under Mr. Birhane," Bereket recounts. "There, we witnessed remarkable progress in egg production and quality. Following this intensive learning, I bought 300 chicks and, again, 1,000 chicks after some time. Unfortunately, these promising agricultural endeavors were abruptly interrupted by the war triggered by the TPLF (Ethiopia). Shortly after my wedding, I joined the military, serving until my demobilization in 2004 and eagerly participated in all the training programs delivered by the Ministry of Agriculture, recognizing them as invaluable opportunities to hone my skills and expand my knowledge – crucial factors that have empowered



When Eritrea's Ministry of Agriculture embarked on its nationwide agricultural strategic plan for 2024-2028, the 'Small and Productive Farm Plot' strategy was the cornerstone for the nation's smallholder and subsistence farmers. In the first round of the strategy, which took place the previous summer, over 12 thousand farming households were engaged in this vital initiative. One exemplary farmer, Bereket Tekeste, vividly embodies the early success of this initiative.



I gained unwavering confidence in row planting over traditional farming methods. The efficiency and impact of this approach are profound," Bereket emphasizes, sharing his journey of discovery.

The Advantages of Row Planting: Order, Efficiency, and Abundance

"Row planting brings organization and efficiency to every aspect of farming," he explains. "Well-defined rows create a visually appealing, orderly field – like the disciplined lines of trainees we see in Sawa. This method enhances mobility within the farm, promotes an efficient work environment, and simplifies crop management. I realized that sowing in aligned rows is an invaluable choice, providing enhanced control, improved sanitation, optimal sunlight exposure, and efficient irrigation."

Bereket Tekeste stands as a pivotal figure in devising the 'Small and Productive Farm Plot (SPFP)' strategy. His personal journey and unwavering belief in this approach have been instrumental in launching this key program, a vital component

of the Ministry of Agriculture's five-year strategic plan aimed at ensuring 'Safe and Nutritious Food for Everyone; Everywhere!'

Concluding Thoughts: Cultivating a Bountiful Future

"Successful agriculture hinges on effective land management, meticulous care, and diligent monitoring. Committed farming practices are invariably rewarded with generous harvests," Bereket affirms, summarizing his core philosophy. "Land productivity isn't solely determined by size, but by the dedication, effort, and focused attention invested in it."

He reinforces his message with practical data: "Real-world results demonstrate that producing approximately 8-9 quintals from a 1000 square meter area is entirely achievable. If every farmer proactively embraces the 'Small and Productive Farm Plot' initiative, realizing our national agricultural goals becomes fully attainable."

Translated by Yosief A. from Fre-Tsaeri Magazine (Ministry of Agriculture)