

# NEWSLETTER

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME ERITREA

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## UNDP celebrates International Women's Day



“Every day should be women’s day, but as the estimate to reaching gender equality is 300 years, this day works as a reminder to all of us that there is still a lot of work to be done.” – UNDP Resident Representative, James Wakiaga, during his speech at the celebration of International Women’s Day at the UN Compound.

International Women’s Day is celebrated globally on 8 March to recognize and honor the achievements of women around the world. It also serves as a reminder of the work still in progress toward achieving gender equality.

This year, the United Nations observance of International Women’s Day recognized the women and girls championing the advancement of transformative technology and digital education under the theme DigitALL: Innovation and technology for gender equality.

Staff from all UN agencies in Eritrea participated in an event hosted by the inter-agency Programming Principles Group (which covers gender equality, human rights, and LNOB) held to celebrate women and raise awareness of the gender gaps that still prevail.

During the event, the official video message by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres was screened, along with the official UN Women video made for the occasion. Guests also had the opportunity to see a video developed by UNDP Eritrea highlighting our gender work and projects.

UNDP Resident Representative James Wakiaga, in his message to mark the day, called for accelerating action to ensure that women are not left behind in the design of new technologies and in access to new technologies and digitalization.

The highlight of the event was Gender Trivia, an activity that involved all staff and included questions related to gender equality and women's empowerment.

## **UNDP Eritrea – bridging the gender gap!**

According to the United Nations System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity and the UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2022–2025, achieving gender parity in recruitment and staffing at all levels of the UN is a priority.

The UN Charter says that “there shall be no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in every capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs”, meaning that no applicant should be discriminated against on the basis of gender when applying for any position in the organization.

On March 2023, the UNDP Eritrea Country Office proudly welcomed on board the first female driver in the UNDP Eritrea Office.

As of June 2023, with a gender balance ratio of nearly 53 percent, UNDP Eritrea is working hard to advance gender equity, equality, and women's empowerment in the workplace.



## **Training helps to improve understanding of ocean affairs and the Law of the Sea**

On 24 March 2023, a five-day training programme for the Government of Eritrea to build capacity in ocean affairs and the Law of the Sea was organized by UNDP Eritrea in collaboration with the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA).

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs (DOALOS) trained 29 Eritrean junior diplomats and relevant government officials within the context of a wider DPPA programme of assistance for Eritrea. The training was implemented with the assistance of UNDP Eritrea.

The training course provided an introduction to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and related agreements, as well as an overview of the legal and institutional frameworks for the management of oceans at global, regional, and national levels. In addition, concepts related to the

blue economy and ocean finance were introduced, with a focus on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the context of ocean affairs.



### **UNDP Eritrea welcomes students from the Dembe Sembel school**

UNDP Eritrea welcomed, in April 2023, a group of students from the Dembe Sembel High School in Asmara to the UN Compound in Eritrea. The students made the visit to collect data and learn from UNDP’s work on climate change adaptation, as well as the Country Office’s planned future actions on the “three Rs”: reducing, reusing, and recycling.

Students, UNDP management, and the Inclusive Sustainable Development Expert had a lively and interactive discussion. The visit gave the young people a chance to reflect on the destructive potential of climate change, the tools that can help to protect our environment, and Eritrea’s progressive efforts



to improve responsiveness to climate impacts, reduce emissions, conserve biodiversity, and protect livelihoods.

## 100 children and parents participate in Family Day at the UN Compound

As part of UNDP's People for 2030 strategy, UNDP Eritrea continues to host Family Day in the UN Compound in Asmara. Family Day promotes staff well-being and teamwork among colleagues in the Country Office and provides enjoyable learning opportunities for children and young people. The first Family Day of 2023 was held in April 2023 and included activities that gave children from different age groups a chance to learn, play and explore.

Children appreciated a first aid training that was delivered by UN clinic staff to raise awareness on basic actions to take in medical emergencies. Other favorite activities among the 100 children, parents, and staff members who attended involved storytelling, sports and art, as well as a panel discussion for young people.



## A Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) financial audit proves satisfactory

In April 2023, a total of seven active UNDP projects were audited by HLB Abraham Isaac & Company for their 2022 financial transactions and the reports were uploaded to the Comprehensive Audit and Recommendation Database System (CARDS). The Financial Audit outcome was rated “satisfactory” by the Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI).

## Joint UN capacity-building training enhances financial skills

On 18 May 2023, the HACT-compliant agencies UNDP, UNFPA, and UNICEF in collaboration and coordination with Eritrea's Ministry of Finance and Ministry of National Development organized a one-day HACT training for 27 staff from nine government institutions implementing UN projects.

The main objective of the training was to enhance participants' knowledge about HACT principles, objectives, and components and to improve their skills for completing the standard Funding Authorization and Certificate of Expenses (FACE) form, including requests for direct cash transfer, liquidation, both direct cash transfer and liquidation, reimbursement and direct payment. The participants were mainly project coordinators, project finance personnel, accountants, unit heads,

directors and M&E officers. A recommendation was made to organize similar meetings at least twice a year to maintain constant learning in line with the work.



## Field trip visits recognize successful community-based Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme projects

On 29 May 2023, the UNDP Eritrea team, led by the Resident Representative and accompanied by the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF SGP) team and focal persons from the Ministry of Land, Water and Environment and the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW), made a field trip to GEF SGP community-based projects in the Anseba and Maekel regions in Eritrea.

The team paid a visit to the community-owned project sites of Habrengaka, Mahabesh, Adi Berbere, Eratahtay and Kerecha in the Anseba region and Mesfinto-Tsehaflam, Weki and Azien in the Maekel region, where they had an opportunity to interact with local communities. The team also visited Elabered Agroindustry and the NUEW Regional Administration offices.

The mission was eye-opening, enabling team members to see first-hand the positive impact and outcomes of the SGP, as well as its capacity to reach the grassroots level, working closely with the community who are the drivers of environmental transformation.



## Climate change session provides food for thought in the Night of Ideas

In April 2023, the UNDP Eritrea Country Office partnered with the Alliance Française in Asmara on a workshop for youth on the subject of climate change, as part of the Night of Ideas initiative under the theme “How to save planet #Earth?”.

The brilliant children who participated in the workshop had the opportunity to brainstorm on the consequences of climate change in their environments, drawing on their personal experiences. Then, they developed and presented colorful stories containing inspiring solutions to help save the environment.



## UNDP Administrator visits Eritrea

UNDP Eritrea Country Office was delighted to welcome in April 2023 the UNDP Administrator, Achim Steiner, who arrived in Asmara for a two-day visit.



The Administrator had a chance to meet the UNDP Eritrea staff during a traditional coffee ceremony and discussion organized in his honor, at which staff had an opportunity to ask questions about UNDP’s long-term vision and evolution.

The UNDP Administrator met with H.E. President Isaias Afwerki and discussed the country’s development pathways and regional engagement, and conferred with senior government officials and development partners.

During the last days of the visit, the Administrator accompanied the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Land, Water, and Environment, and UN/UNDP teams to visit a successful community-based sustainable land management project intervention in Serejeka sub-zone, which transformed the environmental ecosystem through an integrated land management approach.



## The way forward was the theme of this year's UNDP retreat

UNDP Eritrea Country Office held a staff retreat on strategy, programmes and operations performance during the last week of April 2023 in Massawa, Eritrea.

The two-day retreat had an overall objective of strategically positioning the Country Office to deliver on its programme commitments in the coming years, with the goal of achieving development results in Eritrea. The retreat provided a platform for reflecting on how the Country Office performed in the previous year and for evaluating organizational goals aimed at accelerating sustainable development in Eritrea.

Through the retreat, the team had the chance to conduct collective self-assessment and to participate in team-building exercises and activities aimed at enhancing team spirit and strengthening the resolve of the staff and the vision of the Country Office towards implementing its development programmes in 2023 and beyond.





## World Environment Day 2023: Together to find Solutions to Plastic Pollution

Eritrea joined millions worldwide in celebrating World Environment Day 2023. This year with an important milestone for the global environmental community and marking 50 years since the 1973 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, is widely seen as the first international meeting on the environment.

Led by the Ministry of Land, Water, and Environment (MoLWE) and in partnership with UNDP Co in Eritrea, World Environment Day 2023 was celebrated on 5 June 2023 in Asmara, Eritrea.

Celebrated since 2021 by the MoLWE, World Environment Day has become a national platform for public environmental outreach of promoting and raising awareness among the public about the environment and reflecting upon the consequences of environmental mismanagement.



This year, under the theme “Solution to Plastic Pollution”, it was emphasized the importance of plastic pollution control and mitigation to address one of the significant environmental challenges of our time and raise awareness of people on the need to reduce the heavy burden of plastic pollution on people’s health and the threat it poses to the environment and wildlife.

This year’s celebration primarily targeted students with the recognition that they can play a key role in tackling climate change.

A general knowledge competition was organized ahead of World Environment Day, comprising twenty-two students (from 10th grade) selected from schools in the Central region of Eritrea.

Six students made it to the final stage which was broadcasted on National Television. The top-ranked students were awarded during the World Environment Day event that was held on June 5, 2023.

During the Celebration, two young students delivered powerful messages emphasizing the need to act now before it is too late and become actors of change by contributing towards climate change solutions to save the environment.



The UNDP Eritrea Deputy Resident Representative, Ms. Nashida Sattar, highlighted in her remarks, "As Eritrea's partners, it is a duty and honor to celebrate all the progressive efforts the country has embarked on. In the early days of environmental consciousness, Eritrea decisively took the lead by prohibiting the use of plastic bags in 2005.

Many steps have also been taken to improve the legislative and policy framework, contribute to environmental conservation efforts, and control air and water pollution. The efforts to increase the use of alternative energy have also reduced the pressure on the resources while securing the population's health, particularly women and children." The event was also an occasion for awarding six winners of the UNDP Gender and Climate Solutions Award initiative started in April 2023 and six Eritrean public and private companies engaged in plastic waste recycling.

UNDP Eritrea Country Office continues to partner with the Ministry of Land, Water and Environment and the Government of Eritrea for initiatives in designing action plans responsive to climate impacts, reducing emissions, contributing to biodiversity conservation, and protecting the livelihoods of society.

Aligned with the 2030 Agenda, UNDP collaborates with the Government of the State of Eritrea to support the country's long-term development and social equity aspirations through sustainable management of natural resources and environmental protection.

# SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS



"The United Nations Career Journey Podcast is back with a new episode! 🎧 We are thrilled to introduce you to @NashidaSattar Deputy Resident Representative in @UNDP Eritrea Listen to the episode <http://bit.ly/3kgVu2Q> and find the transcript here <http://bit.ly/3QGG4RQ>



Young people are critical agents of change for the future of development. Together w/ @CiscoNetworking, @UNDP Eritrea is empowering Eritrean youth through an IT learning initiative that can help them become competent professionals in the global job market: <https://go.undp.org/ZdyD>



"Happy International Women Day👩🏻2023 !!! On this #IWD2023 day we would like to launch UNDP Video on Empowering Women in #Eritrea watch this inspiring video → [https://youtube.com/watch?v=2QLKH\\_d9NSY](https://youtube.com/watch?v=2QLKH_d9NSY)



"This year under the Theme DigitALL: Innovation & technology for #genderequality, we commemorate #InternationalWomensDay. Here in #Eritrea women are pillar of strength and face of nation building & sustainable development".

@wakiaga, Resident Representative.

#CSW67



#ForestDay, remember healthy forests mean healthy people and resilient communities.



#ForestsSustainOurPlanet

#IntlForestDay #BetterWithForests



This week a team of @UNDPEritrea, MoLWE, SGP and #NUEW undertook a field trip to successful community-based projects of @GEF\_SGP in Anseba and Maekel regions in #Eritrea "What is reveling is that communities are the drivers of environmental transformation".

@wakiaga#LocalAction





Ahead of International Mother Earth Day, UNDP DRR @NashidaSattar, talks about the importance of water, especially for women. #Eritrea @UNDPAfrica@GEF\_SGP @AfDB\_Group #Gender #EarthDay



"I would like to take this opp to sincerely thank the people &the Gov of #Eritrea for providing me with the opp and the platform to be able to engage, & work together in accompanying the Gov in implementing its Development Agenda".

@wakiaga

Watch Video  →

<https://youtu.be/ut-li90MmbA>



**James Wakiaga**  
Resident Representative UNDP Eritrea



Happy #EnviornmentDay!!  
"UNDP applauds #Eritrea for taking early steps to protect from plastic pollution by decisively prohibiting the use of plastic bags in 2005. #UNDP continues to work with the government and the people of Eritrea to #beatplasticpollution" DRR @NashidaSattar



# PARTNERS

## Partners

Ministry of Finance and National Development  
National Statistics Office  
Ministry of Justice  
Ministry of Health  
Ministry of Education  
Ministry of Land, Water and Environment  
Ministry of Agriculture  
Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare  
Ministry of Information  
Office of the Auditor General  
National confederation of Eritrean Workers

### Civil Society and NGOs:

National Union of Eritrean Women  
National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students

### Education Institutions:

National Board for Higher Education  
University of South Africa (UNISA)

### UN Agencies

## Donors



# EXTERNAL / DONORS RELATIONS

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# Developing the **FUTURE** Together

*UNDP continues to benefit from a strong partnership with the Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE) and Development Partners (DPs) in supporting the GoSE to implement the SDGs; UNDP works as an integral part of the UN system laying a solid foundation for Delivering as One (DAO).*