



U N
D P

**UNDP ERITREA
Annual Report
2020**

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

Learn more at UNDP:

LINKS

UNDP Eritrea website: <https://www.er.undp.org/content/eritrea/en/home/>

UNDP Africa website: <https://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home.html>

UNDP Global website: <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home.html>

FOLLOW US:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/UNDPEritrea>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/undp.eritrea>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQTtXOnwjt541Kzuk1tJetA>

The Coffee ceremony in Eritrea is a core cultural custom.

The traditional Eritrean coffee is made in a clay pot called 'jebena' which has a round base.

The picture in the cover page of the UNDP Eritrea Annual Report 2020 depicts the image of jebena holders made of tin metal.

TABLE OF CONTENT



Foreword



UNDP Eritrea
COVID - 19 Response



Strategic Governance



Inclusive and Sustainable
Development



Innovation



Strengthening our systems for
enhanced transparency, account-
ability, and quality programme
delivery



Gender equality and
women's empowerment



UNDP as an integrator



Our 2020 Highlights



Resources received in 2020



Communication Lead:

Monica Modici
UNDP Communication Analyst

Photography (unless otherwise stated):

Julie Pudlowski and Monica Modici, UNDP
Eritrea.



Acknowledgment

UNDP Eritrea acknowledges the Government of Eritrea, our development partners, civil society, and implementing partners, that play a critical role in the quest and implementation of sustainable development.

The support received and partnership contributes towards the delivery of our programmatic interventions and the results are captured in this report.

Written and edited by:
The UNDP Eritrea Team



Foreword

James Wakiaga
Resident Representative
UNDP Eritrea

Eritrea towards development

The development context in Eritrea in 2020 was impacted by events that framed the delivery of support from UNDP and other development partners.

The COVID-19 pandemic happened at a time when Eritrea, and other countries in the Horn, were grappling with the devastating impact of the worst locust invasion in 70 years, which threatened to potentially reverse the laudable gains in agriculture and food security.

This Annual Report looks at the results the UNDP Country Office achieved in Eritrea through 12 months. Despite this challenging context, UNDP in Eritrea, partnered with the Government of Eritrea to produce laudable development results. To support the Country combat the spread of the COVID-19, and address the adverse socio-economic impacts, UNDP and sister Agencies rolled out support anchored on 3 pillars- preparedness, response, and recovery.

In addition, UNDP led in conducting the UN socio-economic assessment and recovery plan by leveraging on its integrator role and as a gatekeeper for the SDGs through the system thinking and co-creation of ideas and strategies towards *building forward better*.

In recognizing the critical role played by the youth of Eritrea to promote sustainable development, UNDP in partnership with the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW), National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS), and with financial support from the Kingdom of Norway and Switzerland rolled out several Youth empowerment initiatives. The youth initiatives have contributed to the enhancement of productive capacities, skills upgrading, incubation of youth startups and promotion of entrepreneurship for improved livelihoods.

Given the country's vulnerability to a range of environmental and food security challenges, in the year 2020, UNDP supported an integrated ecosystem-based approach by applying ecosystem-based solutions targeting rural farming communities benefiting 3500 households (60% women-Households). In addition to the short-term economic benefits through cash-for-work and income-generating activities-based cash injection (USD 750,000) into the local economies, this ecosystem-based environmental conservation and use are expected to provide farming communities with long-term environmental and economic benefits. The development scheme has also contributed to more equitable sharing of natural resources and empowerment of women strengthening

improved land management.

About 14,000 hectares of marine and terrestrial habitats continued to be under strict protection and sustainable forest management.

UNDP in Eritrea rededicates its firm commitment to *Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)* and leveraging its integrator role and ability to work across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to support the national ambition of meeting all the SDGs by 2030. This entails deploying strategic investments towards institutional capacity-building in areas of economic governance, judiciary, as well as, in implementing and reporting on international obligations, including support to the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), to mention but a few.

Finally, the success of development programs could not be possible without the leadership and guidance of Ministry of Finance and National Development (MFND) and coalition of development partners, foremost the UN Agencies under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, and our bilateral partners. We look forward to continuing partnering with the Government of Eritrea to achieve laudable development results in 2021 and beyond!

Thank you for taking a look at our Annual Report 2020, I encourage you to read it thoroughly.



UNDP Eritrea COVID 19 Response



In 2020, the UNDP in collaboration with the UN Agencies in Eritrea committed to support Eritrea to combat the spread of COVID-19 and address the adverse socio-economic impacts. The support anchored on 3 pillars: preparedness, response and recovery.

UNDP offer under the first pillar of preparedness focused on ramping up public knowledge and advocacy on COVID-19, awareness raising and sensitization via new and traditional media.



Building Resilient Health Systems

Pillar 2 of UNDP support on response was aimed at bolstering the resilience and capacities of health systems. In this regard UNDP repurposed its programme resources that enabled it procure hospital equipment, supplies (PPEs) and ICT equipment to strengthen the resilience of health systems, enhanced service delivery and ensured effective and efficient data and information management. The ICT equipment and data base system aimed to strengthen both internal and external communication and enhance the information and data management system of the MoH

Charting the pathway to recovery: under this pillar, UNDP led the UN system to conduct two Socio-Economic impact assessments of both the immediate and the medium to long term impact on COVID-19.

Inclusive and integrated pandemic management

UNDP supported and strengthened multi-sectoral dialogues with emphasis on promoting social responsibility and cohesion and reducing stigmatization.

COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessments and Recovery

As gatekeeper for the SDGs, UNDP leveraged its integrator role and led the UN system to conduct Rapid Socio-Economic impact assessments of the COVID-19. In addition, UNDP also led the preparation of a joint recovery plan aimed at promoting joint programmes that will accelerate build back and scale-up opportunities for livelihoods in communities



US\$2.2m resources to procure vital equipment and medical supplies Health System strengthening support



Bolstering the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Health to respond to COVID-19.



Providing social safety nets in the form of food and cash transfers US\$500,407 worth of food items mobilized to support 2,740 vulnerable households impacted by COVID 19, in the Northern Red Sea and Anseba Regions.



Deployment of secured e-Zoom infrastructure to ensure and facilitate the continuity of business of key Government ministries.



Support to strategic communication by leveraging the innovative capabilities of young Eritrean entrepreneurs by developing a COVID-19 Mobile Application on prevention and safety measures on COVID19.



\$428,000 invested in social safety nets livelihoods resilience- building support provided via the rollout of safety nets and sustainable social transfer interventions addressing both short-term needs of households.



\$320,000 invested for the manufacture of handwash machines to support the re-opening of businesses to ensure workplace safety and well-being of the staff of public service providers and their customers.

Strategic Governance



In 2020, the capacity of the youth training centres increased from 50 to 200 trainees per year. UNDP supported the renovation of 4 youth training centers located in Adi Guadad (Zoba Maekel), Mendefera (Zoba Debub), Keren (Zoba Anseba), and Barentu (Zoba Gash Barka). The centres were also equipped with the necessary training equipment and facilities, such as solar power, computers, furniture, media equipment, electrical tools, and pottery kits. In line with the project, 855 youth, among whom 79% were females, were trained on vocational skills.

Furthermore 230 youth, of which 77% were women, were able to access interest-free loans, which were extended in cash and/or kind, to meet their start-up capital requirement.

Youth livelihoods opportunities increased through beekeeping support provided to 604 households, of which 58% women, to engage in honey production.

Justice sector support and Capacity building

The Ministry of Justice, with financial and technical support from UNDP, initiated the automation and digitalization of the court procedures of the judiciary. This has enhanced the efficiency of the courts and the Prosecutor’s Office due to the reduction of paperwork and increased use of computers. By centralizing all legal service tasks within one office, the new system can be likened to a one-stop-shop which has reduced the burden of the public.

Human resource capacities were upgraded by improving the knowledge and skills of the management and 33 staff of the Ministry of Justice through short-term training.

Distance education and various training were provided to staff of the Ministry of Justice. The number of LL.M or Master of Laws holders in the Ministry has sharply increased from 4 to 97 (out of which 54 in the first batch and 37 in the second batch) within three years.

Public Service Delivery

In 2020, 151 staff from various government offices acquired new and upgraded skills in Compliance Audit, IT Auditing and Internal Auditing.

An additional, 55 public servants, of which 16 were female, were trained in financial and compliance audit, while 60 public servants, of which 40% were women, were trained on auditing, accounting and IT.

Investing in human capital for strengthened accountability: Office of the Auditor General

With the support of UNDP, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) was able to meet 50% of its staffing requirement. The number of auditors increased from 40 in 2016 to 80 in 2020, and all current B.A. degree holders’ staff are currently attending the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants courses. The OAG has made progress in gender equality as women currently constitute 31.5% of the staff.

In 2020, the OAG hosted limited Continuous Professional Education (CPE) events to its staff members and other partners. Majority of the training events were delivered through AFROSAI-E e-learning platform with only three face-to-face workshop programs delivered to Internal Auditors and staff from the corporate divisions of the OAG.

Ministry of Information

The cumbersome analogue system at the Ministry of Information (Mol) was replaced with state-of-the-art digital systems which significantly enhanced the quality and speed of production of TV and Radio programs.

Turn-around time significantly reduced to 30-40% in developing and producing TV programs.

According to project reports, the data collection and management capacity of the Mol has increased and enabled the Ministry in developing targeted SDG awareness and advocacy programs.



People's Front for Democracy and Justice Research (PFDJ) and Documentation Centre

The PFDJ Research and Documentation Center was supported to enhance its human and functional capacity on audio recording and sound arrangement. Two technicians were supported on skill upgrade on audio recording and sound arrangement for different projects and programs.

National Union of Eritrea Workers (NCEW)

The National Union of Eritrea Workers (NCEW) model Training Center in Massawa was supported with state-of-the-art IT and electrical equipment, tools, training manuals, welding machines, and furniture. As a result, the NCEW expanded its scope and is now able to provide various relevant training programs in carpentry, electrical, and welding, among others.

Deploying Diaspora Professionals for Nation Building

Under the UNDP-GoSE Diaspora Support Project, five Eritrean Diaspora professionals

with the following expertise: Foreign relation, ICT, Research and translation, Musical instrument and Engineering were deployed in Eritrea and embedded in line ministries to enhance capacities through knowledge and skills transfer. This initiative over the years has enabled Eritrean diasporians contribute meaningfully to nation building.

Creating platforms for promoting digital penetration and bridging the digital divide

The lockdowns and closure of businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic reaffirms that the future of development is digital. In 2020, UNDP facilitated the deployment of secured e-zoom infrastructure which ensured the continuity of Government business of key ministries namely the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Finance. UNDP and Cisco have also partnered and initiated an ICT and digital programme that would enhance the connectivity of key development sectors and institutions in the country.



Inclusive and Sustainable Development



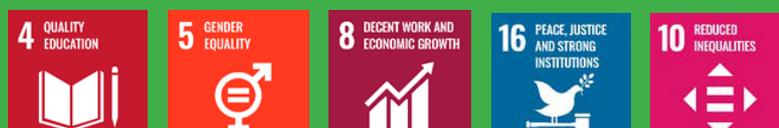


Under the Inclusive Sustainable Development, UNDP's approach to development is to respond to immediate needs, while at the same time addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience to ensure long-term progress and impact.

In 2020, UNDP contributed to an improved livelihood for 3,500 (of which 60 percent were women) rural framers through the implementation of a range of natural resource-based conservation and land restoration solutions, including cash-for-work based natural resources conservation to restore the fragile natural environment and maintain food security of the targeted households and communities. Moreover, 1,000 rural vulnerable households (4,800 individuals) of whom 60 percent are women-headed, were provided with non-food items including mattresses, blankets, plastic sheets, containers for water, cooking utensils, and hygiene kits.

UNDP-supported 14,000 hectares of marine and terrestrial habitats continued to be under strict protection and sustainable forest management. Every year, hundreds of farmers migrate their beehives (about 3,500 beehives) to the mixed or economic use and buffer zones of the protected area system to benefit from the seasonal bee fodder produced by diverse tree species. It is estimated that, at 8kg per beehive, around 26,250 kgs of honey are produced yearly.

During the same period, access to clean energy was also increased. In 2020, the UN, through UNDP and European Union joint project, benefited 450 households (1,800 individuals) residing in sub-towns of Maidima and Areza who were able to access solar-powered renewable energy from the installed two photo-voltaic mini-grids of a combined 2.4 MW. Access to clean and reliable electricity is helping women enhance their livelihood and social development in the society.



The Solar powered mini grids to light up Areza and Maidma project with the revised timeline, is expected to be completed in July 2021.



Innovation



Leveraging youth innovation by promoting digital technology to create awareness about the prevention methods to tackle COVID 19.

The development of the *Eritrea tackling COVID-19 Mobile application* created a platform that promoted innovation and use of digital technology to benefit the community, to increase their knowledge of the pandemic, strengthen preventive capacities among the population, and maintain the population's physical and mental health status.

The initiative empowered the youth and provided a platform for them to express their innovative ideas and translate them into practical solutions.

The collaboration between UNDP, the Ministry of Health and the young Eritrean innovators ensured a joint-up approach in contributing to Eritrea COVID-19 national response efforts.

The multilingual COVID-19 mobile application includes innovative, unique, and essential features targeting everyone to complement the existing communication efforts by the Ministry of Health by ensuring that any information gaps are addressed.

APP FUNCTIONALITY

- COVID-19 Prevention
- COVID-19 Symptoms
- Info about COVID-19
- Self-care information
- Frequently asked question about the virus and disease
- Multi language (English, Arabic, Tigrigna)
- Info using sign language for disabled
- Content in text, image, audio and video format
- Notifying users with relevant information



Eritrea tackling COVID-19

In partnership with the
MINISTRY OF HEALTH ERITREA and
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

“Our COVID-19 mobile app is having a great impact on our society as it is multilingual targeting everyone including those with disabilities like the blind and the deaf.”

Strengthening our systems for enhanced transparency, accountability and quality programme delivery

In 2020 the Country Office conducted eleven programme visits (a mix of physical and virtual), six spot checks and six HACT project financial audits. In addition, and in line with the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) framework, the Country Office conducted micro assessment of all its new implementing partners.

The objective of the assessment is to determine the partner's capacities and risk level and ensure the implementing partner is equipped with the needed human and material capacity to implement UNDP supported projects, and for the Country Office to decide the appropriate funds transfer modalities to apply in disbursing funds to them.

The outcome of the assessment also enables the office put in place the requisite assurance activities, check and balance to safeguard UNDP's assets and property.



Gender equality and women's empowerment





The work of UNDP in Eritrea complements the efforts of the Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE) in promoting gender equality, equity and women empowerment to ensure the success of sustainable socio-economic development initiatives.

In 2020, UNDP continued to make efforts to improve women's place in the country's socio-economic and political life to make women active agents of change to promote sustainable development.

Despite prior challenges posed during the two decades of isolation, "Eritrea achieved the MDGs on women's dignified life including health and education and mobilizing and organizing capacity for the effective implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals" (source UN Eritrea MDG report). However, the impact of COVID-19 further amplified the existing gender gaps.

To address this challenge, the UNDP Country Office in partnership with the Country Office of the UNFPA in Eritrea developed a "COVID-19 and Gender Policy Brief" that outlines the challenges and risks related to the global COVID-19 pandemic in relation to gender equality in Eritrea. The Policy Brief proposed actions which must be taken in the planning and implementation of the UNDP response actions and recovery measures.

'Building forward better' in the case of Eritrea, means ensuring no one is left behind, and that gender equality and women's participation are integrated into crisis prevention, preparedness, and recovery from the earliest stages.

The Brief aims to present ways in which the negative impacts of COVID-19 can be responded to in a gender-sensitive, responsive and women-empowering fashion, according to the SDGs, to 'build forward better.'

Lastly, it sets out recommendations on ensuring gender equality and equity in the recovery process, focusing on women's empowerment in the decision-making processes related to COVID-19 response and economic development.



Establishing Community based platforms for sustainable development.

GEF-SGP/UNDP Eritrea served as a platform for the NUEW (National Union of Eritrean Women) to showcase their implementation and management capacity to carry out community-based environmental projects such as afforestation program (soil and water conservation projects, permanent area enclosures, and biodiversity conservation) and follow up on installation of solar home systems since 2009. The women association was generally perceived as a promoter of elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), improved traditional stove and implementation of small-scale projects on saving and credit. Before performing the implementation and follow-ups of GEF-SGP (Global Environmental Facility- Small Grants Programme) projects, NUEW was not recognized as an implementor of environmental projects as illustrated above.

In Eritrea, the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) has, over the years, worked closely with the local communities.

In 2020, the NUEW Anseba region accomplished a three-year project titled 'Awareness Creation on Improved Management of Agro-Chemicals for Sustainable Land Management' and was able to enhance awareness of farmers, key informants of village community representatives, Administrators, NUEW representatives, government officials at subregion level and representatives of Elaborated agroindustry workers on proper management of agrochemicals within the community. The implementation involved conducting a baseline assessment and development/production of promotional materials.

Agro-chemicals, including persistent organic pollutants (POPs) and chemicals cause enormous problems for human health and the environment. Agro-chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides containing organochlorine and organophosphates have been reported to be the of cause Malignant tumor, birth defects, nervous system disorders, heart, kidneys and lung diseases, hence the project aimed to enhance awareness of farmers and extension workers on proper storage, handling, disposal of agrochemicals and using of personal protective equipment (PPE) to contribute on tackling the problem.

Generation Equality



Eritrea has made the empowerment of women a national priority and committed to its development agenda grounded on social justice and gender equality.



UNDP as an Integrator

UNDP plays an important role in supporting the office of the Resident Coordinator and the United Nations country teams with integrated analysis and planning to promote a multidimensional approach to the achievements of the 2030 Agenda.

Under the technical leadership of UNDP, two Socio-Economic impact assessments on COVID-19 in Eritrea were produced in collaboration with all UN agencies in 2020. The first was a rapid assessment to gauge the extent of the impact of the lockdown measures on supply chains, service delivery, and livelihoods, both in urban and rural areas. The second assessment, leveraging the former, an in-depth approach with a broader outlook at the potential impacts into the medium and long term. These two socioeconomic impact assessments underpinned the framework for the preparation of the Eritrea Socioeconomic Recovery Plan 2020-21: Living with COVID-19.

The recovery plan, which is forward looking, outlines a whole-of-society approach to livelihood initiatives that will contain the pandemic and help the country *build forward better*.

As the current UNDP Country Programme cycle (CDP- 2017-2021) and cooperation framework (UNSPCF -2017-2021) end this year, UNDP actively participated in the conduct of the Common Country Analysis (CCA) by leading the following thematic areas; socio-economic situation, SDGs Frameworks, state institution and political situation, human rights, climate and environment, and financing for sustainable development. These analyses have enabled both UNDP and UN system to prepare the next generation programme and cooperation framework 2022-2026.



Our 2020 Highlights

Launch of the Human development Report 2020



On the 16th December 2020, the UNDP Country Office, led by the Resident Representative, James Wakiaga and Mr. Jakob Ström Head of the Office of the Embassy of Sweden in Eritrea successfully co-launched the #HDR2020 in country.

“Human development puts people at the centre of development as agents of change.”

On 11th December 2020, the UNDP Country Office in Eritrea organized a webinar entitled “Fostering sustainable development in Eritrea. The webinar focused on the environmental, social, and economic aspects of sustainable development in the Country and presented the 25 years of UNDP in Eritrea video.

“We believe that co-operation for economic social development is a practical working proposition that has been successfully implemented in Eritrea.”

UNDP Resident Representative,
James Wakiaga

UNDP in Eritrea is 25years and celebrates its Silver Jubilee



International Volunteer Day

On December 05, 2020, UNDP Country office observed the International Volunteer Day under the theme: Together We Can Through Volunteering.

The world wide theme aimed to thank volunteers around the world for their actions and to showcase the impact of volunteering in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic.

"Volunteering actions, now more than ever, are critical in creating resilient communities, to address an ever-evolving web of issues facing the world"

William Silamawia, UN Volunteer, Communications and Knowledge Management Officer



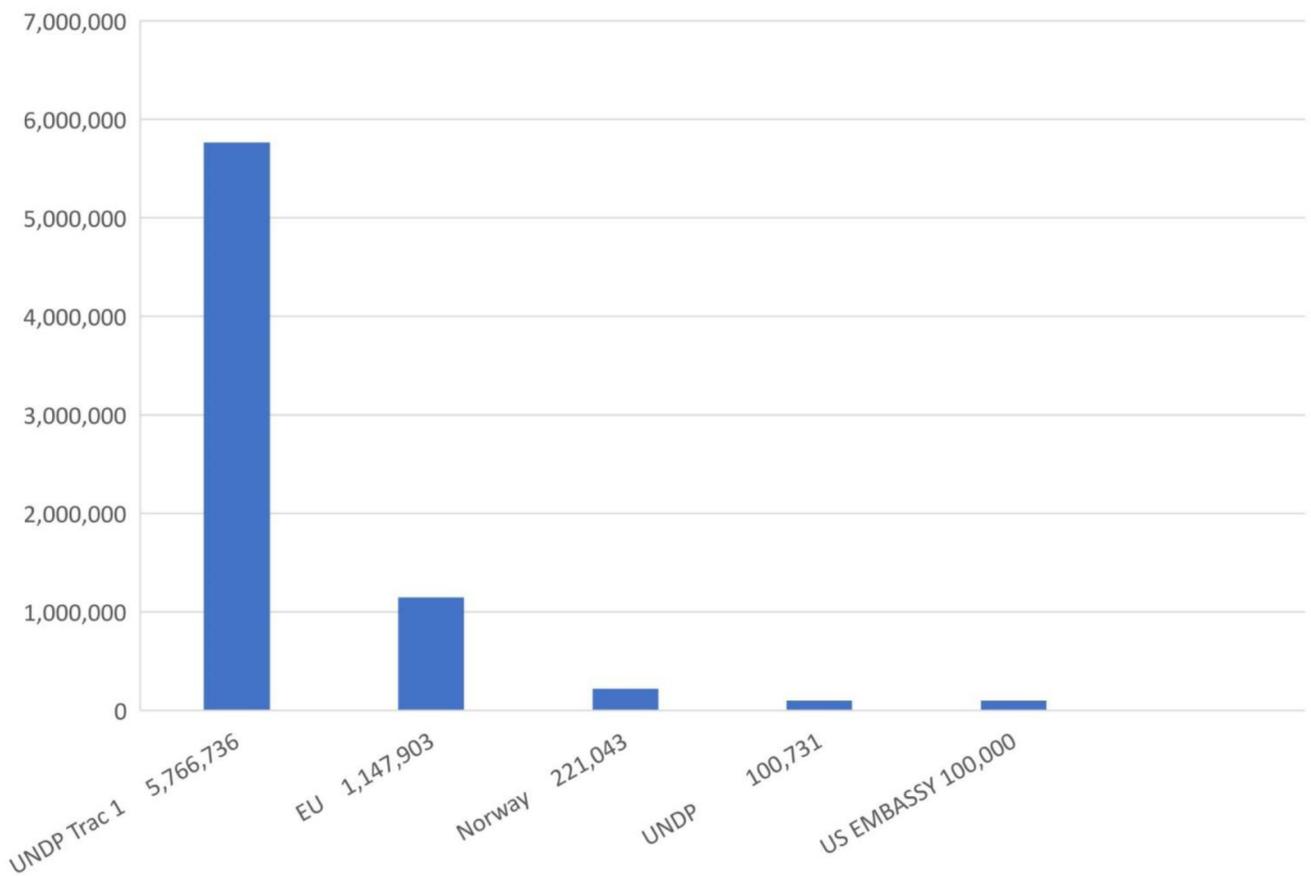
Duty of care and staff welfare

In December 2020, In line with the UNDP duty of care and the People for 2030, UNDP Eritrea organized an exclusive psychosocial support session. The session was facilitated by Occupational Safety, health and welfare in Copenhagen.

After the first COVID record in the CO, and in line with the corporate duty of care, UNDP Eritrea distributed PPE for all staff and their dependents. These includes face masks, sanitizers and other disinfecting materials. These including fumigation and disinfection of office spaces.



Resources received in 2020



**People centered development in line
with Government priorities
of Leave no One Behind.**

UNDP Country Office in Eritrea

United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Offices
HDAY Street
P.O. Box 5366
Asmara, Eritrea

Tel: (+291) 1 151166
FAX: (+291) 1 151081

E-mail: registry.er@undp.org

