



The Government of the State of Eritrea

**Fourth Periodic National Report of the State of Eritrea
on the status of Implementation of the
African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
(ACRWC)
(2020 – 2024)**

2025

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Acronyms

AAYC: Afro Arab Youth Council

ACERWC: African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

ACRWC: African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of Children

AfCFTA: Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement

ANC: Antenatal Care

AOW: Arierieb Orthopedic Workshop

ARV: Antiretroviral

CBGHs: Community Based Group homes

CBHC: Community Based Health Care

CEDAW: Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CEDC: Children Educational and Discovery Center

CEE: Complementary Elementary Education

CEmONC: Comprehensive Emergency Obstetrical and Newborn Care

CLTS: Community Led Toilet and Sanitation

CRPD: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

CSO: Civil Society Organizations

CWDs: Children with Disabilities

DHS: Demographic and Health Surveys

EDF: Eritrea Defense Force

EH: Environmental Health

ELFS: Eritrea Labour Force Survey

EPHS: Eritrea Population and Health Survey

FGM: Female Genital Mutilation

FGM/C: Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

GER: Gross Enrolment Ratio

GoSE: Government of the State of Eritrea

GPI: Gender Parity Index

HSSDP: Health Sectoral Strategic Development Plan

HTPs: Harmful Traditional Practices

IMAM: Integrated Management of Acute malnutrition

IMNCI: Integrated Management of Newborn and Childhood Illness

IMR: Infant Mortality Rate

IYCF: Infant and Young Child Feeding

MIHAP: Minimum Integrated Household Agricultural Package

MoA: Ministry of Agriculture

MoE: Ministry of Education

MoFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MoFND: Ministry of Finance & National Development

MoH: Ministry of Health

MoI: Ministry of Information

MoJ: Ministry of Justice

MoLG: Ministry of Local Government

MoLSW: Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare

MoLWE: Ministry of Land, Water & Environment

MoT&Com: Ministry of Transport and Communication

NCD: Non-Communicable Diseases

NCEW: National Confederation of Eritrean Workers

NER: Net Enrolment Ratio

NFPS: National Forces of Police & Security

NHP: National Health Policy

NSO: National Statistics Office

NSSS: Nutrition Site Surveillance System

NUEW: National Union of Eritrean Women

NUEYS: National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students

NYIEH: National Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub

ODF: Open Defecation Free

PHC: Primary Health Care

PNC: Post-natal Care

PWDs: People with Disabilities

PYU: Pan African Union

REC/D: Reach Every Child/District

RMNCAH & HAA: Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Healthy geing

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SMCF: Small and Medium Commercial Farmers

STI: Sexually Transmitted Infections

TCCE: Transitional Civil Code of Eritrea

TCPCE: Transitional Criminal Procedure Code of Eritrea

TPCE: Transitional Penal Code of Eritrea

TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UAM: Under-age Marriage

UHC: Universal Health Coverage

VNR: Voluntary National Report

WFDY: World Federation of Democratic Youth

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE) is pleased to present to the Committee its Fourth Periodic Report on the implementation status of the ACRWC for the period of 2020-2024.
2. This Fourth Periodic Report has been prepared pursuant to Article 43(1) (B) of the ACRWC guidelines regarding the form and contents of periodic reports to be submitted by states parties. This report updates Eritrea's second and third combined periodic report 2014-2019 and highlights significant changes on policies and programs that were made between 2020 and December 2024. Where relevant, this report contains cross-reference to the combined second and third ACRWC Eritrea report.
3. During the preparation of this fourth Eritrea's report on ACRWC, the National Inter-ministerial Coordinating Committee chaired by the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare made allocation of tasks among its member institutions and formed a core group composed mainly of the members of the Technical Committee to discuss the concluding recommendations of the Committee with the appropriate civil society stakeholders in order to take concerted stalk of the diverse issues raised.
4. The preparation process of this fourth periodic report was participatory, in which all public and private sector partners, namely the Ministries of Education (MoE), Health (MOH), Justice (MOJ), Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW), Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Local Government (MOLG), Finance & National Development (MoFND), Information (MoI), Transport and Communication (MoT&Com), Agriculture (MOA) and Land, Water & Environment (MOLWE), as well as National Statistics Office (NSO), National Forces of Police & Security (NFPS), , National Associations including National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW), National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS), National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW), the four national Associations for People with Disabilities, "Bidho" (challenge)- the Association of People living with HIV/AIDS participated & Rora digital library of the PFDJ.
5. A draft report was circulated among the national partners and feedbacks solicited from all stakeholders. Community-based committees for ensuring women & child rights and combating harmful traditional practices actively participated in the discussions of the draft report. The National Coordinating Body on the ACRWC and CRC made substantial input to the finalization of this report. The MoLSW facilitated the process as the focal institution responsible for the coordination of the implementation of the ACRWC and the CRC.
6. The preparation of this report illustrated the ever-increasing level of coordination, collaboration and harmony that exist between all government institutions and civil society organizations concerned with the implementation of ACRWC.

7. The GoSE has not spared any opportunity and resource within its power in the promotion of the Rights and Welfare of the Child and Committee reaffirms its commitment to the sustained furtherance of the rights and welfare of the child enshrined in the ACRWC and other pertinent international and regional conventions. The following sections will address the implementation status of the recommendations.

II. GENERAL MEASURES OF IMPLEMENTATION

A. POLICY AND STRATEGY

8. National Social Protection Policy and a National Social Protection Strategic Plan that covers the period 2022 – 2026 were developed in 2021. The documents are expected to provide a more developmental alternative and conceptualize the nature of social vulnerability by addressing the important socio-political drivers that cause and perpetuate socio-economic vulnerability and insecurity, particularly to the most vulnerable groups of the society. The policy for disability was revised, in 2021 by the MoLSW.
9. This provides a clear direction for the protection of the rights of children with disability in particular. The updated English version of 2021 was also translated to Tigrigna local language in early 2023 so that the general public in general, the PWDs and the private institutions to easily comprehend the policy issues and statements & be guided by it. This has contributed for the awareness raising on rights and welfare of PWDs to be strengthened.
10. The Ministry of Education has developed a Sector Strategic Plan (2022-2026) to guide the provision of educational services across the whole country. The 2023-2027 Partnership compact: outlining an inclusive and transformative reform agenda for quality learning for all girls and boys produced by the MoE in September 2023 is meant to reinforce the policy of MOE and is financed by Global Partnership Fund for Education.
11. National Health Policy (NHP-2020) and the Third Health Sectorial Strategic Development Plan (HSSP-III 2022-2026) were produced by the MOH. The Ministry of Health has developed a comprehensive Strategic Plan 2022-2026 on Sexual and Reproductive Health, Maternal and Newborn Health, Child Health, Adolescent Health and Healthy Ageing (RMNCAH & HAA). This strategic plan guides the implementation of RMNCAH & HA. It sets the strategic objectives together with national targets and milestones to be attained during the implementation period as a way of achieving Universal Health Care (UHC) in the country.

B. RECENT RATIFICATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

12. Eritrea has acceded to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on 20 December 2024, reaffirming its dedication to inclusivity. This marks a significant step in ensuring that children with disabilities enjoy their full rights.
13. Taking into consideration the obligations emanating from this protocol and the need to further enhance the infrastructure for its implementation, the GoSE will in due time keep the Committee updated with regard to the steps taken towards the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

14. The GoSE conveys its gratitude to the Committee's recognition of its principled approach to multilateral engagement and its commitment to addressing issues affecting children, including trafficking and economic exploitation. Eritrea acknowledges the potential benefits of the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) in fostering regional economic integration and sustainable development across the continent. At the same time, Eritrea underscores the importance of ensuring that Africa has the necessary infrastructure, institutional capacity, and equitable economic arrangements to fully realize the potential of AfCFTA. Sustainable trade and economic cooperation must be underpinned by robust transport, energy, digital, and financial infrastructure that enables all Member States to benefit equitably from the agreement. The GoSE remains engaged in assessing the AfCFTA's alignment with Eritrea's national development priorities and economic strategies. Eritrea will continue to engage in dialogue with regional partners to ensure that any steps toward economic integration contribute meaningfully to inclusive and sustainable growth for all, including the well-being of children.

C. LEGISLATION

15. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) designed a comprehensive strategy aiming at improving the overall quality and accessibility of the justice system; mainly through institutional as well as human capacity development; comprehensive legal reform process; meaningful public participation in the administration of justice; promotion and institutionalization of out-of-court dispute resolution mechanisms; legal aid, and enhancing the ongoing public awareness-raising efforts. This strategy aims, inter alia, at making the judicial system easily accessible to the public taking into account the historical, social, economic and cultural norms and other realities of the Eritrean people.
16. To align with the above strategy, structural adjustments of the Ministry, courts and the prosecution were conducted. To this effect, in 2023 Eritrea issued Proclamation No. 184/2023 through which court structures are reformed. Along with this Proclamation, 'Access to Justice' Department, of the MOJ is reinforced and mandated with significant undertakings to enhance community centered mediation as well as augment the public awareness programs.

D. BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

17. The State Party requests the Committee to refer to the second and third combined report Page 9-10 on budgetary allocation and actual expenditure. Moreover, budgetary allocations are regularly analyzed to ascertain that the actual amount and the pattern is consistent with the government social justice policy which prioritizes disadvantaged communities and areas. For example, as boarding schools are meant for such disadvantaged communities, boarding schools construction and enrolment of students is given priorities to remote and scattered settlements. Moreover, some schools in remote areas are provided with extra budget to cater for the student feeding services. Construction of new health facilities also takes these factors into account.
18. Between 2017 and 2023, the Government of Eritrea has made notable progress in improving

access to health services by alleviating financial barriers. Payment for services is minimal at health center and health station, and they are mainly for registration purposes and there are free 24-hour emergency services at all levels, Annual cost recovery caters for less than 10%; a 50% discount for referral health facility; poverty certificates for waiver of registration fee and for treatment of all major NCDs, communicable diseases such as HIV, TB, viral hepatitis and SRH medication and services are provided free of charge.

19. The Strategic Plan for the Implementation of Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health and Healthy Ageing Programs (RMNCAH and HA) 2022–2026 has budget allocations for each components of the program. Child and Adolescent health is one of the programs which have detailed costs for all its components. In the RMNCAH and HA strategy, Reach Every Child/District (REC/D), promote health, development and wellbeing of children is clearly indicated and implemented.
20. The GoSE allocates relatively high annual budget to the education sector. Some of the allocated budget is used to strengthen analysis on the rights of children on education. The government gives much attention to children in disadvantaged situation. The Ministry of Education (MoE) has been conducting various studies to carry out situational analysis of developments in the rights of children to education. Some of the areas given focus on this issue for analysis include on creating access, on quality of education, professional development of teachers, increasing enrolment at all levels etc. Recently, the MoE is conducting needs assessment analysis at the primary level giving more focus to the disadvantaged children. At the same time concerted efforts have been made to sensitize parents and communities across the nation on the rights of children to education and to enhance these rights.
21. Likewise, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MoLSW) produced the social protection, policy and strategic plan and is focusing on the most vulnerable categories of population hosting vulnerable children. The MoLSW, MoH jointly with the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) have been working around the strategic plan (2020-2024) to ensure the rights of children and women focusing on combating harmful traditional practices such as FGM, UAM and other harmful practices including in the remote and most disadvantaged sections of the society.

Recurrent budget allocated from domestic sources to sectors which impact children's wellbeing and rights

22. The State party once more requests the Committee to refer to the second and third combined report (2014-2019, pages 9-10) with regard to budgetary allocation and actual expenditures. Eritrea's budget allocation to social sectors and disadvantaged regions emanates from its social justice policy. Even under austerity budget situation, every effort is made to allocate adequate budgetary resources to marginalized communities and geographical areas. However, a more detailed and fully disaggregated account of resource allocation and actual expenditure by the relevant ministries is not readily available for this reporting.

Table 1: Budgetary allocations to social sectors as percentage of domestic resources

Year	Health	Education	Social Welfare	Information	Sports and culture	Total for these sectors
2022	6.0	10.6	0.9	0.9	0.5	18.9
2023	5.3	11.4	1.0	1.0	0.5	19.2
2024	6.0	10.7	1.2	1.0	0.6	19.5

Source: MoLSW, 2024

E. ON CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSO)

23. The Government of the State of Eritrea (GoSE) acknowledges the Committee’s observation regarding the regulation of civil society organizations (CSOs) and wishes to recall the rationale and provisions of Proclamation No. 145/2005. The Proclamation was introduced in light of Eritrea’s historical and developmental realities, including the legacies of prolonged war, recurrent droughts, and the risks of dependency. It specifically recognizes the positive role played by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the past and affirms their continuing contribution in relief and rehabilitation “complementary to, but by no means substitutes of, governmental agencies” (Preamble).
24. Importantly, the Proclamation does not prohibit the operation of CSOs, but establishes a framework that ensures accountability, transparency, and complementarity with national priorities. Both local and international NGOs are explicitly permitted to operate in Eritrea, provided they register with the Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare and demonstrate the capacity to deliver meaningful relief and rehabilitation services (Articles 8–9). Local NGOs may operate with USD 1 million in resources or equivalent technical capacity, while international NGOs may operate with USD 2 million. Their programs are further required to include training and institutional capacity-building components, thus contributing directly to the empowerment of local communities, including children and care-givers (Article 9(4)).
25. The requirement that NGOs operate through government coordination and avoid reliance on earmarked UN or bilateral funding reflects Eritrea’s emphasis on sovereignty, sustainability, and community participation in relief and rehabilitation programs. Far from restricting engagement, the framework seeks to ensure that non-state actors genuinely strengthen national efforts without undermining them. In this sense, the Proclamation already provides a basis for collaboration with CSOs in areas benefiting children, while ensuring that such engagement is transparent, sustainable, and aligned with national development priorities.

F. DEFINITION OF A CHILD AND OTHER AGE REQUIREMENTS

26. While a comprehensive single legislative framework specifically addressing children's rights has not yet been enacted, there are adequate provisions within various domestic laws that

encompass the definition of a child and the mechanisms for child protection. Notably, Articles 1, 2, and 198-338 of the Transitional Civil Code of Eritrea (TCCE) serve as key references in this regard.

III. General principles

A. NON-DISCRIMINATION

27. Freedom of religion is guaranteed to all citizens under the Transitional Civil Code of Eritrea (TCCE) and Proclamation No. 73/1995, which regulates the activities of religious institutions. These legal frameworks are founded on a principle of zero tolerance for discrimination, including that based on religion or belief. The government fosters religious harmony and peaceful coexistence, a tradition upheld in Eritrea for over 1,400 years.
28. The speculation of "stigmatization" is unfounded and mischaracterizes the situation. Article 15 of the TCCE explicitly states that "there shall be no interference with the exercise, in accordance with the law, of the rites of any religion or creed by residents of the State, provided that such rites are not utilized for political purposes or do not prejudice public order or morality." Proclamation No. 73/1995, which delineates the separation between the State and religious institutions, establishes clear registration requirements to prevent misuse of these institutions for political ends.

B. BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

29. The principle of acting in the best interests of the child is a fundamental legal requirement in Eritrea's child protection framework. This principle is firmly embedded across various national laws, including the laws governing persons, family, and contracts. It is reflected in provisions relating to a child's right to inheritance, the establishment of paternity, the right to life if born alive, the determination of guardianship in the absence of parents and settling child custody disputes. The TCCE contains specific articles that enshrine the protection of the best interests of the child, including Articles 2–4, 199, 209, 211, 235, 316, 681, 834, and 1063.
30. The TCCE substantially incorporates the principles and provisions of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC), including the central tenet of the best interests of the child, which must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children. The Code also upholds the right of every child capable of forming his or her own views to express those views freely in all matters affecting them, ensuring that their opinions are given due weight considering their age and level of their maturity.
31. There are normative frameworks in place that provide a range of legal remedies for children whose rights have been violated. These remedies are comprehensive and begin with the acknowledgment of rights at birth. Key provisions include:
 - The right of a child to be duly registered and named, with penalties for individuals who fail to fulfil this obligation.
 - The right of a child to receive care and protection from their parents and guardians, with

legal repercussions for those who grossly neglect their responsibilities or abandon the child without adequate care. This includes provisions for cases where a guardian entrusts the child to a third party, knowing or should have known that such arrangements could lead to physical or moral harm.

- These measures ensure that the views of the child are considered and their best interests are prioritized in any adjudication of rights violations.
32. Eritrea categorically rejects all allegations of abuse of children's rights which are unfounded and do not reflect the reality on the ground. The Sawa Education and Training Center is an institution designed to provide high school education, vocational training, and national service preparation in line with Eritrea's nation-building objectives. The GoSE remains committed to the protection and well-being of children and reject any form of exploitation or abuse. Eritrea emphasizes that national service is a sovereign matter deeply linked to the country's history, security, and development. As previously stated, there are no children in military training, and the legal framework of Eritrea strictly prohibits the recruitment of minors into the armed forces. The National Service Proclamation No. 82/1995 is clear on the issue of age, setting the minimum age limit of national service to 18 and all allegations to the contrary are inaccurate.
33. The recurrent allegations of recruitment of children in Sawa are utterly unfounded. Students go to Sawa when they finish Grade 11 of their schooling. Enrollment in primary school i.e. Grade 1, thought-out the country starts, when the eligible student reaches the age of seven-years (or at six years and 9 months minimum) in September of that academic year. Prior to the period, children go the kindergarten only (normally when they are from 4-6 years old). So, all those going to Sawa for their last year of High School (Grade 12) which is combined with over three months of military training. By the time they had sat for the High School Leaving Certificate National Exam they are 18 years old before they enter the Sawa military academy.
34. Regarding fact-finding missions, Eritrea strongly asserts that such mechanisms are neither warrant nor appropriate in its context. Unwarranted or externally imposed fact-finding missions represent an undue encroachment on national sovereignty and undermine the principles of equal partnership and mutual respect that should govern international cooperation. The GoSE firmly maintains that any engagement must be based on constructive dialogue, trust, and full respect for its sovereign rights and national ownership of domestic matters. Eritrea remains open to cooperation with relevant partners, including the Committee, through established and mutually agreed mechanisms that ensure objectivity and avoid politicization. The GoSE reiterates its commitment to the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of children and looks forward to continued engagement with the Committee within this principled framework.

C. RIGHT TO LIFE, SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT

35. While the GoSE maintains a prohibition on abortion, there exist legislative provisions under the TPCE that allow for the termination of pregnancy in cases of medical necessity and emergencies that pose grave and imminent danger to the mother.
36. According to the TPCE (Article 534, section 1), termination of pregnancy is not punishable

where it is performed to save the pregnant woman from grave and permanent danger to her life or health that cannot be averted in any other way. Abortion is not also punishable in Eritrea where it was done to avert physical or emotional distress of the pregnant woman; or where the pregnancy resulted from sexual violence or incest.

37. Contrary to the notation of the Committee, in Eritrea, there is no restrictive law that prohibits victims of violence to access safe abortion. There is also no age based restriction and no requirement for parental consent to access RH services. Once the victim comes to the health facilities, the girl child receives all the necessary medical interventions if need be safe abortion service as a measure to assist her without insisting to report to the law enforcement authorities as a precondition. It is the victim, not health care workers, who makes the decision of reporting to law enforcement authorities. Nonetheless, it is encouraged for the sexual assault victims who come to health care facilities or other medical examination sites for the medical checkup to report the assault to law enforcement authorities to track the perpetrator and ensure that similar violations will not happen again.

D. CHILD PARTICIPATION

38. Paragraph 76 of the second and third consolidated report does not state ‘allocation of working roles to children’. It should be duly noted that the ‘Eritrean Zero Wastage Policy’ is an educational policy whereby persons who did not succeed to secure college entrance exam results are accorded with technical and vocational education. This statement specifically pertains to the persons who have attained the age of majority.
39. There are systems and mechanisms established to ensure the voices of children are heard and children are consulted and participate on issues that affect them. Two children aged between 14-17 years old are permanent members of each of the 67 sub-zonal committee members established to ensure women and child rights.
40. The education system of Eritrea adheres to learner centered and interactive pedagogy. This system allows a child to express his/her thoughts freely among his/her peers and with teachers. Frequent seminars and meeting are conducted to raise the awareness of parents on this issue. Besides, the participation of children in various co-curricular activities organized at school, sub- Regional, Regional and National levels help them to enhance their ability to express their views. Such activities include debating, general knowledge contests, drama, music and many more.
41. The National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) has family counseling centers in the six regions where family issues including the child are to be heard. All these institutions have interconnections for the betterment and interest of our precious children.
42. The mini media clubs are giving children a voice & helping them to be active participants in their communities. By allowing children to write, discuss, express their thoughts and opinions; the mini media promotes the free exchange of ideas & encourage children to think critically about the world around them. This fosters creativity & innovation which helps to build their confidence & self-esteem.
43. Red flowers cultural groups provide wonderful grounds for children to express themselves &

share creative ideas with the wider community. Not only is this a great outlet for their creativity, but it also helps to raise awareness about important issues in the society and to develop courage to perform in front of large audiences.

44. Workshops organized by the NUEYS are very beneficial for children and young students in providing a safe and open platform to explore their ideas and share their thoughts and experience with others. By encouraging children to actively participate in the workshops and share their ideas, the NUEYS is helping to foster a culture of free expression and critical thinking. NUEYS has established more than 46 youth centers in six administrative regions of the country. The purpose of the youth centers is to provide different types of services aimed at meeting the diverse and growing needs of the youth in the fields of sport, culture, arts, education, gender and health. The scope and mix of the services provided by the youth centers not only provide a place for young people to engage in healthy recreational activities, but also serve as important hubs for personal growth and development.
45. To promote a community of young innovators and new ideas, NUEYS established and is in a process of furnishing a National Youth Innovation and Entrepreneurship Hub (NYIEH) in Asmara. The NYIEH is expected to support young innovators by selecting promising ideas with potentials for implementation to provide sustainable solutions. So far, NUEYS organized two youth invention and innovation conferences, attended by 180 participants from various backgrounds including innovators, youth leaders and government officials to discuss the theme “Creativity for Prosperity and Development”. Moreover NUEYS organized competitions and exhibitions in three zones (Anseba, Maekel and Debub) in 2022-2023 to show case the nascent innovations. The exhibition was broadcasted on all national media outlets i.e. youth magazine national radio, newspaper and TV.

IV. Civil Rights and Freedoms

A. RIGHTS TO NAME, NATIONALITY AND BIRTH REGISTRATION

46. Birth registration falls under the mandate of the Ministry of Local Governments (MoLG). The MoLG undertake registration of vital civil events namely, birth, death, marriage, and divorce. The levels of administration stretch down from Zonal, Sub-Zonal and District/Village Administration. To make registration easy for the people, it is carried out in the district level which is closer to communities, while certification is done at the sub-zonal level. There are around 800 registration centers which are seated at district administration offices, both in urban and rural areas.
47. Birth registration and certification is a basic right to a child which is protected by law. The TCCE under the clauses pertaining to family, personal identification, and others. The law defines the vital events and specifies duration of registration from the date of occurrence of the birth. At present, public awareness has risen, and is being reinforced by requiring parents to present birth certificate for the registration of their children to pre-schools (kindergartens). The rate of birth registration is increasing from time to time. A child, through his family or guardian, is exercising his/her full right to birth registration and certification without discrimination of

sex, race, or religion. So far certification is being produced upon the request of the family depending on the need for it.

48. Furthermore, the MoLG, in collaboration with stakeholders (NSO, MoH, MoJ, and others) has prepared a five year strategic plan for the period 2024-2028. The Main goals/outcomes of the strategic plan are:-

- Efficient and effective CRVS governance;
- Improve quality of CRVS services;
- Improve willingness of the public for the registration of all vital events; and
- Ensuring Reliable statistics.

49. A child is born either at home or at health facilities. To achieve the highest coverage of registration, it is planned to make formal linkages between main stakeholders, such as MoH (health facilities) and religious institutions (churches and mosques) to notify the civil registration office which is located at the local administration office. This means that a birth notification form will be filled in at the time a child is born or vaccinated at health facilities or through outreach by the health workers; and similarly by a church or mosque when rituals of baptism or naming of the child is performed. In this way, the coverage and rate of registration of birth would be achieved to the highest possible level, at least equal to the percentage of child vaccine, if not more. It is also planned, parallel to the registration; a birth certificate of the child will be produced and delivered to the family of the born child.

50. The above mentioned measures, including the ICT infrastructure and computerized database which is planned to be put in place is anticipated to help expand nationwide registration coverage.

B. RIGHT TO NAME, NATIONALITY

51. The modes of acquiring Eritrean nationality are not solely based on descent. According to the Nationality Proclamation No. 21/1992, there are four avenues for obtaining Eritrean nationality: by birth, naturalization, adoption, and marriage. Adoption serves as a means of providing a home for children who have lost their biological parents due to death or for those whose parents are unable or unwilling to care for them. Recognizing that adoption involves integrating a child into a family that is not their birth family, the Eritrean Nationality Proclamation includes provisions to grant Eritrean nationality to any child adopted by an Eritrean national. An abandoned child found in Eritrea and whose parents remain unknown and a child born out of wedlock has also the right to Eritrean nationality.

52. The Nationality Proclamation does not discriminate against persons or groups of persons on grounds of race, gender, religion, or national or ethnic origin of their right to a nationality. It is strictly enforced and is a fundamental right of any citizen. Eritrean national identity card is given at the age of 18 years.

C. CRIMINALIZATION OF NON-REGISTRATION

53. The issue of criminalizing non-registration falls under Eritrea's domestic laws, and it is essential to understand that effective law enforcement requires appropriate mechanisms.

Without these mechanisms, the provisions of the TCCE risk becoming mere theoretical guidelines with no practical application. Even then, in Eritrea, penal and correctional measures are viewed as a last resort. The focus remains on awareness-raising campaigns and training for relevant officials to improve compliance with civil registration requirements. This approach aims to enhance the birth registration rate through education and support rather than punitive measures. (see Para.19)

D. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

54. We wish to highlight that the publicly owned Newspapers, TV, and Radio (In all nine Eritrean Languages) offer specific programs and platforms to children. On national TV for instance, there are weekly programs- Fiyorina (ፊዮሪና) and Hello children (ሃለው ቆልዑ)- which focus on issue relevant to children. There is also a Children column (ተረፎች) newspaper in Hadas Eritrea. The programs are outsourced to private producers. The presenter, the themes, the panel discussions etc. are done by children themselves. There are weekly/Monthly review published by social society groups- women's and students association etc. - which provide additional platforms and space devoted to and prepared by children.

E. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

55. Freedom of thought and assembly is accorded to all residents, including children, pursuant to Articles 14 and 16 of the TCCE. Moreover, the legislative scheme of the State provides for the protection against the limitations on these rights by any means whatsoever including voluntary limitations unless a legitimate interest justifies it.
56. With a wide number of memberships, NUEYS is a thriving organization that reaches youth across Eritrea. More than 40% of these members are female, demonstrating NUEYS commitment to gender equality. Moreover 11,541 youth are organized in different clubs, each focusing on specific skills and interests. NUEYS is driven by its volunteer members, who self-organize into clubs based on their individual interests and aspirations. These clubs provide a platform for personal development, enabling members to hone their skills and make meaningful contributions to NUEYS objectives and their own personal goals. With strong emphasis on volunteerism and dedication, NUEYS members are a force to be reckoned with in response to Eritrea's current challenges, the country has launched a comprehensive rehabilitation program that places youth at the forefront of its priorities.
57. NUEYS new strategies and priorities demonstrate a comprehensive and thoughtful approach to addressing the diverse needs of young people. By focusing on areas like education, health and vocational training, the organization is positioning itself to support youth in achieving their full potential and contributing to the growth of their communities. In addition to advocating and sensitizing club members, certain clubs such as the reading, mini media, sport club, health club, merih clubs play a vital role in equipping young people with specific skills through training and practice. Club members serve as key influencers and advocates within NUEYS,

helping to engage and raise awareness among their peers on important issues affecting young people's lives in order to establish and sustain successful clubs NUEYS prioritizes capacity building for club members, which begins with training activities upon their selection.

58. The reading club aims to enhance students' and youth' performance and competence by cultivating their reading habits through the club members are exposed to variety of reading materials, which improves their ability to articulate and analyse situations and problems and fosters a strong desire for knowledge.

Table 2: Number and membership of reading clubs

YEAR	Number of reading clubs	Members		
		Male	Female	TOTAL
2020	COVID	COVID	COVID	COVID
2021	100	800	700	1500
2022	87	727	671	1398
2023	264	937	1073	2010
2024	94	1126	1096	2222

Source: NUEYS

59. *Merih* club members serve as student leaders and facilitators, coordinating school activities, promoting discipline among students and supporting the work of other clubs like scout activities. *Merih* club focuses on developing leadership skills and fostering a sense of community involvement among youth.

Table 3: Number of Merih clubs and membership

YEAR	Number of Merih clubs	Members		
		Male	Female	TOTAL
2020	COVID	COVID	COVID	COVID
2021	200	1100	1200	2300
2022	105	896	941	1837
2023	255	1063	1262	2325
2024	108	1093	1086	2179

Source: NUEYS, 2024

60. NUEYS has conducted various activities to promote youth health, including public education and awareness events, as well as direct services like counseling (hotline) and condom distribution. During the COVID 19 pandemic, NUEYS prioritized raising awareness and knowledge among youth and students to help them develop the necessary attitudes and behaviors to protect themselves and their communities. NUEYS collaborated closely with the national task force under the ministry of health to develop and implement targeted health

promotion activities, including to mobilize the youth and student's population against the impact of COVID 19. In summary, NUEYS health plan reached over 534,594 individuals, providing information about HIV AIDS and other health topics.

61. NUEYS in addition to its regular membership, organizes special youth students group such as *Keyahti Embaba*, *Fitewerari* and *Himeret*. *Keyahti embaba* (red flower) in particular targets children and aims to introduce them to the history and culture of the Eritrean people. *Keyahti embaba* serves as a foundation for developing future leaders who will carry on NUEYS mission and values. These children are expected to eventually join the *himeret* group and play an important role in the organization future.

Table 4: Number of children trained in group organizations

Training type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Keyahti embaba	=	1246	6051	1786	2143	11226
Fitewrari	=	1270	4219	7333	7410	20232
Himeret	=	482	956	4575	4989	11002
Total	=	2998	11226	13694	14542	42460

Source: NUEYS

FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY

62. NUEYS is a membership based organization that operates at all levels from village to the national levels, creating a strong connection with grassroots communities. NUEYS welcomes all Eritrean youth and students between the ages of 14-40 without discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, gender and disability.
63. NUEYS is an active member of several international, regional youth and student organizations, including the Pan African Union (PYU) the Wworld Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY) and the Afro Arab Youth Council (AAYC) underscoring the organization's commitment to global youth development and collaboration. NUEYS represented the voice of Eritrean youth in regional and international youth and students' forums, engaging in initiatives that promote youth development and collaboration at the continental and global levels.
64. NUEYS is an active participant in several national committees including the national committees for ensuring women and children's right. Through platforms, the union advocates for the right and interest of young people, addressing harmful traditional practices FGM and under age marriage. It is clear that NUEYS is playing an active role in various administrative and coordination committees at local, regional national and international levels. This participation is crucial for ensuring that youth voices are heard and that policies and programs are effective in addressing the needs and concern of the young people. NUEYS is well represented in variety of administrative and coordination committees at zonal, sub zonal and

villages.

F. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, CONSCIENCE AND RELIGION

This topic is dealt with in earlier paragraphs in detail.

G. PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

65. The rights of a person, including children, related to privacy are attributed to them on birth, and the right is established in law in Eritrea under the different provisions of the TCCE including but not limited to Articles 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 18, 27 and other. Moreover, the Ministry of Justice gives a high attention to the rights and duties affected by draft legislations in vetting draft legislations passing under its scrutiny.
66. The internet outlets in Eritrea are obliged to be abided by a strict directive that prohibits them to entertain any online exploitation related websites and specifically pornographic sites in their cafes. In addition, they are not allowed to assist in any form for online sexual exploitation and/or sell pornographic products by any means including offline downloaded products. Violating these directives consequences with severe punishment including up to suspension and/or closure of their licenses. So far, there are no significant pornographic product issues reported.
67. The policy on ICT in education 2005 has various provisions for the protection of the rights, privacy and safety of children in using digital materials. New ICT text books for grades 8, 9 and 10 have recently been printed and are being taught in schools. Numerous ICT courses have been conducted for teachers and school principals, efforts have also been made to enhance the awareness and use of ICT among parents.

H. PROTECTION AGAINST ABUSE AND TORTURE

68. In response to the inquiry regarding the prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings, we acknowledge the importance of this issue. The working law, that is, the TPCE does not allow corporal punishment. In fact, various provisions of the TPCE including Articles 166, 548, 626 and so on provides for the correction and rehabilitation of young offenders via apprenticeship and other related moral mechanisms. It should be noted that when Eritrea adopted its TPCE in 1991, Article 172 of, which provided for the application of corporal punishment was repealed.
69. The 2015 Penal code is not yet enforceable law. Article 32, which allows for certain acts of correction or discipline, is framed within a legal context that recognizes the necessity of maintaining order and discipline in appropriate circumstances. The provisions in Article 32 are

intended to differentiate between acceptable forms of discipline and those that may harm or violate children's rights. Corporal punishment towards children is not acceptable and Article 32 was not meant to exonerate such kinds of transgressions. However grounding of children; restricting their communications may be considered as acceptable modes of discipline while such modes yet violate rights of movement or freedom of information/communication. It is crucial that any disciplinary actions are conducted in a manner consistent with the principles of respect and dignity for the child.

70. The educational policy of Eritrea indicates that corporal punishment or any kind of abuse and torture is prohibited in schools. Reports from schools indicate that there are no problems concerning this issue.

V. Economic, social, and cultural rights

A. EDUCATION

71. In Eritrea all nationals have the right to education. Basic education is compulsory, and education is free of charge at all levels. Moreover, students from poor families are given support such as stationeries; school uniforms etc. and they are also exempted from nominal school contributions and payment at the national, regional, sub-regional and school levels. The National Education Policy clearly indicates the GoSE's commitment to reach the un-reached and create a literate society on the basis of good quality education for all children and at all levels.

72. Main educational policy objectives include:

- Providing Elementary, Middle and Secondary Education,
- Promoting Technical and Vocational Educational and Training through the establishment of various training centers,
- Promoting Adult and Continuing Education,
- Eliminating gender and geographical disparities at all levels of the education system,
- Expanding and improving Teacher Education, and
- Strengthening institutional capacity.

1. Expanding and Improving the Provision of Education: Basic Education

73. In the Eritrean education system, basic education starts with two years of pre-primary schooling year I and II for children aged 4-5. This is followed by five-years of Elementary Education of grades 1-5 for children aged 6-10, and three-years of Middle School Education grades 6-8 for children aged 11-13. This official school age has been effective since the 2012/13 academic year. The State provides free, compulsory education up to grade 8. Secondary Education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Higher Education are also free of charge.

2. Pre-primary Education

74. The GoSE believes that investment in early childhood development contributes directly to the promotion of child rights, poverty alleviation, sustainable human resource development and

basic education for all. As indicated in the national education policy of Eritrea, the main objective of pre-school education is to develop children's knowledge, skills and attitudes and make them ready for the next educational level. Further, it facilitates the socialization, creativity, critical thinking and self-esteem of the child. Pre-school education is provided in formal Kindergartens and non-formal (Community Care-giving Centers or Rural Community Children's Centers.)

75. During the reporting period, much attention has been devoted to early child education, with special emphasis on rural and remote areas. From 2019/21 up to 2023/24, the total number of formal pre-schools has increased from 671 to 777. This indicates almost a 16% increase. Out of the total number of schools in 2023/24, 76% were in rural areas. As a result, enrolment at the pre-school level has significantly increased both in urban and rural areas. The total enrolment at the pre-school level has increased by more than 17% in 2023/24, as compared to the 2019/21 academic year. More than 48% of the total enrolment in 2023/24 was that of females. In addition to this, total GER has increased from 20.9 in the academic year 2019/21 to 24.6 in 2023/24. Similarly, NER also has increased from 19.3 to 23.1 in the same academic years.

Table 5: Pre-School Level: Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios by year and sex

Academic Year	Enrolment			GER			NER		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2019/21	26,581	25,136	51,717	21.1	20.8	20.9	19.5	19.2	19.3
2021/22	28,835	26,792	55,627	22.7	22	22.4	20.2	19.6	19.9
2022/23	29,204	27,181	56,385	23.1	22.4	22.8	21.4	20.8	21.1
2023/24	31,462	29,427	60,889	24.8	24.3	24.6	23.3	22.8	23.1

MoE, Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics, 2019/21-2023/24

Key: GER is Gross Enrolment Ratio, and NER is Net Enrolment Ratio

76. The Government is making efforts to expand access to pre-school education by giving great attention to rural and remote areas. There was an increase in total enrolment, both in urban and rural areas in 2023/24, compared to 2019/21. The total increase in enrolment in rural areas was 29.7%. At the same time, female enrolment in rural areas showed an increase of 29.5%.

Table 6: Pre-primary: Rural /Urban Enrolment

Academic year	Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
2019/21	23,828	12,266	11,562	27,880	14,306	13,574
2021/22	25,091	12,895	12,196	30,536	15,940	14,596
2022/23	26,766	13,963	12,803	29,619	15,241	14,378
2023/24	30,910	15,934	14,976	29,979	14,451	14,451

MoE, Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics, 2019/21-2023/24

3. Elementary Level

77. All school age children are expected to complete elementary and middle school education, while at least attaining the minimum learning achievements defined by the curriculum of Eritrea. The main objective of elementary education is to give children a firm ground on literacy, numeracy and life skills. In 2019/21 there were 1,040 elementary schools and these have increased to 1094 in 2023/24. This shows a 5% increase. Out of the total schools in 2023/24, 81.4% were in rural and remote areas.
78. Students' enrolment at the elementary level has shown a significant increase over the reporting period. The total enrolment at this level has shown an increase by 24% from the academic year 2019/21 to 2023/24. Female enrolment has also increased by 25% during the same period. At the same time, GER has shown an increasing trend from 99.1 to 117.2 during 2019/21 to 2023/24. On the other hand, there was a slight decreasing trend in NER from 83.8 to 83.2 in the same period. This could show a decrease of the over age students at this level from time to time.

Table 7: Elementary Level: Enrolment, Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios by year and sex

Academic Year	Enrolment			GER			NER		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2019/21	194,902	161,327	356,229	104.9	92.9	99.1	85.8	81.6	83.8
2021/22	216,587	180,878	397,465	116.3	103.9	110.3	85.9	81.7	83.9
2022/23	226,826	190,486	417,312	120.9	108.5	114.9	83.6	78.6	81.8
2023/24	238,602	201,553	440,155	131.2	110.9	117.2	85.8	80.4	83.2

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24

79. Total enrolment in rural and urban areas at the elementary level has increased significantly in 2023/24 compared to 2019/21. The same trend is also seen both for males and females during this period.

Table 8: Elementary level: Rural /Urban Enrolment

Academic Year	Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
2019/21	231,396	128,351	103,045	124,833	66,551	58,282
2021/22	251,598	139,182	112,416	145,867	77,405	68,462

2022/23	268,297	148,191	120,106	149,015	78,635	70,380
2023/24	284,305	156,325	127,980	155,850	82,277	73,573

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24

4. Middle school Education

80. In 2019/21, the total number of middle schools was 417. This increased to 469 in 2023/24. This indicates a 12.5% increase. Out of the total number of middle schools in 2023/24, 76.1% was in rural and remote areas. This was achieved because significant measures were taken to bring middle schools close home to those who are disadvantaged in rural and remote areas.
81. Total enrolment at the middle school education has increased by 11.8% in 2023/24 compared to 2019/21. Female enrolment at this level has increased by almost 8% in the period between 2019/21 and 2023/24. At the same time, GER has increased by almost 8.6 percentage points and NER has decreased by 0.4 percentage points. The decrease in NER could show a decrease of the over age students at this level from time to time.

Table 9: Middle School Education: Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios by year and sex

Academic Year	Enrolment			GER			NER		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2019/21	94,942	81,023	175,965	90.7	85.4	88.2	41.1	44.0	42.5
2021/22	97,667	78,495	176,162	92.7	82.2	87.7	41.6	43.1	42.3
2022/23	106,231	84,044	190,275	100.2	87.4	94.1	41.0	41.8	41.4
2023/24	109,277	87,518	196,795	102.6	90.6	96.9	41.7	42.6	42.1

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24

82. It should be noticed that enrolment at the middle level increased both in urban and rural areas from 2019/21 to 2023/24. In rural areas enrolment increased by 8.8% in 2023/24 as compared to 2019/21.

Table 10: Middle level: Rural /Urban Enrolment

Academic Year	Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
2019/21	89,405	49,606	39,799	86,560	45,336	41,224
2021/22	89,667	51,666	38,001	86,495	46,001	40,494
2022/23	94,685	55,186	39,499	95,590	51,045	44,545
2023/24	106,234	61,506	44,728	90,561	47,771	42,790

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24

Elementary and Middle School flow rates

83. GoSE has made concerted efforts to provide access to education in all parts of the country. Moreover, it has created new opportunities for school children from rural and remote areas by opening boarding schools and hostels in many parts of the country. These have helped many disadvantaged children from rural and remote areas in general, and girls in particular to access education.

84. The dropout rate at the elementary and middle levels has decreased in 2023/24 as compared to 2019/21. This is partly the result of the additional boarding and Para-boarding schools and hostels that have been opened in many parts of the country. Grade repetition showed a slight increase at the elementary and at the middle school education in 2023/24 in comparison to 2021/22. The increase of grade repetition both at the elementary and middle schools needs a further investigation to identify the causes and come up with plausible solutions in the future.

Table 11: Elementary and Middle School flow rates, by year and sex

Academic Year	Levels	Dropout%			Promotion%			Repetition%		
		Male	Fem.	Tot	Male	Fem.	Tot.	Male	Fem.	Tot.
2019/21	Elementary	6.7	5.3	6.1	84.6	88.2	86.3	8.7	6.5	7.7
	Middle	11.2	8.9	10.1	72.5	81.3	76.6	16.3	9.8	13.3
2021/22	Elementary	4.7	3.5	4.1	88.3	91.3	89.7	7.0	5.2	6.2
	Middle	7.2	5.2	6.3	77.4	86.2	81.3	15.4	8.6	12.4
2022/23	Elementary	4.2	2.9	3.6	87.6	91.2	89.3	8.2	5.9	7.1
	Middle	8.4	5.1	6.9	72.0	83.8	77.2	19.6	11.2	15.8
2023/24	Elementary	3.7	2.6	3.2	87.4	90.9	89.0	8.9	6.5	7.8
	Middle	7.4	4.4	6.1	71.5	83.8	77.0	21.1	11.8	17.0

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24

5. Secondary Education

85. The main purpose of secondary education is to prepare learners for higher education and for the world of work through the provision of core, enrichment, and occupational subjects. Expanding Secondary Education was one of the efforts made during the reporting period. Opening new secondary schools in rural areas, especially for hard-to-reach groups was vigorously pursued by the government, in order to expand opportunities for school age children at this level and for girls in particular. For example the number of secondary schools showed an increase from 109 in 2019/21 to 132 in 2023/24. Out of the total secondary schools 56% were in rural and remote areas in 2023/24(see table below). As a result of the government's efforts, total enrolment at the secondary level has increased in 2023/24 when compared to the academic year 2019/21. Female enrolment showed a similar trend in the stated years. In addition to this, GER and NER also showed a significant increasing trend for both sexes during the same period.
86. All students from all over the country attend their grade 12 classes at Warsay- Yikealo-Secondary School. The objective of Warsay-Yikealo Secondary School is to help students from all over the country to complete their secondary schooling. Besides, it intends to offer students with opportunities to share their experiences in academic and cultural values.

Table 12: Secondary Education: Enrolment, Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios by year and sex

Academic year	Enrolment			GER			NER		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total

2019/21	45,193	41,793	86,986	26.6	26.5	26.6	18.2	20.6	19.3
2021/22	46,881	42,103	88,984	27.5	26.6	27.1	20.8	22.2	21.5
2022/23	50,549	44,930	95,479	29.8	28.6	29.2	19.8	21.9	20.8
2023/24	57,893	51,265	109,158	34.0	32.5	33.3	21.3	23.8	22.5

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24

87. The total secondary school enrolment in rural areas has increased from the academic year 2023/24 as compared to 2019/21. Both male and female enrolments showed an increasing pattern in rural areas. A similar pattern is also indicated for enrolments in urban areas.

Table 13: Secondary Education: Rural /Urban Enrolment

Academic Year	Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
2019/21	36,494	19,362	17,132	50,492	25,831	24,661
2021/22	37,257	20,135	17,122	51,727	26,746	24,981
2022/23	30,419	16,212	14,207	65,286	34,469	30,817
2023/24	46,032	24,398	21,634	63,126	33,495	29,631

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24

88. The total dropout rate at the secondary level showed a decrease of 7.6 percentage points from 2019/21 to 2023/24. In the same period, repetition showed an increasing trend at this level for the total, male and female students. The raising trend in grade repetition at this level from 2019/21 to 2023/24 indicates that some action has to be taken to curb it in the future.

Table 14: Secondary Education: Flow rates by year and sex

Academic year	Drop out %			Repetition %			Promotion %		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2019/21	15.6	17.5	16.5	13.2	6.2	9.8	71.2	76.4	73.7
2021/22	9.4	9.5	9.4	14.7	6.5	10.8	75.9	84.1	79.8
2022/23	9.7	8.4	9.1	16.5	9.5	13.3	73.8	82.1	77.7
2023/24	9.9	7.6	8.9	16.0	7.6	12.1	74.1	84.8	79.1

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24

Consolidation of the School Support System

89. The term school support system here refers to science laboratories, libraries, sports, and arts education, equipment and facilities, PRCs and ICT resources, etc. There is ample evidence that the availability of various support facilities and materials in schools has an important contribution on the quality of education. So far, the MoE has been supplying the schools with

the necessary facilities and equipment stage by stage.

90. The Ministry of Education has already introduced ICT and digital library in secondary and middle schools. This program will continue to be implemented stage by stage in all of the rest of schools. However, the main problem with introducing ICT in schools is the shortage in supply of electricity. The government is installing solar energy in schools without electricity supply.
91. The policy of 2005 on ICT contained various provisions for the protection of the rights, privacy and safety of children in using digital products including cyber security and personal data protection. New ICT text books for grades 8, 9 and 10 have recently been printed and are being taught in schools. Numerous ICT courses have been conducted for teachers and school principals. Efforts have also been made to enhance the awareness and use of ICT among parents.

Strategies and interventions for promoting girls' education

92. The GoSE believes that education in general, and the education of girls in particular is a pre-requisite for the sustainable social, political and economic development. Furthermore, it believes that, educating women and girls makes a major impact on the family, the community and the nation as a whole. Thus, the participation, retention, and achievement of girls as well as women have been a priority in education. Much effort has been made to bridge the gender gap in education and to enhance the quality of girls' education.

Schools and Teachers in all levels

Table 15: Schools by level, location and year

Level	2019/21			2021/22			2022/23			2023/24		
	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural	Total
Pre primary	208	463	671	199	484	683	191	518	709	189	588	777
Elementary	188	852	1040	201	847	1048	191	885	1076	203	891	1094
Middle	107	310	417	120	311	431	116	331	447	112	357	469
Secondary	51	58	109	52	57	109	59	60	119	58	74	132

MoE, Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics, 2019/21-2023/24

93. The Government of Eritrea recognizes that an effective and efficient teacher education system is core to the provision of quality education and subsequently to national development. Thus, it has been making concerted efforts to address the major challenges in producing qualified teachers. The total number of teachers at all levels increased in 2023/24 when compared to 2019/21. An increase of 17 %, 38%, 37% and 41% was observed at the pre-primary, elementary and middle schools levels respectively. The number of female teachers also showed an increasing pattern in the stated years.

Table 16: Teachers by level and sex and year

Level	2019/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total
Pre-primary	1,750	1,809	1,880	1,911	1,890	1,977	2,040	2,125
Elementary	3,490	9,113	5,301	12,025	5,417	17,110	5,658	12,544
Middle	1,113	4,675	1,661	5,769	1,608	5,507	2,020	6,401
Secondary	705	2,700	1,309	3,759	1,122	3,472	1,274	3,813

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24.

94. The College of Education produces limited number of graduates which cannot satisfy the continuous demand of the Ministry of Education for teachers. To fill the gap, students who graduated from other colleges are assigned as teachers to teach in their fields of studies. Graduates who are assigned as teachers are provided induction programs on teaching methodology and psychology before they are deployed in the profession. They are also provided with material and monetary incentives which are assessed on the basis of the location of their assignment and their personal performance.

Pupil Teacher ratio

95. The teacher to pupil ratio has been decreasing at all levels from the academic year 2019/21 to 2023/24. This is the result of government's efforts of training and recruiting as many teachers as possible during reporting period.

Table 17: Pupil teacher ratio, level by year

Acad. Years	Pupil teacher ratio			
	Pre-primary	Elementary	Middle	Secondary
2019/21	29	39	38	32
2021/22	30	40	31	28
2022/23	29	40	30	28
2023/24	29	35	31	29

MoE, Eritrea: Essential Education Indicators, 2019/21-2023/24.

Gender Parity Index (GPI)

96. The MoE has endeavored to effectively and equitably address the education needs of socially disadvantaged groups in general, and the girl child in particular. Expanding educational opportunities for girls and women, and establishing their parity with boys and men by reducing the gender gap have been major successes. Much emphasis has been laid on ensuring the participation, retention, and performance of girls. Though gender disparity still exists, the

Gender Parity Index has shown a promising trend at all levels. Gender parity is achieved when the ratio of female to male students is equal to one.

Table 18: Gender Parity Index by level and year

Academic year	Pre-primary	Elementary	Middle	Secondary
2019/21	0.95	0.83	0.85	0.92
2021/22	0.93	0.84	0.80	0.90
2022/23	0.93	0.84	0.79	0.89
2023/24	0.94	0.85	0.80	0.89

MoE, Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics, 2019/21-2023/24

6. Nomadic Education

97. The GoSE gives much emphasis to nomadic education, because the education statistics indicate that Eritrean nomads are at the bottom of the national level of enrolment, participation, classroom performance, gender balance and progression rates. This is mainly because nomads live widely dispersed and constantly move from place to place. Besides, the significance of children's participation in the production system of these communities and in their households makes it difficult for parents to allow their children to participate in formal schooling. Nevertheless, the government is taking notable measures to improve the educational situation of nomadic people. During the reporting period 35 new schools were opened to serve nomadic communities in addition to the 65 schools that previously existed. Ten of these schools were elementary boarding serving nomadic communities. The total enrolment of the nomadic schools has increased by 400 students in addition to the 7,528 students, of which 46% were female students. Financial or material incentives are given to female students in order to continue their education. Moreover, to enhance the performance of the females tutorial classes are also given. To raise the awareness of nomadic communities on education continuous meetings is conducted. Para boarding (one meal a day) is provided fully in these nomadic schools especially in Northern and Southern Red Sea Regional administrations and in a limited number of nomadic schools in the Anseba and Gash-Barka zonal administrations of the country.

7. Special Needs Education

98. The promotion of education for children with special needs is highly considered. The GoSE believes that every citizen shall have the right of equal access to publicly funded social services and shall not be discriminated against in any way. Children with disabilities, nomadic children, girls, and others are some of the groups that need special attention in the provision of education.
99. During the reporting period there were three special elementary schools for children with vision and hearing problems. Some children with these impairments access education in these special schools. Students who completed their studies in these three schools are integrated or mainstreamed into the normal schools at the next levels, where they receive special support

and consultations.

Table 19: Special Needs Education: Enrolment by year and sex

Schools						
Academic Year	Abraha Bahta School for the blind			The Two Schools for the deaf		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
2019/21	44	31	13	135	74	61
2021/22	54	31	23	144	78	66
2022/23	69	43	26	183	102	81
2023/24	75	40	35	198	112	86

MoE, Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics, 2019/21-2023/24

100. In the academic year 2023/24 there were a total of 7,110 at the primary and 2,411 students at the secondary with various types of impairments who attended their schooling in regular schools with special assistance.

Table 20: Type of disability by level and year

Type of Disability	2019/21		2021/22		2022/23		2023/24	
	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
vision impaired	42	25	38	21	64	19	57	16
Deaf	153	10	238	7	200	9	318	25
Hard hearing	145	25	92	35	215	52	239	36
Partial hearing	907	301	1006	221	1034	310	1176	384
Low vision or partially sighted	2553	981	3004	964	3582	1174	4100	1553
Physical impairment	462	159	485	150	544	222	501	308
Speech and communication impairment	661	65	599	68	714	70	719	89
Total	4923	1566	5462	1466	6353	1856	7110	2411

MoE, Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics, 2019/21-2023/24

101. A number of initiatives have recently been taken to improve access and quality of education for children with disabilities. The capacity of the special school for the deaf in Keren has been expanded to enroll about 160 children, which is double its previous enrolment. This school

together with the other special school for the deaf in Asmara, has been upgraded to teach deaf children in sign-languages up to and including middle level (grades 6-8), which is three grades higher than before. Another boarding school for the deaf has also been opened in 2023 in Mai-Habar, and plans for its expansion are already underway. The various zonal administrations have also started to establish 2-3 inclusive classrooms each for children with disabilities. Special classes have also been established in the six zonal administrations for children with Intellectual and Developmental Disability.

8. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

102. The Macro policy of the GoSE states that the “emphasis of technical /vocational training will be imparting multi-craft dexterity and skills that enhance the job adaptability and retraining potential of the learners”.
103. Moreover, the GoSE believes that skills development is essential for economic growth. Hence, TVET is considered a key strategy for equipping people with relevant, adaptable skills for wage employment and for self-employment. In addition to formal Technical and Vocational Education and Training, non-formal skills development has been considered as a strategy to meet economic requirements. This is expected to help create self-employment and income generation for certain target groups in accordance with their needs and the needs of the nation.
104. The GoSE has exerted much effort to produce skilled and semi-skilled workers, with the aim of creating opportunities for gainful employment. Various types of training are provided in TVET Centers. These include auto mechanic, construction, drafting, electricity, electronics, general metal work, machine shop, wood work, computer maintenance etc. Students are trained for two years after they have completed grade 10, or for one year after they have completed grade 12. In the academic year 2023/24 a total of 2,500 students were enrolled in different technical schools, and the number of female students were 35%. During the same period, 985 students participated at National Centre for Vocational Training and almost 47% were females.

Table 21 Technical & Vocational Education & Training: Enrolment by year and sex

Academic year	Technical Schools Enrolment			National Centre for Vocational Training – Enrolment		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2019/21	1,384	1,151	2,535	1,133	995	2,128
2021/22	1,137	546	1,683	455	398	853
2022/23	1,548	866	2,414	479	457	936
2023/24	1,620	880	2500	520	465	985

MoE Basic Education Statistics, 2019/21-2023/24

9. Adult and Continuing Education

105. The GoSE endeavors to provide a nation-wide Adult Literacy Program, as well as Continuing Education and Training opportunities. The Program targets adults and out-of-school children and youths, and focuses on literacy and numeracy skills. The Post-Literacy Program integrates basic science and social studies. The medium of instruction in this program is the mother tongue.

Table 22: Adult Literacy Enrolment, 2019/21-2023/24

Academic year	Participants enrolled	Females enrolled	Females who completed the program	Female who completed %
2019/21	34,471	30,433	23,934	69.4
2021/22	37,574	33,065	26,121	78.5
2022/23	38,969	34,292	26,747	77.5
2023/24	37,011	32,940	26,023	77.8

MoE, Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics, 2019/21-2023/24

106. In 2023/24, a total of 37,011 participants were enrolled in the National Adult Literacy Program. Almost 89% of the total participants were females, and about 78% of them completed the program. A total of 2,245 teachers were deployed in this program, and female teachers constituted 31%. The Adult Literacy Program in 2023/24 was organized in 920 centers.
107. Continuing education opportunities are provided at the elementary, middle and secondary schools for adults and youth who have discontinued their education for various reasons. During the 2023/24 academic year, a total of 4,234 learners were enrolled in this program, and 31% of them were females.

10. Complementary Elementary Education (CEE)

108. The GoSE is also running a CEE program, for out- of- school children. The main objective of the CEE program is to provide three years education for out of school children aged 9-14 years. This program is equivalent to the five years of formal elementary education provided to younger children. The main beneficiaries of this program are girls from disadvantaged and remote, rural areas. In 2023/24 academic year, a total of 23,859 learners were enrolled, 43% of whom were girls. Besides, 17,699 (74%) of the enrolled learners completed the CEE program.

Table 23: CEE Program: Enrolment, Dropout and Completion by sex

Academic year	Enrolment		Dropout %		Completion %	
	Total	Female	Total	Female	Total	Female
2019/21	15,158	6,705	3,193	1,434	9,934	4,390
2021/22	22,899	10,059	4,077	1,665	16,024	7,147
2022/23	22,635	9,884	3,163	1,288	16,582	7,319

2023/24	23,859	10,366	2,654	1,048	17,699	7,817
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MoE, Eritrea: Basic Education Statistics, 2019/21-2023/24

B. LEISURE, CULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

109. Leisure, recreation and cultural activities are organized at all levels of education. All students including the CEE participants take part according to their interests and enjoy this program. In school and out of school children, especially from nomadic communities and children with disabilities, can also participate in the programs. The National unions such as the National Union of Eritrean Youths and students and National Union of Eritrean Women contribute a great deal to strengthen this program. There is also a Children Educational and Discovery Center (CEDC) in Asmara. The government established the CEDC in Asmara in order to facilitate the right of the child to have access to a variety of educational and recreational activities. The center opens opportunity for children to exchange ideas. The center is also expected to be a model for similar centers in the future. The main task of the center is to meet the various educational and entertainment needs of the children. Some of the activities in this center include:

- Education section acquaints children with different learning materials such as kits, lab tools, equipment, charts, models etc.
- Computer section includes: 70 computers for various educational and entertaining purposes. Besides in this room, children are assisted to develop their self-learning using different equipment such as white board, projectors digital screens etc. ICT teachers are assigned in this room to help children with computers.
- Indoor games section contains more than 30 types of indoor games including computer games. The various games are classified according to the ages of children.
- Art section helps children to develop the skills of children in drawing and painting. Teachers who can help children in drawing are assigned in this section.

C. HEALTH AND WELFARE

110. The Eritrean National Health Policy requires the health sector to work towards the progressive attainment of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG3), through the promotion of Primary Health Care (PHC) and increased coverage of essential services, especially to vulnerable and hard-to-reach population.

111. Currently, approximately 80 per cent of the Eritrean population lives within 10km of a healthcare facility, and that includes nearly 98 per cent of pregnant women who now have access to routine ante- and post-natal care. As stated in the NHP-2020 the Eritrean health system is Primary Health Care (PHC) oriented. The new approach to primary health care is central to achieving the SDGs and UHC.

112. To address the community related challenges and improve access for children, the Eritrean MoH has developed Community Based Health Care (CBHC) policy. The policy document is designed to respond to the nationwide transition to sustain progress. The policy focuses on: (i) integrating community-based programs into an institutionalized, data-enabled community-based health system; (ii) to deliver a comprehensive package of community-based services that address all the components of public health functions such as promotion, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitative and palliative services; (iii) meaningful engagement and participation of communities that are empowered through mutual bottom-up social accountability mechanisms; (iv) enhanced quality of service delivery; and (v) leveraging cross-sectorial local partnerships and synergies.
113. The community-based platform as part of PHC is expected to support the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities centered on their needs and circumstances. It also ensures delivery of equitable and affordable access to health services, extended to the rural, remote and disadvantaged populations. The services delivered as an integrated essential package, are focused on the needs of the communities, and are geared towards the attainment of UHC and subsequently contributing to the SDG targets.
114. The platform comprises the community structures and management systems (such as CHWs and the Community Health Committees), which have strong links with the lowest level of the formal PHC system –such as health stations, health centers and community hospitals for effective and quality community services delivery. The links include a well-established two-way referral system between the communities and the formal health system, supportive supervision, on the -job training, regular replenishment of medicines and kits, and an extension to community level of data collation, analysis and feedback for action.
115. Outreach health services connect different levels of the health system and strengthen the cooperation between them through a better utilization of the health workforce. Accordingly, integrated outreach for child health services is conducted especially in hard-to-reach areas and nomadic populations. Children and mothers are the target population for a comprehensive maternal and child healthcare package with special emphasis on immunization services, vitamin A supplements, ANC, PNC EMTCT, and Community Based IMNCI. Thus, screening of children <5 years age for malnutrition status, distribution of supplementary foods for children & pregnant mothers, and other minor alignment for children in the remote areas are provided.
116. The adolescent and youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services strategy was adopted and implemented in 2017. The guideline allows adolescent youth to get contraception without parental consent.
117. Based on the essential elements of Adolescent and Young People Sexual and Reproductive Friendly Health service, the integrated sexual and reproductive health care package adopted for Eritrea includes:
- Counseling on safe sex, contraception, hygiene
 - Menstrual health and hygiene

- Promotion of healthy behavior (nutrition, physical activity, health seeking behavior)
- Provision of Td, Meningitis and HPV vaccines
- Screening and management of anemia and management
- Counseling on menstrual hygiene, nutrition, safe sex, STI prevention, substance abuse
- Psychosocial support for mental health issues including intentional and unintentional injury
- Prevention and management of reproductive tract infections, especially sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDS.
- Prevention and management of the complication of abortion.
- Active discouragement of harmful traditional practices, such as female genital cutting (FGC), early marriage, domestic and sexual violence against women.

118. Another SRHR service for Adolescent is prevention and control of Cervical Cancer. In Eritrea Quadrivalent HPV vaccine (Gardasil) was introduced in November 2022 with 2 dose schedule using a 6 month interval between doses. The target population are girls aged 9-14 years old and its consumption by the population was high about 98%.

119. The cervical cancer screening services had started on limited scale in four hospitals and will be scaled up to the whole country. Linking to treatment is a great challenge for those with positive result because single visit approach is not employed, and the right referral system is not in place. Currently, the MOH is increasingly deploying Gynecologists to various regional hospitals in the country. This is a great opportunity for expansion of SRHR services so that reproductive organ cancer patients, particularly cervical cancer cases presented to the hospitals will receive all the basic services.

120. The GoSE with key national partners and international stakeholders has built the child survival and development achievements as well as existing opportunities to overcome the challenges towards achieving the stated goals. The development of this child survival strategy was guided by the NHP and HSSDP priorities and takes into account the need to implement proven, cost-effective and affordable child survival and maternal interventions in an integrated manner. The following achievements were made during the reporting period:

- The proportion of women attending first Antenatal Care (ANC) has increased from 92% in 2017 to 99% in 2024
- Skilled birth attendances is increased from 74.2 in 2020 to 84% in 2024
- Facilities (Hospitals and C/Hospitals) providing Comprehensive Emergency Obstetrical and Newborn Care (CEmONC) from 70% in 2020 to 95% in 2024
- Under 5 mortality rate (U5MR) reduced from 40/1000 live birth in 2020 to 35 in 2024
- Infant mortality rate (IMR) reduced from 32/1000 live births in 2020 to 26 in 2024
- Neonatal mortality rate reduced from 16/1000 live births in 2020 to 14 in 2024.
- Stillbirth rate reduced from 25/1000 in 2020 to 21/1000 in 2024.

121. The GoSE extended lifesaving health and nutrition interventions including the treatment of pneumonia, diarrhea, malaria, acute malnutrition, as well as micronutrient supplementation while maintaining the quality of interventions.

122. Eritrea remains committed to ensuring every child's health, safety, and empowerment, creating a brighter future for all. It has made significant strides in children's health, maintaining above 95% immunization coverage and introducing new vaccines such as Meningitis-A and HPV since 2020. The Ministry of Health's community and facility based Integrated Management of Newborn and Childhood Illness (IMNCI) has expanded access to holistic care for children, resulting in reduced infant and child mortality rates. A national vaccine delivery system – with nationwide reach, effective distribution, and easy access for marginalized populations, adequate cold chain and ongoing quality control – that is able to respond to new disease threats. Has been put in place.
123. There are programs in place to increase vaccine uptake including rapid results initiatives and outreaches. Furthermore, there are clear mechanisms for vaccine regulation, procurement, distribution, maintaining cold chain and stock control. Supplies for the EPI program are distributed to the sub-national levels and health facilities through a clearly defined structure. This shows that vaccination services in Eritrea have good access and equity to each household in rural and urban setting.
124. The vaccination coverage indicated that:-
- Penta3 vaccine (DTP-HepB-Hib) increased from 88.3% in 2020 to 98.9% in 2024
 - MR2 vaccine increased from 69.7% in 2020 to 98.4% in 2024
 - HPV vaccine coverage is 98.5% 1st dose and 91% 2nd dose
125. Maternal health has also seen notable improvements. Through the adoption of Essential and Comprehensive Emergency Maternal and Newborn Care, the country has enhanced maternal and neonatal survival rates. This approach ensures that all women deliver at health facilities under the care of skilled professionals. The proportion of deliveries attended by skilled health workers has impressively increased from 74.2 % in 2020 to 84% in 2024. The country has been constructing maternity waiting homes in health facilities to accommodate pregnant women who live far from the health facilities where they can get skilled birth attendance.
126. Eritrea's multisectoral HIV/AIDS and malaria response has been a success story. The prevalence of HIV among the youth aged 15-24 is very low and continues to decline. The country has made significant progress in eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV. High coverage of antenatal care attendees accepting HIV testing and receiving results, as well as antiretroviral (ARV) when necessary, has been crucial. The decreasing positivity rate among pregnant women, from 0.18% in 2020 to 0.13% in 2024, highlights this progress. Additionally, the number of HIV-exposed infants tested with PCR and low prevalence of positive cases reflect the pre-elimination stage of HIV transmission from mothers to their babies.
127. Starting in 2024, Eritrea aims for triple elimination by integrating Hepatitis B testing in antenatal care, further strengthening its efforts to combat these diseases. An all-society approach to malaria control using high impact interventions have resulted in reduced morbidity and mortality contributing to the well-being of children.
128. To prevent and treat all forms of acute malnutrition, the health and Nutrition program have

put several interventions in place and the following Sub-programs are routinely implemented:

- Nutrition Site Surveillance System (NSSS)
- Integrated Management of Acute malnutrition (IMAM)
- Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF)
- Micronutrient intervention (Vitamin A, Iron/folate, Iodized salt)

129. Micronutrient Deficiency Control Strategies designed by the MoH to combat micronutrient deficiencies include: routine supplementation of vitamin A for children 6-59 months and iron tablets for pregnant women, advocacy and social mobilization on the importance of micronutrients, training of health workers and supporting private salt producers with Potassium Iodide to fortify the salt produced for the whole population.
130. The Eritrean Environmental Health (EH) has one and prime objective of making contributions to the achievements of safe, sustainable and health-enhancing human environments, protected from biological, chemical and physical hazards, and tried to protect the health of citizens from the effects of global and local environmental threats.
131. The contribution from the side of the EH is therefore, to reinforce the mission of the GoSE that could possibly be made a reality to the broad achievement of the attainable human health, well-being and development. Consequently, the Eritrean people enjoy a universal health coverage whereby every citizen, irrespective of its sex, gender, ethnicity, religious belief or place of origin is enabled to have full access to high-quality services for health promotion, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, palliation and financial risk protection.
132. The interventions are geared towards the rural poor and disadvantaged populations. After years of work and experience developments, the Environmental Health experts have accumulated the fine art, technical and skill of detecting, preventing, and responding to environmental health threats and consequently reducing the disease burdens of the threats in the whole layers of the population, especially among the women, and children who still are vulnerable groups to diseases of different origins.
133. The success stories and achievements of Environmental Health are as follows:
- The number of Villages targeted for Community Led Toilet and Sanitation (CLTS) has increased from 81% in 2020 to 98% in 2024.
 - Villages declared Open Defecation Free (ODF) increased from 55.4% in 2020 to 91% in 2024.
134. In 2013, the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) launched the Minimum Integrated Household Agricultural Package (MIHAP), a comprehensive program designed to enhance household food security, nutrition, and income. MIHAP provides each participating family with a starter kit, including:
- Livestock: One improved indigenous or cross-breed dairy cow or 12 small ruminants (shoats) raised using cut-and-carry feeding system.
 - Poultry: 25 chickens.
 - Apiculture: 2 beehives.

- Horticulture: A vegetable plot.
 - Agroforestry: 50 trees (10 fruit trees, 30 bee forage trees, 5 leguminous trees like moringa, leucaena, and pigeon pea for livestock feed, and 5 trees for firewood).
135. MIHAP empowers families to meet their own food and nutritional needs while generating surplus to support at least four other households. The program envisions beneficiaries specializing in specific agricultural commodities and transitioning into small-scale commercial farming. To facilitate this transition, the Ministry developed the Small and Medium Commercial Farmers (SMCF) Strategy in 2019. This strategy supports MIHAP graduates who have become commercial farmers, as well as existing SMCFs. Key intervention mechanisms under the SMCF strategy include:
- **Technological Support:** This includes access to improved breeds and varieties, modern farming techniques, enhanced animal husbandry practices, and other relevant technologies.
 - **Creating an Enabling Environment:** This includes policies and initiatives that foster SMCF growth, such as improved access to credit, strong market linkages, infrastructure, and business development services.
136. With approximately 3,373 families participating in MIHAP and an average of 3 children per family, an estimated 10,119 children are directly benefiting from MIHAP. This integrated approach, from household-level production to commercialization, aims to transform rural and semi-urban agriculture, driving economic growth and improving livelihoods.
137. As an arid and semi-arid country with erratic rainfall, construction of water infrastructure continues to be one of Eritrea's national priorities. 79% and 95% of the rural and urban population respectively have access to safely managed drinking water. Access to safe and clean water has also progressively increased in schools, offices, and other public spaces. The percentage of schools with access to safe and clean water at the elementary level has increased from 63.3% to 65.1 % while it almost remained the same at middle level at 75% and increased from 83.7% to 85.3% at secondary schools between 2015/116 and 2021/22. Moreover, all health facilities in the nation have access to clean and safe water. Access to basic sanitation and hygiene facilities has been steadily expanding in recent years.
138. The water policy of Eritrea emphasizes that water as a basic human right plays a major role in maintaining people's dignity. It allows children to benefit from the hygiene that is needed to remain in good health. In addition, having clean water and adequate sanitation facilitates in educational establishment plays a significant role in making the right to education a reality.
139. Eritrea's WASH strategy and investment plan 2019-2030 articulated that from a child rights perspective is an effort to improve services and practices for realizing children's rights to survival and development on an equitable basis. Eritrea as a developing country makes a creditable effort in making sure that every child has equal access to safe drinking water in a sustainable way.

D. FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND ALTERNATIVE CARE

1. Protection of the family

140. Traditionally, the family in Eritrea has served as a major vehicle for the socialization of the child. All members of the society play a role in this process. They pass on stories, maxims, riddles, proverbs and other types of oral traditions, which are among the main forces that influence the child's development. Traditionally, there is a belief that large number of children strengthens the family and build up the community. In short, the family is generated and sustained through the children, and the popular African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" is upheld dearly in the country.
141. During the years 2020-2024, in all of the six zones promotional campaigns, seminars and workshops were organized to a total of 1,911,338 participants who are families and members of the society at large to revitalize the awareness of the communities; to strengthen social protection programs for the rights, care and rearing of orphans, disadvantaged and disabled children, for the elimination of harmful practices, for the prevention and reduction of those who drift to streets; about offences committed by juvenile delinquents and how to minimize the phenomenon; about the causes and effects of HIV and AIDS, and the prevention of underage commercial sex workers even if the practice may be hidden. Participants were from religious institutions, village elders and representatives, police officers, women who have been actively participating in female circumcision, people living with HIV and AIDS and parents of disabled children, social workers in community-based rehabilitation volunteers; representatives of associations, administrators of districts; parents, influential teachers and students. Participants expressed their readiness to work more vigorously toward the removal and prevention of social problems that encounter children.

Table 24: Participants of campaigns on rights of women and children

Year	Participants		
	Male	Female	Total
2020	16,586	13,376	29,962
2021	31,886	48,901	63,453
2022	31,888	33,015	64,903
2023	81,541	159,149	240,690
2024	315,155	1,197,175	1,512,330
Total	477,056	1,451,616	1,911,338

Source: Ministry of Labour & Social Welfare

2. Parental Guidance and Responsibilities

142. The GoSE refers to the combined second and third report pages 26-32 of the ACRWC. Children in Eritrea are entitled to care and support, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding so that their full and harmonious development and their personality are maintained. The child, by reason of his/her physical and

mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth, indicating the need for protection from time of inception until transition to adulthood.

143. One of the prominent Eritrean cultural heritages is the traditional extended family system, which is deeply embedded in society. It obliges members of a family and the community to share the responsibilities for caring and protecting children.
144. During the reporting period, efforts were made to: (i) strengthen the family to provide better environment for the growth and development of children; (ii) empower communities to coordinate and promote good childcare and appropriate socialization practices; (iii) create favorable grounds for orphans to remain and grow within their communities; and (iv) strengthen the coping mechanism of caretaking families by way of income-generating schemes.
145. The TCCE, and TPCE provide the legal basis for the protection of the rights of children and the general population. Moreover, the GoSE has produced a Comprehensive Child Policy under the theme “Children are flowers of today and fruits of tomorrow” which was prepared with the participation of children, families, communities, civil society organizations and appropriate Government institutions in 2016.
146. In the reporting period, different types of intervention programs were implemented to safeguard the growth and development of orphans and to transform the family environment for the purpose of attaining optimum development of orphaned children. In this regard, considering the social structure of the Eritrean society and the best interest of the child, among others, the GoSE formulated realistic policy options for disadvantaged and vulnerable children, including orphans centered at the community-based approach. These include: (i) re-unification of orphans and other vulnerable population by providing a one-time support of an income generation support of the choice of the beneficiary or a vocational skills training after which the family member can acquire employment to get income. During 2020-2024, a total of 6,146 House Holds were supported with different Income Generating Activities of their choices.

Table 25: Income Generating Support provided to vulnerable groups

Year	Trade	Livestock	Other (cart, bee keeping..)	Total
2020	61	588	6	655
2021	35	94	2	131
2022	35	24	1664	1723
2023	35	156	1380	1570
2024	69	235	1763	2067
Total	235	1,097	4,815	6,146

Source, MoLSW 2024

147. Likewise, during the same period, 1140 heads of households out of which 653 were females were provided with vocational training of their own choices to provide them with opportunities

to start employment so that they would be able to take care of their children with the income they get.

Table 26: Vocational training to vulnerable heads of households

Year			
	Male	Female	Total
2020	-	-	-
2021	35	16	51
2022	40	61	101
2023	400	576	976
2024	12	-	12
Total	487	653	1140

Source, MoLSW 2024

3. Orphans Placed in Families and Communities

148. The MoLSW placed orphans in extended families as a way of providing care and protection similar to a family environment. The GoSE is strongly committed to the implementation of the reunification of orphans with close relatives or extended family members to enable them get a stable life after the loss of their parents. Although the extended families have been rendering due care to the orphaned children, the Government supported these vulnerable families through financial support for income-generating activities. Because of the economic support given to the disadvantaged families taking care of orphans, the host families' livelihood situation has improved in terms of food security status and with regards to the health condition and school performance of the orphans themselves. Moreover, reunifying orphan children with consanguineous relatives was found to be not only cost effective but also an efficient way of healing the psychological trauma of orphans.

4. Adoption

149. In Eritrea, adoption is regulated under the TCCE, Articles 796-806. The numbers of orphans that were re-unified with adoptive parents through the course of 2020-2024 were 36 out of which 15 are females. Their age and sex in each year is indicated in the following table:

Table 27: Age, sex and number of orphan children adopted each year

Year	Ages	Male	Female	Total
2020	<1 year	3	3	6
2021	<1 year	4	5	9
2022	<1 year	2	1	3
2023	<1 year	2	4	6

2024	<1 year	10	2	12
Total		21	15	36

Source: MoLSW, 2024

5. Orphans placed in Community Based Group homes (CBGHs)

150. Group homes provided a family-like upbringing to orphaned children with the help of caregivers. This is preferred when foster or adoptive parents are not available. Currently, there are two group homes in the country. One in *Barentu*, in the *Gash Barka* region and the second in *Emba Derho* in the Central region. Each group home has a mother and an assistant. Such group home services are based within communities and have enabled orphaned children to go to local schools, play and interact with local children and feel a sense of belongingness to family and community. The group homes are administratively attached to the zonal and sub zonal offices of the MoLSW to facilitate the delivery of necessary social services such as education, health, and socialization. The resident host communities in the towns and villages where the group homes are situated are cooperative. They treat orphans as part and parcel of the host communities and provide them with the same rights as any other citizen, including organizing marriage ceremonies when they become adults. The table below shows the number, sex, age of orphans hosted in group homes during the reporting period:

Table 28: Orphans placed in community based group homes, 2020-2024

Age in years	2020			2021			2022			2023			2024		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
0-4	-	-	-		-		-	-	-						
5-9	1	2	3	1	-	1	-	-	-				-	1	1
10-14	2	3	5	2	2	4	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	-
15-18	13	7	20	8	6	14	2	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	2
18+	7	7	14	13	6	19	11	4	15	11	6	17	10	5	15
Total	23	19	42	24	14	38	14	5	19	14	7	22	11	7	18

(Source: MoLSW, 2024)

6. Orphan Children Cared in Orphanages

151. The total number of orphans cared in orphanage center from the year 2020 to 2024 was 79, out of the total number 37 were girls.

Table 29: Orphan Children Cared in Orphanage Centers

Age in years	2020			2021			2022			2023			2024		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
0-4	8	10	18	5	11	16	6	6	12	5	4	9	14	6	20
5-9	1	-	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
10-14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18+	9	10	19	6	11	17	7	6	13	6	4	10	14	6	20
Total	18	20	38	12	22	34	14	12	25	12	8	20	28	12	40

Source: MoLSW, 2024

7. HIV/AIDS-Affected Families

152. In the reporting period, 3,839 vulnerable children and orphans affected by HIV/AIDS were supported with monthly financial support to respond to the immediate needs of the children and families. The MoLSW, in collaboration with its partners has continued to mitigate their difficulties. The MoLSW has largely provided overall care to HIV-affected families and children in terms of psycho-social support, facilitating cash-support and case-management.

Table 30 Assisted HIV/AIDS infected and vulnerable children and affected orphans living with families

Age in years	2020			2021			2022			2023			2024		
	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot	M	F	Tot
0-4	38	44	82	56	50	106	35	26	61	42	33	75	6	5	11
5-9	99	97	196	119	139	258	81	71	152	83	90	173	15	8	23
10-14	170	145	315	190	171	361	141	131	272	140	134	274	33	35	68
15-18	203	163	366	198	209	407	117	158	275	146	106	252	31	23	54
18+	13	16	29	4	4	8	7	14	21	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	523	465	988	567	573	1,140	381	400	781	411	363	774	85	71	156

(Source: MoLSW, 2024)

8. Families of Martyrs

153. To ameliorate the plight of martyrs' families and their orphaned children the GoSE, through the Martyrs' Survivors Fund, has been providing Nakfa 500 per martyr per month. In total, the GoSE has spent Nakfa 340 million annually during the reporting period of 2020-2024. Among the beneficiaries 37 percent were orphan children and youth. The impact of the scheme includes noticeable improvement in their livelihood, which among other things, contributed to the children attending school without interruption.
154. This national program is supported not only by the Government but also by Eritrean citizens living inside and outside the country. The resources secured from these individuals have been in the form of money, material support and psycho-social services.

9. Children with Disabilities

155. Basic human rights to all citizens in general, and the rights of every person with disability are enshrined in the TCCE and other relevant legislations. There is a legal notice on exempting tax for mobility aiding appliance for critically disabled persons. Unlike the ACERWC comment which the state party wants to correct and clarify, a Comprehensive National Policy of PWDs and the Comprehensive Child Policy have been prepared with the participation of all government institutions, civil society organizations, organization of PWDs, Persons with disabilities themselves in May 2016. The original policy document has been updated in 2021 and has been translated into Tigrigna local language in 2023 so that all citizens can understand the content of the policy document on the rights of PWDs. The document promotes the respect of the rights and access to and sharing of equal opportunities and specifies the roles of all actors in expediting implementation of the convention of the rights of persons with disabilities including children with disabilities (CWDs). The Eritrean Labour Proclamation No.118/2001 has also relevant provisions to ensuring the rights of PWDs. The International Day for Persons with Disabilities is also commemorated annually with the participation of PWDs and CWDs with enthusiasm.
156. The four associations of PWDs are strengthened through technical and financial support of the MoLSW. They also mobilize public support to promote their own rights. The four associations also advocate for the best interest of CWDs and function independently implementing their respective strategies and programs. During the reporting period, each of the associations conducted campaigns to raise awareness on the rights of CWDs among the general public and they have expanded their membership by registering new members. Some associations provided appropriate skills training, mobility appliances and loans to start small businesses.

10. Provision of Mobility Rehabilitation and Orthopedic Appliances

157. The Arierieb Orthopedic Workshop (AOW) managed by the MoLSW provides services to PWDs including CWDs. Different types of appliances required for easy mobility that enhances participation and interaction of PWDs in diverse activities are being produced in this workshop. The products include assorted mobility appliances and devices including wheelchairs, crutches

and body trolleys. During 2020-2024 a total of 900 CWDs, out of which 300 are females were provided with various appliances such as prostheses, orthotic, splint, crutches, arch support, spinal corset, baby trolley, collar, compensation and wheel chairs. The services provided by the AOW are free of charge. The appliances have enabled CWDs to: (i) easily interact and play a more active role in community affairs; (ii) participate in economic and social activities; (iii) self-respect; and (IV) participate in recreational and sports activities.

158. The “Donkey for School Project” initiative intends primarily to enhance the right of children with disabilities to education by helping them overcome difficult terrain to reach nearby schools by means of donkeys with saddles for their mobility. During the reporting period, this initiative benefited 1,357 CWDs to pursue their education. The donkey provided also engages in household domestic activities such as fetching water, collecting fire wood, transportation of goods, and aged people. It alleviates the domestic burden in rural & semi-urban communities, particularly for girls and women.

11. Children in situations of economic exploitation

159. The government initially set the minimum working age at 14 upon ratifying the Minimum Age Convention No. 138. This decision was linked with the need to foster a labor-intensive economy. The Labour Proclamation provides vital protection for young people under 18, stipulating that any employment contract considered harmful to their interests is nullified. They are protected from liability for damages arising from such contracts. The proclamation also clearly defines the "worst forms of child labour" as applying to all individuals under the age of 18.
160. Pursuant to international frameworks of the ILO and the Palermo Protocol, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is currently considering raising the minimum working age to 15, indicating a commitment to aligning national policy more closely with international standards for the protection of young workers.

12. Refugee children, children seeking asylum, and internally displaced children

161. The GoSE reaffirms that there are no refugee children, children seeking asylum, or internally displaced children within Eritrea. Eritrea’s inclusive policies and strong social infrastructures ensure that all children in the country, without exception, have access to essential services, including education, healthcare, and social protection. The absence of such categories within the country is a reflection of Eritrea’s stability and commitment to fostering national cohesion, rather than a denial of reality.
162. Eritrea has consistently demonstrated its commitment to combating child trafficking and irregular migration through robust national measures and active engagement in regional and international initiatives. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic approach that targets the root causes of displacement, including external factors that drive irregular migration. The GoSE remains at the forefront of advocating for genuine cross-continental collaboration to ensure the protection of children on the move while upholding national sovereignty and the rights of its people.
163. Regarding compliance with reporting obligations, Eritrea underscores the importance of

accurate and evidence-based assessments. The GoSE will continue to engage constructively with the Committee while ensuring that all submissions reflect the realities on the ground, free from external misrepresentations. Eritrea remains open to dialogue that respects its national context and affirms its sovereignty, while working collectively to address issues affecting children regionally and globally.

13. Children affected by armed conflict

164. In this respect, we wish to underline that the EDF's (Eritrea Defense Force) Rules of Engagement in any war are unambiguous and in full conformity with the established Humanitarian Laws of War, including the Geneva Conventions, to which Eritrea is a State Party.
165. We are puzzled by the Committee's reference, in paragraph 47, to the conflict which broke out in November 2020 in the Tigray region of Ethiopia, acknowledging that children may be affected by the presence of Eritrean army, urging "not to harm children through conducting training and sensitization... that children are not unnecessary separated from caregivers... The committee encourages the demonstration of the obligation not to inflict harm on SoE's neighbor and for children not being harmed as a result of this ongoing conflict ...etc."
166. In the first place, it is inconceivable for the EDF to conduct training and sensitization of children in Tigray. They are Ethiopian citizens and they cannot be recruited in Eritrean's national army. In the same token, "separation of children from their caregivers" cannot be contemplated in view of Eritrea's publicly pronounced Rules of Engagement that prohibits any attack against civilians under any circumstances.
167. The operative paragraph further insinuates continued presence of the EDF after the end of the War. This presumption must be rectified as it seems to endorse false allegations from TPLF quarters who speak about the restitution of "Tigray's pre-war territorial integrity". The latter infers to the sovereign Eritrean territories – Badme and other places- occupied by the EPRDF regime for almost two decades in breach of the international law and EEBC award of 13 April 2002. It must also be recalled here that bilateral ties between Eritrea and Ethiopia were normalized in 2018 after the Ethiopian Government announced its readiness to fully implement the EEBC Award and thereby respect Eritrea's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
168. The GoSE categorically rejects any assertion that Eritrean forces have harmed children or violated international norms in relation to the conflict in northern Ethiopia. Eritrea has consistently upheld its commitment to peace, security, and the protection of civilians, including children, in all circumstances. The GoSE reaffirms that Eritrean military doctrine and operational conduct strictly adhere to principles that prohibit harm to civilians and war captives, and the respect of international humanitarian law.
169. Eritrea has long advocated for regional stability and peaceful coexistence among nations in the Horn of Africa. It remains committed to fostering durable peace through dialogue, mutual respect, and cooperation. As history has demonstrated, Eritrea values its sovereignty and territorial integrity while respecting those of its neighbors. Any engagement by Eritrea in regional security matters has been guided by legitimate concerns for stability, protection, and

long-term peace.

170. The GoSE also underscores that the well-being of children, whether in Eritrea or beyond its borders, remains a fundamental priority. Eritrea remains committed to constructive engagement with the Committee and reiterates the importance of objective and balanced assessments that acknowledge the complexities of regional dynamics while respecting Eritrea's sovereignty and national security imperatives.
171. The GoSE acknowledges the Committee's reference to General Comment on Article 22 of the Charter and its emphasis on conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction. However, Eritrea firmly asserts that its situation does not fit the narrative of a "post-conflict" state. Eritrea is a sovereign nation that has long since overcome the challenges posed by external aggression and the struggle for independence. Eritrea's history is defined by resilience and self-reliance, and the country has long been engaged in rebuilding and developing its own future, independent of external influence.
172. The GoSE does not view its ongoing efforts to strengthen national cohesion, security, and development as a "transition" from conflict but rather as a deliberate and long-term process of development and economic growth in line with its vision for sustainable peace and prosperity. Eritrea has consistently prioritized stability, regional cooperation, and development, and these efforts remain firmly rooted in Eritrea's policies of self-reliance and sovereignty.

14. Children in situations of sexual exploitation

173. The GoSE has a legal framework within the TPCE that prohibit sexual exploitation. The TPCE provides a broad basis for the protection of human dignity that also embraces the prohibition of sexual exploitation whose violation entails severe punishment.
174. To address this concern, the Eritrean Government through its Digital Library services tries to enhance access to safe educational content and indirectly monitoring the children's exposure to these offline materials by providing structured contents that only align with the Eritrean curriculum specifically from K-12.
175. The internet outlets in Eritrea are obliged to abide by a strict directive that prohibits them to host any online exploitation related webs and specifically pornographic sites in their cafes. In addition, they are not allowed to assist in any form for online sexual exploitation and/or sell pornographic products by any means including offline downloaded products. Violating these directives results in severe punishment including suspension and/or cancelation of their licenses. So far, there are no significant pornographic product related issues reported.
176. The policy on ICT in 2005 has various provisions for the protection of the rights, privacy and safety of children in using digital materials including cyber security and personal data protection. New ICT text books for grades 8, 9 and 10 have recently been printed and are being taught in schools. Numerous ICT courses have been conducted for teachers and school principals. Efforts have also been made to enhance the awareness and use of ICT among parents.

E. HARMFUL PRACTICES

177. The MoH, MoLSW, NUEW, UNICEF and UNFPA have been working jointly since the end of 2017 on a protracted program for ensuring women's & children's rights, elimination of FGM/C, underage marriage & other Harmful Traditional Practices (HTPs). To accelerate the elimination of FGM, underage marriage and other harmful practices, the GoSE has developed a holistic five year National Strategic Plan (2020-2024). The motto of the strategic plan is 'towards Elimination' as the GoSE is determined to end FGM and HTPS before the internationally agreed date of 2030.
178. The national strategic plan is a joint program guided and steered by the National Steering Committee, and implemented at the zonal, sub zonal and administrative area/village levels with the participation of different stakeholders/entities and technical and financial support from the National Technical Committee. The joint activities mainly focuses on:
- Community sensitization and mobilization to transform social and gender norms that lead to collective and public decisions on ensuring women's & children's rights, elimination of FGM/C, underage marriage & other harmful traditional practices (HTPs)
 - Advocacy and community mobilization on harmful practices using mass media
 - Seminar for Influential members of communities on ensuring women's & children's rights, elimination of FGM/C, underage marriage & other harmful traditional practices (HTPs)
 - Seminar and Capacity Building for Women's Group on prevention, early detection and reporting cases on time.
 - Training of teachers, students religious leaders, law enforcement bodies, on ensuring women's & children's rights, elimination of FGM/C, underage marriage & other harmful traditional practices (HTPs)
 - Community mapping and assessment on FGM to evaluate the status of the community on the KAP of FGM.
179. Commemorations of the Africa Children's Day and the International Children's Day are held in Eritrea annually involving the media by preparing a keynote statements for the day. Interviews of resource persons are organized with the national TV and radio to spread the message to the wide public including in rural areas. Plays, dramas and poems are staged by children to audiences of parents, children, civil society organizations and invited guests.
180. Commemoration of February 6 Zero Tolerance for FGM day is marked annually in all zonal administrations with the motto, 'Towards elimination'. In the 2024 commemoration of February 6, the theme, "zero tolerance of FGM" was upheld in all zonal administrations in a location of their choice within the zone. These were attended by elderly, religious leaders, women activists, boys and girls and members of mass organizations and public institutions. In At a national level the occasion was celebrated with a theme **"Her future with her participation"** in Halib Mentel, a township in Anseba Zonal administration. On average there were about 400 participants in each zone.
181. During 2023-2024 mapping assessment was conducted in **1086** villages in selected **20** sub

Zones in 5 Zonal Administrations. The results of the mapping showed:

- **93.5%** of the respondents have general knowledge on the harmful effects of FGM
- **92.7%** of the respondents believed that the practice has no benefit
- **95.9%** supported the abolition of the practice
- **92.9%** of the respondents confirmed to have heard about the proclamation.
- Only 4.4% and 2.3% of the girls under 15 and five years of age respectively, were reported to have been circumcised.
- Of the total number of villages covered by the study (**1, 086**), **689 (63.4%)** did not have any girl under 15 years of age circumcised.
- None of the girls under five years of age have undergone FGM in **922** of the **1,081 (85.3%)** villages with at least one female child under five years of age.
- Readiness of the communities to make public declaration to abandon FGM, **44.3%** were found to be ready, **16.0%** were almost ready, 12.2% not ready, and the remaining **27.4%** were far from ready to make the announcement.

F. CHILD JUSTICE

182. Referring to the recommendation stipulated in paragraph 19 of the Committee, the GoSE wishes to inform the Committee that the matter of criminalizing or de-criminalizing certain acts is a prerogative of the state party. Under the TPCE, criminal responsibility results from direct criminal intention and negligence. It in such spirit that the article 623 of TPCE and article 141/142 of TCCE are provided to safeguard compliance with the regulations.
183. The Eritrean justice system is child-friendly, prioritizing the rehabilitation and integration of young offenders into society. The primary goal of Eritrean criminal laws is to prevent crime, primarily through early intervention by clearly defining criminal acts and their consequences. To ensure a supportive environment for young offenders, the Eritrean legal framework emphasizes non-custodial measures. When a child violated the law, the justice system utilizes various correctional measures rather than imprisonment. These measures include admission to curative institutions, supervised education, home arrest, and other rehabilitative options. Importantly, children are not detained with adults, thus safeguarding their well-being.
184. When a young person is accused of a crime, the court oversees the investigation, ensuring that procedures are tailored to the child's needs. For serious offenses, such as those punishable by rigorous imprisonment or death, children are directed to special detention centers designed for their rehabilitation, as stipulated in Article 53 of the TPCE. In most cases, the court opts for non-custodial measures, focusing on supervised education and correction rather

than punitive detention. Additionally, during legal proceedings involving young offenders, the presence of witnesses, experts, and the child's guardian is restricted to protect the child's privacy, further enhancing the child-friendly nature of the justice system.

VI. Challenges and the way forward

A. CHALLENGES

1. As a least developed country, Eritrea has faced multitude challenges such as recurrent drought caused by the continuous impacts of climate change which has impacted the availability of reliable and secure food supply, the COVID-19 Pandemic and the recurrent intra-state and interstate conflicts occurring in the horn of Africa. For almost a decade, the country and its people were subjected to unwarranted UN Security Council sanctions, based on fabricated allegations. Yet, the country is further sustaining the illegal unilateral sanctions imposed by the US and EU. Those sanctions have highly impacted the development trajectory of the State and the progressive realization of human rights due the lack of correspondent banking relations caused by excessive over-compliance mechanisms by international financial institutions.

B. WAY FORWARD

2. The State of Eritrea will continue its endeavors to raise the level of protection, respect and fulfillment of human rights and fulfill the comprehensive development objectives and improve the livelihood of its citizens. Eritrea will actively participate in the regional human rights governance, advocate for a genuine dialogue and cooperation with human rights mechanisms on the basis of the basic principles of objectivity, non-selectivity and non-politicization. It will also promote the work of the African Union human rights mechanisms and ACRWC.