



# ERITREA - VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

## KEY MESSAGES

- Eritrea's inaugural voluntary national review report shares the country's experiences, including successes, remaining challenges, and key takeaways, in implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The review is grounded on successes of the country on health-related Millennium Development Goals and is conducted in the spirit of peer learning, mutual exchange, and transparency. Eritrea seeks to consolidate local ownership of the 2030 Agenda, promote awareness, and strengthen cooperation to progress.
- Sustainable development remains an integral part of Eritrea's long-term vision. The national policies and action plans are aligned with the SDGs and are supportive of Eritrea's progress towards achievements of Agenda 2030.
- Eritrea has fostered a conducive environment for development that promotes inclusive, whole-of-society approaches, leverages the country's diversity and wealth of indigenous knowledge systems, and catalyzes contributions from all regions and communities.
- Eritrea has established cooperative frameworks and partnerships with many bilateral and multilateral partners. Engagement and cooperation are built upon a platform of common principles and trust, with concerted efforts being based on complementarity and guided by locally-defined priorities and needs. Eritrea's diaspora continues to play an active role in assisting development.
- Eritrea's development and nation-building processes are grounded on social justice. Emphasis is placed on ensuring that all citizens can fully participate in, contribute to, and benefit from sustainable development. Laws and policies establish a foundation for inclusive development, while guaranteeing a range of fundamental rights. Legal instruments and protection programs address the specific needs of and catalyze progress for vulnerable groups. These interventions cultivate peace and unity within Eritrea's multiethnic society, mitigate disparities, and help ensure everyone is empowered and able to enjoy the fruits of sustainable development.
- Notwithstanding challenges, including illegal, unjust sanctions and a difficult regional geopolitical context, great strides have been achieved towards:
  - Universal health coverage, with investments in expanding health infrastructure, equipment, medicines, and personnel. Maternal and child mortality have been significantly reduced, the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel has risen, routine vaccination coverage rates are nearly universal, HIV prevalence and new infections have declined, and there have been major inroads against malaria, tuberculosis, hepatitis B, and neglected tropical diseases.



- Climate change mitigation and adaptation, halting biodiversity loss, reducing land degradation, and restoring ecosystems are priorities. Water and soil conservation programs are being expanded, enclosures and protected areas have been established, greening and irrigation schemes are proceeding, and a vast network of terraces, dams, and ponds has been constructed. There are plans for desalination of sea water for domestic use and economic sectors, while degraded land is being restored and rehabilitated. Renewable energy remains a focus, with initiatives to improve energy efficiency and promote clean alternatives ongoing. The summer holiday program amongst the youth has been effective in promoting advocacy for environmental management.
- Developing infrastructure, raising agricultural production and productivity, and ensuring food and nutrition security, while access to electricity, water, sanitation, and hygiene, among other services, have been expanded, with notable expansions in rural areas. Also, youth and adult literacy rates have increased, enrolments have grown, gender gaps have narrowed, and education remains free across all levels.
- Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Eritrea has maintained among the lowest death and infection rates in Africa, with a high recovery rate, and minimal community transmission. Success has been based upon sustained aggressive action; clear communications from authorities; public buy-in and solidarity; and past experience in controlling endemic and communicable diseases. Although measures have been implemented to alleviate its impacts, COVID-19 has led to many disruptions.
- Many areas for improvement remain. Strong local and global partnerships will help accelerate progress, scale up successful interventions, and support a sustainable and equitable COVID-19 recovery. Technical and financial cooperation are required to enhance sustainable management of natural resources, address climate change impacts, enhance disaster preparedness, introduce clean technologies, and promote a just energy transition. Cooperation is also essential for attaining universal health coverage, provision of essential health services, and further improvement of the well-being of the population. There is need to strengthen the national statistical system and build capacity with regard to data generation, analysis, and dissemination of timely, high quality, and disaggregated data which will enhance the monitoring infrastructure for tracking progress and support evidence-based planning.

