### Country: Eritrea

### **COUNTRY PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE SUMMARY[[1]](#footnote-1)**

### Reporting period: January 2013-December 2015

### **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Eritrea made progress in its engagement with the international community to address issues of isolation. For instance, GoSE demonstrated commitment and willingness to engage on human rights promotion and protection. The OHCHR was invited in Eritrea thrice on human rights issues. In addition, Eritrea finalized and published four new sets of permanent legal codes including the civil code, penal code, civil procedure code and criminal procedure code. However, assessment reports of the Commission of Inquiry (CoI) on Eritrea and the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Eritrea allege wide-spread human rights violations in the country. In spite of the COI Report, the GoSE continued to engage on the Universal Periodic Review recommendations. In the UPR process, dialogue between the GoSE and the UNCT was strengthened in order to support efforts to implement the UPR recommendations and mainstream human rights across all line ministries to improve the human rights situation in the country. Eritrea has also been supported to report on CEDAW and other international treaties and the Beijing plus 20+

Through UNDP support; a number of high level missions started visiting the country since 2013, including from the UN, Donor countries, media and other organizations. Side events in New York and Geneva helped Eritrea to show case its progress on MDGs and Women empowerment. Recently Eritrea hosted a COMESA colloquium alongside the national union of Eritrean Women congress which brought over 15 representatives from the COMESA region. Eritrea also hosted twice the Africa forum of the Workers Union that brought all representatives from Africa and senior leadership of the World Union of workers from all over the world. A big Eritrea studies conference envisaging more than 600 participants is also planned in July 2016, this is in addition to the various research initiatives that UNDP has supported through the commission of higher education and other sector ministries. Eritrean delegations have also visited, Europe and African countries in an effort to enhance peer learning. UNDP has also supported the ministry of information to increase its capacity and train local journalist, in addition to various efforts geared toward supporting them to interact with international media. The increasing openness of the country to the international community and increased partnerships is a good opportunity to build on during the implementation of the CPD.

The UN Sanctions on Eritrea were renewed in 2015 and this is likely to continue to negatively affect the country's economic conditions and advancement of external relations and stability. Furthermore, the continued border dispute with Ethiopia gives no indications on time and strategies for a lasting solution, a situation of no war no peace still prevails. There are also fears that the Yemen conflict could lead to refugees fleeing into the Horn of Africa, and a possible expansion of the conflict in the rest of the region leading to a possible humanitarian crisis. It will be crucial to continue encouraging Eritrea to re-join regional bodies like IGAD and actively participate in COMESA and similar organizations in order to find regional solutions to some of the challenges that are shared in the region and to promote trade and investments plus promote regional peace initiatives.

With regard to the SDGs and MDGs, during the last general assembly the Eritrea government committed to embrace the SDGs to guide their own national plans. The GoSE allowed series of panel discussions on the SDGs to take place in the country with a wide coverage in the state media coverage, an event which would not have happened 2-3 years back when the relationship between the UN and the GoSE was very poor. The GoSE produced both the Health MDG report in 2014 and a comprehensive MDG Report in 2015, although absence of up-to-date, reliable and accurate data in Eritrea hinders an up-to-date assessment of the current development progress, as the MDG Report used data from 2013 or earlier years.

Under UNDP strategic governance, the assessment of Civil and Vital Registration System (CVRS) was validated and endorsed, preparation of the Eritrean Population and Health Survey (EPHS) 2016 started and Labour Force Survey (the first ever in Eritrea) is ongoing. The capacity of NUEW in planning, advocacy, income generating activities was strengthened, and female genital mutilation has been reduced, enhancing women's participation in the economy and leadership positions. Support to the Ministry of Finance resulted in recommendations of frameworks to establish a robust Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS) and Eritrea Tax Administration Information System (ERITAS), as well as the development of three years actions plans. As a result, the GoSE has requested for support from the African Development Bank to implement the IFMIS and further support in this areas will improve public financial management systems, the revenue base of the country, and the overall economic progress. The countries continues to face challenges in data development, therefore the national statistics office needs continuous support on data development to support evidence policy making.

In order to alleviate some of the poor economic conditions fueling illegal migration, especially of the youth, the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS) is being supported to provide training and skills development for vulnerable people, such as the youth, women and girls in the country and people voluntarily repatriated from abroad. The project has also created a much needed forum for dialogue on youth and migration issues. Eritrea is doing well in the mining sector, the country needs to be encouraged to use this good experience to broaden the economy, encourage private sector in order to promote growth.

Agriculture is still largely rain-fed, and UNDP downstream interventions aimed to improve food security, and income levels of communities, as well as environmental sustainability, such as construction of micro dams and provision of improved seeds and application of improved farming methods (although inadequate rains in 2015 have hindered this). Also, piloting the 1994 new land tenure system continued in 2015 and as a result 23 villages with a population of 5,500 households (37% female headed households) benefited from secured land tenure system which enabled them to improve investment on their land and to introduce sustainable land management and long term planning, thereby improving the land productivity and the state of environment in the country. Government officials and land users elsewhere in the country have taken lessons from this experiment and are upscaling the land reform initiative. The pilot project has also provided land users lifetime usufruct right to woodland, farmers are planting trees in their allocated hillside land, which is reducing land fragmentation; communities in Eritrea are currently more active in conserving their local natural resources. Furthermore, 116.65 km of hillside, 490.8m3 check-dams and 353.55ha of farmland were rehabilitated. These, in addition to the ecosystem conservation benefits, provided 1500 (30% women) households with additional household income generated through cash for work implemented conservation activities. Besides, six meteorological stations (2 manuals, 4 automatic systems) in six strategic locations within the project area (sub-zoba Habero and Hamelmalo) were established and are fully operational. Awareness among farmers has been created on the usefulness of met data and as a result more than 10,000 household farming communities living within the two sub-zobas are benefiting through timely agricultural meteorological information.

### **II: Country Programme Performance Summary**

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| **Country information** | |  | | |
| **Country name: Eritrea** | | | | |
| **Current country programme period: 2013-2016** | | | | |
| **Outcomes** | | **Total Expenditure** | **Key Indicators of outcome (1-4 per outcome)** | **Progress made against key indicators** |
| **1. Selected government institutions have the capacity to effectively and efficiently provide services to all** | | (Regular: 11,822,372 Other: 3,930,838) | 1. *Extent to which sub-national governments/administrations have functioning planning systems* 2. *Existence of effective mechanisms to collect, disseminate sex disaggregated data and gender statistics.* | 1. *In the course of CP, the regulatory frameworks, instruments and tools of the ministry of Finance were reviewed, database and networking systems at Water Resource Department developed, 3 research papers on enterprise development and youth entrepreneurship, outmigration in Eritrea and the in the HoA, and land degradation produced and published* 2. *MDG 2015 report produced; EPHS 2015 completed, Data for Labor Survey collected, rapid assessment on Civil and Vital registration endorsed, 5th CEDAW report submitted and 2nd national gender action plan 2014-2017 completed.* |
| **UNDP Contribution**  CP Outputs:   * Joint programme on gender equity in Eritrea * Data for development * Public Sector management programme * Capacity building for Ministry of Finance * Youth employments and skills development.   Progress and Achievements:  The quality, availability and access to adequate and accurate data in Eritrea continues to be a major challenge. After 10 years, for the first time Eritrea produced an MDG Report in 2015 with support from UNDP. The MDGs Report makes available data to almost all Government Ministries and Departments for their planning and as a reference in the preparation of the National Development Plan.  In addition with UNDP support a Study Report was produced that reviewed and analysed capacity gaps in the management information systems on meeting the evolving needs of the departments in Ministry of Finance and the government in general. The report also included recommendation on frameworks to build future public financial management and tax administration systems. The findings of these two studies have informed the design and approval of the $2.5m AfDB grant to the Ministry of Finance for strengthen planning and treasury management frameworks and to establish a robust Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS).  There has also been an improvement in gender equality promotion through enhanced capacity of the National Union of Eritrean Women (NUEW) to advance its mandate. With UNDP support, NUEW enhanced consolidation of its influence by producing a five year Strategic Action Plan. The Strategic Action Plan has helped NUEW to strengthen its leadership and coordination roles on gender equality promotion across departments and Ministries. As part of its strategy to advance women in leadership and decision making positions, a total of 83 selected women in civil service were equipped with skills and knowledge on assuming responsibility in senior decision making positions. This was done through UNDP’s support of NUEW’s leadership coaching programme that has prepared the women to take up higher level leadership positions. With UNDP support, NUEW produced the 5th CEDAW report, the Beijing +20 report, Civil Registration and Vital System report and the 2nd National Gender Action Plan. The reports provide important information for use in advocacy and performance tracking of the country’s efforts in promoting and protecting gender equality.  With UNDP support, an indicative Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) mapping exercise affirmed that FGM/C prevalence for under-five and fifteen is at 7 and 19%, respectively, in 2014, compared to 95% in 1995, as a result of community sensitization and empowerment being implemented through the establishment of anti-FGM committees in Debub.  The GoSE accepted 92 UPR recommendations out of 200 recommendations raised towards human rights protection and promotion. This was achieved with UNDP’s support on active engagement and lobbying of the GOE to participate in the UPR process. For instance, UNDP facilitated the UNCT/GoE dialogue and support on implementation of the UPR recommendations. The acceptance of the recommendations is a significant milestone in terms of the GoSE commitment in moving forward to implement the recommendations].  A total of 600 young people were equipped with vocational and entrepreneurship skills for employment in metal and wood works, beekeeping and hairdressing. UNDP supported the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS) to conduct the trainings that provided the vulnerable and disadvantaged youths with the employment skills. In addition, NUEYS’s Vocational Training Centres were revamped with revised curriculum, modern training equipment, and attachment of trainer of trainers to each centre and updated training manuals. The revamping increased capacity of NUEYS to provide market matching trainings and to absorb more youths than previous years. The project has also created a platform for dialogue on youth and migration issues. | | | | |
| **2. Poor and vulnerable households have improved access to, and utilization of, quality food and enhanced livelihoods opportunities** | (Regular: 8,426,422 Other:  3,960,302) | | 1. *Number of females benefiting from strengthened livelihoods interventions* 2. *Number of demonstration projects which expand and diversify the productive base based on the use of sustainable production technologies* 3. *Number of males benefiting from strengthened livelihoods* | 1. *In 2013, the base line was 6,885 beneficiaries. As of 2015, the number is 18,209, and the 2016 target 25,679 beneficiaries.* 2. *In 2013, the baseline was 3 demonstration projects, while in 2015 the result was 7 projects (4 projects increment to the baseline).* 3. *In 2013, the baseline was 4,590. As of 2015, the number is 15,549, and the 2016 target is 22,598.* |
| **UNDP Contribution**  CP Outputs:   * Food security and sustainable livelihoods   Progress and Achievements: Eritrea faces challenges of food insecurity due to the adverse effects of climate variability, recurrent droughts, lack of agricultural inputs, and over-exploitation of its natural resources. More than 70% of the country’s population resides in rural areas and predominantly relies on rain-fed agriculture for employment and income generation. In 2015, due to lack of seasonal rain in most parts of the country there was poor crop harvest and pastoralists destocked for lack of animal feed.  A total of 10,384 locust and drought affected poor and vulnerable people (51% female) of the Northern and Southern Red Sea and Debub regions have enhanced their productive capacity and livelihood opportunities through soil and water conservation activities, agricultural training and provision of agricultural hand tools and seeds. 8,419 people have each received each improved crop seeds and 333 female headed households (1,665 people) received 1,000 dairy goats. A total of 16,461 people (55% women) have benefited from cash for work equivalent to $73 on average. This work involved construction of 1634 cubic meter check dams to prevent soil erosion and stabilize gullies, recharge ground water and reclaim land and stabilize the environment in 7 villages (out of 75 villages of the sub-region of Main-mine) in the Debub region . Other interventions expected to yield results in 2016 as a result of 2015 interventions include; improved seeds distributed to 1684 HHs (8,419 individuals) due to be harvested in February/March 2016 depending on the availability of good rains. The dairy goats distributed to 333 female headed households (1,665 people) are expected to produce milk and improve nutrition of under- 5 children of the target households and improve the household income of the target households through sell of offspring goats this year . As reported under CPD indicators, the total number of beneficiaries from livelihoods intervention is 33758 (18,209 female and 15,549 male), while the milestone/target for 2015 was 38,277 (20,679 female and 17,598 male).The underachievement of the targeted milestone for 2015, and decrease in actual beneficiaries reached in comparison to 2014 is due to reduced resources for food security and livelihoods related activities. A case in point is the scale back in available funding. | | | | |
| **3. Eritrea is on track towards the achievement of MDG targets for environmental sustainability** | (Regular: 2,375,817 Other: 7,295,412) | | 1. *Communities (females and males) benefiting from strengthened livelihoods through solutions for management of natural resources.* 2. *Existence of effective mechanism for operationalizing protected areas system through solutions for management of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystem services.* 3. *Extent to which comprehensive measures - plans and programmes are being implemented to achieve climate resilient development objectives* | 1. *The baseline was set as low agricultural production and water harvest and community resilience and adaptive capacity.*   *In 2015, 6 meteorological stations are installed, and as result 10,000 HH farming communities are benefiting from timely information; Also: 116.65k of hillside terracing, 490.8 m3 check dams ad 353.55ha of farmlands were rehabilitated, ensuring that 1,500 HH (34,750 people-30% women) benefited from additional income through cash for work.*   1. *By 2015, operation manual is developed, preparation for policy and regulatory framework undertaken and awareness programme conducted.* 2. *By 2015, land distribution for 23 villages is conducted, together with soil and conservation interventions and SLM practices introduced.* |
| **UNDP Contribution:**  CP Outputs:   * Climate change adaptation programme for Anseba water and agriculture * Integrated Semenawi and Debubawi – operationalization of protected areas management systems * Mainstreaming climate risk considerations in food security * Solar energy for rural electrification   Progress and Achievements:  UNDP has achieved most of the outputs related to gender equality, access to safe water, and environmental protection, restoration and sustainable management that would contribute towards the achievement of outcome through empowering communities and government institutions. Nevertheless, there has been delays in programme implementation related decisions which is largely due to inadequate institutional and human resources capacity on the part of the Implementing partners (line ministries) that limit project progress.  The customary land tenure system in the country does not provide land users adequate incentive to invest on land and adopt sustainable agricultural practices as it does not guarantee long term land security, especially for women. The traditional tenure system was characterized by cyclical redistribution of land every five to seven years. To gradually change this and improve land tenure security in the country, UNDP continued to support piloting of the implementation of the 1994 land proclamation to reform the customary land tenure system. As a result 23 villages with a population of 5,500 households (37% female headed households) benefited in 2015 from secured land tenure system. As the result of the implementation of the new land tenure system local communities have significantly increase investment in their land in terms of extensive farmland terracing and soil and water conservation activities (900 ha) and encouraged them to introduce sustainable land management. Implementation of the new land tenure system also reduced land fragmentation (each farmer use to have 4 parcels of small plots of land spread across the village) through land consolidation and thereby reducing transaction cost in terms of time and increased agricultural labour productivity. The implementation of the land tenure system has also ensured women’s equal right to land ownership. Prior to the implementation of the new land tenure system, women had no direct access and entitlement to land. Following the implementation of the lifetime usufruct land tenure system, farmers have planted about 125,000 tree seedlings which is around 16 trees/household in their respective woodland allocations which is expected to provide fuelwood, construction material and income from the sale of timber in the upcoming years. As a result of the new land tenure pilot project communities from other areas are demanding replication of these practices and government is considering upscaling the project. Following a UNDP 10 days training of 23 agricultural extension agents on the GPS use and GIS application, 6 communities have established a land use plan of their communities with the support of the trained agricultural extension agents. This exercise is expected to significantly help communities to effectively adopt other SLM interventions for improved land management and improved livelihoods. Land degradation is arguably the most critical environmental problem facing Eritrea. UNDP has continued to support soil and water conservation activities. 116.65 km of hillside terracing, 490.8m3 check-dams and 353.55ha of farmlands were rehabilitated. Through these conservation activities, 1,500 (30% women) households benefited from additional income through cash for work. To enhance climate change adaptation capacity of the agro-pastoralists and pastoralists of the project area, 6 meteorological stations in 6 strategic locations in Subzobas, Habero and Hamelmalo, have been established with UNDP support and are able to provide timely climatic information to the local farming communities. As a result of this intervention, agrometeorological information is provided on a weekly basis to more than 10,000 household farming communities to minimize crop and livestock failure risk. | | | | |

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| Summary of evaluation findings (e.g. from outcome and project evaluations, UNDAF reviews, and other assessments)   1. **SPCF Mid-term Review, 2015;**   Findings:  Outcome 4 targets strengthening of capacity of selected government institutions such as NSO, MOF, MOJ, NCHE, NUEW, and MOH. Given the human and institutional capacity constraints facing Eritrea, activities are designed to improve the capacity of these institutions to effectively and efficiently deliver services. Thus, the MTR found this outcome to be highly relevant. In terms of effectiveness and efficiency, the MTR found mixed results because implementation of some activities lagged behind while others progressed well. The sustainability of the outcome results will depend on the establishment of a dynamic institutional and organizational structure, government commitment and adequate budgetary allocations as well as community efforts and participation. With regards to progress made towards achieving outputs, for outputs such as capacity improved and systems strengthened within NSO, sectoral ministries and regions for effective development planning and management, the progress has been slow while for the other outputs, the progress is highly satisfactory.  Outcome 6 was designed to support achievement of food security of households and enhance their production capacities; it is a highly relevant outcome as the country strives to promote food security and reduce poverty. The project has been effective in addressing gender based participation and more women are in the projects directed to expansion of crop, livestock and fish production and other related income generating activities. It has been able to improve the livelihood of poor households through increased consumption and supporting children to attend schools. There were no fund disbursement problems and no delays or funds unutilized. This led to high budget utilization rate and therefore relatively efficient. The outcome is sustainable because of the high degree of community involvement and exhibited government commitment. Continued strong partnership with UN agencies such as FAO, UNDP, IFAD, and others will play a key role in contributing to sustainability of the results achieved. The progress made towards achievement of outputs is highly satisfactory except in improving utilization of quality food measured by prevalence of underweight children under five years of age, which was found to be moderately satisfactory.  Under outcome 7, the focus is on achieving environmental sustainability which is one of the top priorities of GOE. The outcome is relevant as it targets to bring a balanced development in the country. Most of the activities implemented such as distribution of energy saving stoves and training of women on production of modern stoves, construction of latrines, introduction of PAs, banning of plastic bags etc., were effective. However, there were some activities that were not completed on time and there have been cost overruns which negatively affected implementation. Technical efficiency was also a problem due to inadequate expertise and trained manpower which led to delays in implementation such as in GPS land mapping and converting it to the actual land topography. There is government commitment and support which plays key role in sustaining results achieved in this outcome. While the regulatory instruments are intact, there is a need to strengthen the enforcement of the rules and laws in place. To this end sustainability is highly dependent on the readiness of the communities and the general public to change and protect the environment. The partnerships with UN agencies also strongly contribute to environmental sustainability. Progress towards achievement of three out of five outputs is highly satisfactory while for the remaining two outputs is satisfactory.  Recommendations for the next SPCF 2017-2021:  • Consolidate achievements made in all sectors  • Focus more on disabled and vulnerable persons  • Strengthen and enhance national capacity building  • Strengthen and consolidate public service delivery at all levels  • Promote investment and employment generation in key sectors  • Improve indicators and baseline data  • Design women empowerment priorities and program based on wider consultations and discussions with NUEW and other partners   1. **CPAP Annual 2014 review**   Findings:  The 2014 Annual Review has concluded that the CPAP is progressing well towards delivering the planned results. This is a result of the sound partnership established with all partners (central ministries, regional administrations, associations and donors). The NEX implementation modality has enhanced project/programme efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability. In addition to its alignment with government policy, the modality contributed to capacity building of IPs.  UNDP has made significant progress in non-core resource mobilisation and is on track towards meeting its target. The process currently followed to prepare, approve and finance projects appears to be long, causing delays in implementation and affecting delivery of results. Consequently, signing of annual work plans was delayed, significantly shortening the time for project implementation. All correspondences between UNDP and IPs go through the MND and this has contributed to delays in programme implementation. Direct transfer of resources to the zobas (bypassing central structures and hierarchies) would have been more appropriate. This could have resulted in increased effectiveness of programme operations.  UNDP has been most effective in its working relationship with GoSE line ministries. All national and regional IPs are satisfied with UNDP partnership. Critical shortage of qualified staff in IPs to prepare projects, AWPs and financial and narrative reports affected programme implementation. The collaboration between UNDP and other UN Agencies has generally been good, though there is still a need for improving joint programming.  The review concluded that UNDP support has adequately addressed national priorities and contribute towards the achievement of international obligations and the SP. The CPAP has contributed to the human and institutional capacities of national and regional institutions, gender equity and empowerment of women, food security and sustainable livelihoods and environmental sustainability. This was achieved through different projects/programmes targeting national and regional institutions as well as beneficiary communities including WHHs.  Recommendations:  1. Procurement of goods, especially foreign, has been a major challenge affecting programme implementation. The Government and UNDP need to engage in open high level discussions and agree on the way forward. One area of support could be to strengthen the capacity of Red Sea Corporation. Parallel with this, UNDP has undertaken international procurements on behalf of IPs where Government has allowed.  2. Ensure that AWPs are timely signed by initiating the planning process early enough to give IPs sufficient time for implementation. In as much as possible, the Annual Work Plans should be signed by end of January every year.  3. Consider transferring funds directly to the regions in order to enhance programme delivery and avoid unnecessary bank service charges. Keep the MND and concerned line ministries informed about the transfer of funds through a copy for their follow up and appropriate action.  4. Enter into dialogue with the government to get drafted policies, legislations and guidelines approved and implemented.  5. A well-structured design of programmes/projects is critical for improved implementation, monitoring, and measuring progress towards outputs. Get the proposed SPCF M&E system approved by the government to enable all partners report on the same indicators. Ensure that all indicators are quantifiable and verifiable.  6. The CPAP has been implemented over a wide a geographical area covering different areas in all the six zobas. Resources are thinly spread over wide geographical areas. To generate maximum impact, UNDP should have to consider intensive investment in limited geographical areas through the implementation of integrated programmes with all the components namely SWC, rangeland, improved seeds, horticulture, livestock, beekeeping, etc. This can be piloted in selected areas and can be replicated in a wider area if found successful. The pilot areas would also serve as demonstration areas for extension agents and also facilitate experience sharing.  7. Develop capacity of IPs especially regions on the preparation of narrative and financial reports as per UNDP’s requirement. Strengthen the planning, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation capacities of the MND and IPs to improve project delivery.  8. Create synergy among the various projects implemented by the two programme units to reinforce outputs and contribute to their effectiveness and sustainability.  9. Support line ministries and regions to conduct comprehensive & systematic capacity building needs assessments as a basis for developing national capacity development programme. |

### **III. Country Programme Resources**

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| **Focus Area** | **Programme Expenditure 2012-2015 ($)** | | | **% of Total** |
|  | Regular (TRAC) | Other | Total |  |
| Capacity of institutions developed | 11,822,372 | 3,930,838 | 15,753,210 | 42% |
| Food security and sustainable livelihoods | 8,426,422 | 3,960,302 | 12,386,724 | 33% |
| Environmental sustainability and energy | 2,375,817 | 7,295,412 | 9,671,229 | 25% |
| **Total** | **22,624,611** | **15,186,552** | **37,811,163** | **100%** |

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| **Data sources: (please indicate the main sources from which data were obtained for this report.)** |
| Country Programme Document 2013-2016  Results Oriented Annual Report, (2013, 2014, 2015)  Mid-term SPCF review  Annual 2014 CPAP review |

1. This assessment of results is to be prepared only in the absence of a completed Assessment of Development Results (ADR) for the cycle. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)