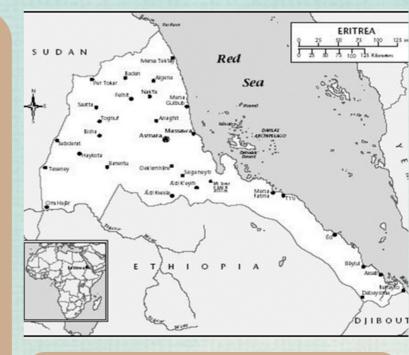
## **ERITREA**

The principal language spoken is Tigrinya, however, Tigre and Arabic is also used. There are nine officially recognized ethnic groups in Eritrea: Afar, Blien, Hidareb, Kunama, Nara, Rashaida, Saho, Tigre and Tigrinya. The population in southern and central Eritrea is primarily Christian, while the population of northern Eritrea is primarily Muslim.

Eritrea is a small country in the horn of Africa bordering Ethiopia, Sudan, Djibouti and the Red Sea. Eritrea has one of the best colonial architectural structures in the world. Their cultures remain intact, diverse, and colourful with nine ethnic groups that contribute to the country's cultural immersion

Different communities in Eritrea celebrate various festivals that showcase the rich culture of the country as follows:

- · New Year's Day
- Christmas Day
- Orthodox Epiphany (end of the 12 days of Christmas)
- Fenkil Day (honours the patriots and martyrs who ended the colonial rule and celebrates the country's independance
  - Birth of the Prophet
  - Martyr's Day (pays tribute to the freedom fighters who died for Eritrea's liberation)
  - Bahti Meskerem (recognizes those who sacrificed during their freedom campaign against Ethiopia)
    - Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan)
    - Eid al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice)



Eritrea has experienced numerous challenges throughout the years such as drought, famines and recurrent war. As a result, poverty has become more rampant in a country where over 66 per cent of people live below the poverty line. Some families live on remittances.

The name Eritrea comes from a Greek word meaning 'Red Sea' and the country is largely untouched by development and tourism.

The capital is Asmara and the current population of Eritrea in 2022 is approximately 3.6 million

Greeting somebody with a handshake and the word "Salam" is common. Lengthy, elaborate greetings are normal, especially on special occasions.

Women greet each other by ululating (an expression of strong emotion) and kissing each other on each cheek three times.



The flag of Eritrea was adopted in 1995. The red represents the bloodshed in the struggle for independence. The blue signifies the Red Sea and its marine resources. The Green stands for the country's agricultural exuberance and yellow represents its mineral resources



The main traditional food in Eritrean cuisine is tsebhi or zigni (stew), served with injera (flatbread made from teff, wheat, or sorghum and hilbet (paste made from legumes; mainly lentil and faba beans). Eritreans eat exclusively with their right hands, using pieces of injera to pick up bites of entrées and side dishes. Utensils are rarely used within Eritrean cuisine.

Each year, thousands of
Eritrean students, some
still under 18, are
conscripted into the
country's abusive
indefinite national service
program. National service
is supposed to last 18
months, but the
government often
extends it to well over a
decade. National service
hampers children's access
to education and family
life.

The Ethiopian
government has begun to
refuse to register
unaccompanied children
to seek asylum.If children
are unregistered, they
don't have access to food,
shelter, protection, or any
psychosocial support.
That exposes them to
many external risks,
including exploitation.

Habesha Kemis is a traditional ankle length dress which is worn by Eritrean and Ethiopian women at formal events as well as at casual occasions. A zuria is a dress worn by the Tigrinya women in Eritrea. Traditional zurias go to the ankles, sometimes with a gauze hood around the head and shoulders. Zurias come in different forms and designs with an extra sheen due to the demands of fashion. Zurias are worn during holidays, weddings, or parties.

The traditional formal wear of the men Eritrea consists of long sleeve, kneelength shirt, and matching trousers. Most shirts are made with a Mandarin band or Nehru collar.

\*\*Thank you to our young people who supported in writing this guide