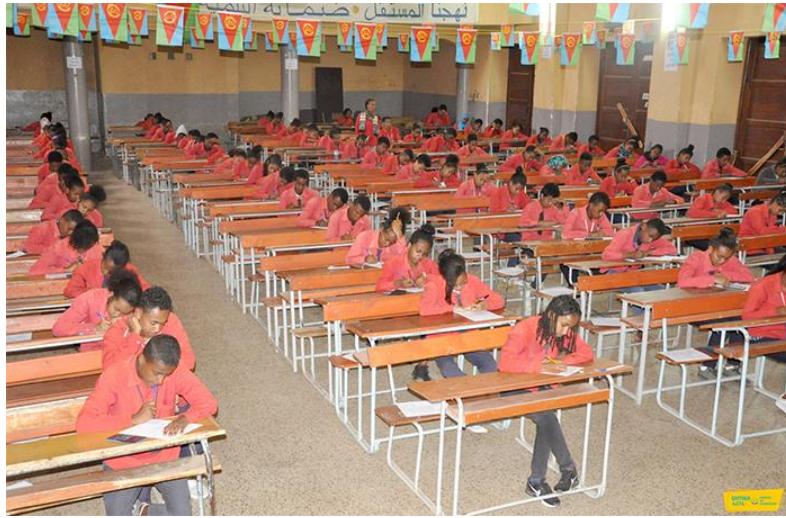


Eritrea: Overview of its National Curriculum



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On Oct 14, 2020 The Government of the State of Eritrea considers education the cornerstone of all national development efforts, and has adopted a national education policy that advances the knowledge and skills required for a vibrant and competitive economy. It has been making significant investments in the development of human resources by providing education and health services for the entire people so that they can fully participate in the civic, cultural, political, social and economic affairs of their nation.

The national policy of education of the State of Eritrea states that the provision of sound basic education is both a human right and a tool that raises the overall awareness of citizens, which enhances productivity. It also emphasizes that education at middle and secondary schools should integrate knowledge and skills in order to prepare students for higher education, on the one hand, and occupation in different fields of work, on the other.

At all the levels efforts have been made to include innovative ways of integrating theory with practice, focusing on the process of inquiry, analysis, interpretation, problem solving, communication and other essential learning skills.

The general aims of the National Curriculum are to:

- promote a sense of unity in diversity, collective identity and loyalty to the nation;
- provide all learners with an enabling environment for the development of autonomous learning and problem-solving skills;
- develop the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes which could serve as bases for continuing learning and productive work in adult life;
- foster the total development (e.g. physical, cultural, aesthetic) of the individual learner's potential, including those with special needs;
- support the development of desirable moral and social values;
- contribute to the development of democracy and social justice, including cooperation, tolerance, mutual understanding and service to others;
- contribute to the development of democracy and social justice; and
- promote the study of science and technology along with the development of an informed concern for the conservation of the environment, nature and natural resources.

The structure of the education system in Eritrea has three bands — basic, secondary and higher education. Basic education, which encompasses pre-school, elementary and middle school levels, is free and compulsory for all school-age children.

Pre-school Education, which runs for two years, is an integral part of the education system for children between ages 4 and 5. The emphasis at this level is on laying the foundation for language and concept development, social relationships and the holistic development of the child in a thematic approach. Elementary Level Education is a five-year school cycle with the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, and it is viewed as an important formative period in the social, emotional and intellectual development of learners. The core learning areas provided at this level are Mother Tongue, English, Mathematics,

General Science, Social Studies, Citizenship Education, Life Skills Education, Arts and Sports and Physical Education.

Middle Level Education is the end of the basic education cycle which goes from grade six to eight. The medium of instruction from this level onwards is English. This cycle offers a broad-based general education with opportunities for learners to begin to identify their interests for further education and flexible skills of learning. Vocational orientation topics are integrated in various subjects. A national examination is given at the end of grade 8 and serves as an entrance exam for secondary education.

Secondary Education is structured as a four-year program of core and enrichment learning areas. Work-related practical studies, with relevance to individual learner interests and national development needs, are an integral part of the curriculum. In Eritrea, secondary education is designed to serve both as preparation for further education and the world of work. Therefore, upon completion of their Secondary Education, school leavers have the option of either seeking employment or pursuing further education and training.

Students at grades 9 and 10 of the secondary school education take the same subjects as common courses and in grade 11 are assigned to either the Natural Science or Social Science streams which provide them with in-depth learning according to their interests, aptitude and the national development needs.

At the end of this cycle, learners sit for the Eritrean Secondary Education Certificate Examination (ESECE), which enables the authorities to assess the education standards and to channel learners who fulfill the admission criteria into institutions of higher education in line with their interests and aptitudes and the development needs and priorities of the country.

Finally, on top of the core learning areas listed in the curriculum, learners are engaged in co-circular activities by joining Green, Health, Debating, Arts and Sciences, Drama and Sports clubs in their schools. Co-circular activities are given strong consideration as they are convenient vehicles for complementing and strengthening learning within the context of the formal curriculum and contribute towards the physical, social and intellectual and affective development of the learners

