

SEPTEMBER 1, 2023 TO FEBRUARY 29, 2024

DIALOGUE, TRAINING, BARGAINING: WORK AS AN INSTRUMENT OF PEACE AID 11604

Newsletter n. 10

VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE IN MASSAWA, SOCIAL MEDIA CENTRE IN ASMARA, AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING



Within the "Dialogue, training, bargaining: work as an instrument of peace - AID 11604" project, equipment, goods and materials were supplied to the Social Media Centre in Asmara and the Massawa-MWVTC Massawa Workers Vocational Training Centre in order to implement vocational training courses and events aimed at promoting training, dialogue, work, and pathways to Peace.

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- **The Social Media Centre in Asmara and the Massawa Workers Vocational Training Centre (MWVTC)**
The Centres were prepared and rehabilitated.
- **Hospitality, HACCP protocol, Eritrean cuisine meets Italian cuisine**
- **Vocational training**
- **Heading towards the end of the project and the final seminar 'Work as an Instrument of Peace'**

THE SOCIAL MEDIA CENTRE IN ASMARA AND THE MASSAWA WORKERS VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE (MWVTC)

The purchases made in the first six months of 2023 allowed us to send to Eritrea the equipment needed to **rehabilitate part of the professional centre in Massawa and complete the setting-up of the professional kitchen in the Social Media Centre in Asmara.**

Once arrived at the port of Massawa in October 2023, we received prompt on-site assistance by the specialised technicians from the Italian company supplying the materials. Railings, doors, pergolas, and other equipment were installed to rehabilitate part of the Massawa centre, and doors and windows were placed in the Asmara Social Media Centre.

The materials and tools supplied made it possible to improve production capacity and quality of the industrial kitchen installed at the Social Media Centre in Asmara.

Since its implementation, the kitchen has been used to run vocational courses for the project beneficiaries (and other participants) and to prepare food that is sold in the bar-restaurant adjacent to the centre. This offered the opportunity to create new professional skills and jobs, services and income-generating activities, with the ultimate aim of creating decent employment and income for the self-sustainability of the Social Media Centre in Asmara.



Massawa Workers Vocational Training Center (MWVTC)



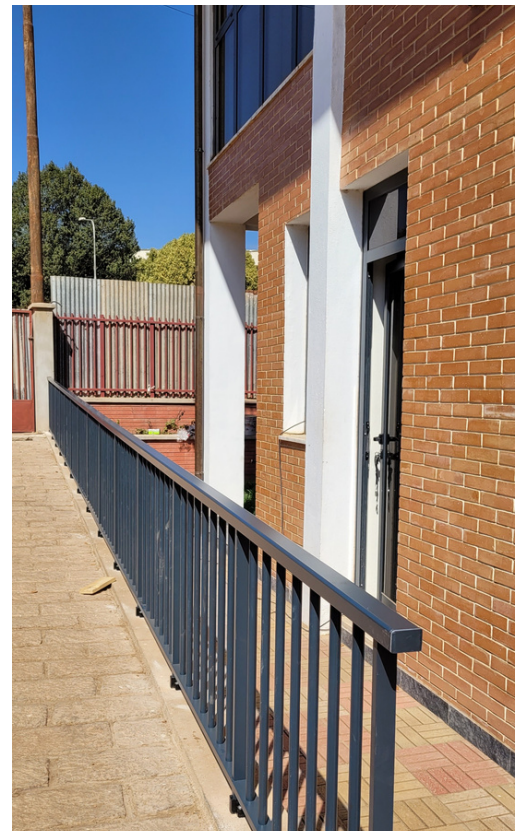
Outdoor railings of the Massawa Workers Vocational Training Center



Entrance doors and Exterior fittings (pergolas) of the Massawa Workers Vocational Training Center



Exterior fittings (pergolas) of the Massawa Workers Vocational Training Center



Exterior fittings (outdoor railings) of the Social Media Centre in Asmara



Work in progress to set up the Social Media Centre in Asmara



Setting up the interior of the Social Media Centre in Asmara



Equipment and tools for the professional kitchen of the Social Media Centre in Asmara



Professional kitchen warehouse of the Social Media Centre in Asmara

The bar-restaurant adjacent to the kitchen of the Asmara Social Media Centre was provided with new, modern tables and chairs, smart TVs, and audio-visual systems. It is now a recreational space in the centre, a club with indoor and outdoor spaces, and a meeting place for citizens open every day. In just a few months, the bar-restaurant also became a venue for parties, weddings, public and private events.

The outdoor spaces of the Social Media Centre in Asmara



The latest equipment purchased and sent to Eritrea (computers, printers, and related accessories) made it possible to renew the laboratories and spaces needed for the vocational training of young Eritreans. The laboratories and spaces concerned were already present in both centres but needed suitable equipment for computer courses (at different levels).

The two centres in Massawa and Asmara have been built, rehabilitated, equipped, and adapted over the years in order to meet the needs of the AID 11604 project beneficiaries, on the one side, and of the entire citizenry, on the other. To date, these centres promote vocational training, encourage young people gatherings, and create job opportunities.

HOSPITALITY, HACCP PROTOCOL, ERITREAN CUISINE MEETS ITALIAN CUISINE

The project "Dialogue, training, negotiation: work as an instrument of peace" made it possible to enhance the Eritrean professionals who have been working for years in reception and catering. Having been jeopardised in recent years by a new international context (above all, due to the Covid-19), this is one of the key sectors for the future development of Eritrea, not only for the possible induced activities it could create but also for its potential to create new jobs. This is why, in the first days of December 2023, we organised the course on "Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points" (HACCP) in collaboration with Chef Daniele Paralovo, which was addressed to more than 40 Eritrean workers in the catering sector.



Course on 'Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points' protocol - HACCP



Course on 'Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points' protocol - HACCP

The training was led by Chef Daniele Paralovo and covered topics related to the HACCP protocol, hygiene and health standards for food preparation, prevention of food poisoning and contamination while cooking and serving, raw material procurement/storage, food preservation, procedures for proper disinfection and pest control, and safety in the workplace.

The professional kitchen at the Social Media Centre in Asmara, which is managed by the NCEW and was set up thanks to the AID 11604 project, could be used during the training. This gave the participants the opportunity to put in practice the information provided by Chef Paralovo.



Course on 'Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points' protocol - HACCP

Eritrean professionals from different backgrounds and socio-cultural backgrounds participated to this professionalising and innovative training for the Eritrean context, which adds to those already completed.

Italian and Eritrean culture met in many occasions during the training and at the end of the lessons, when the certificates of participation were awarded. The training was an opportunity to enhance a potential catering sector in Eritrea, but also to support the industry of hospitality and tourism, which has the potential to be a driving sector for the country, create new jobs and be another step towards good and inclusive employment.

We would like to thank Chef Daniele Paralovo for his collaboration, professionalism, and experience, which he has passed on to the beneficiaries of the courses that have taken place over the past two years.

Please find the video of one of the courses held in Asmara by Chef Daniele Paralovo here: [LINK](#)

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Vocational training has been focused on three industries:

- Hospitality/tourism;
- Information and Communication Technologies (ICT);
- Cold chain/refrigeration systems.

These industries had been identified by the research "Labour market survey in Eritrea: retraining and vocational training in the IT, tourism/hospitality and cold chain sectors", which you can read in Italian and English at the following link: [LINK](#)

The trainings, divided by sector, were carried out in Massawa, Asmara and Keren in the 3 vocational training centres managed by the National Confederation of Eritrean Workers (NCEW).

A first course for further professional training was addressed to more than 20 experts who subsequently carried out training modules aimed at 300 young Eritreans (employed in companies, unemployed and/or working in the formal economy) in order to improve, strengthen, and update their professional skills.

The young participants who took part in the courses were selected by a team consisting of representatives from the NCEW, public bodies and institutions, and civil society organisations. Whenever possible, the participation of people with disabilities and/or individuals who had not completed compulsory education (secondary school - high school) was also facilitated.

The goal of training 300 young Eritreans was almost achieved in October 2023. During the same month, we also had the opportunity to spend two days in the classroom with some of the course beneficiaries.

During our stay, **we also had the chance to take part in one of the cooking classes**, which theoretical and practical parts were held at the Massawa Workers Vocational Training Centre (MWVTC) and at the AMHL Professional Training Centre in Massawa, respectively. An agreement signed by the NCEW and the AMHL Professional Training Centre made it possible to use of the spaces where the cooking course for aspiring cooks and kitchen assistants took place.

We received a very friendly welcome and we could taste the excellent food made by the participants in our presence, which we ate together.



Cooking class in Massawa



Most of the planned courses about ICT and hospitality/tourism were activated between August and September, while the course for the repair and maintenance of refrigeration systems was activated in November. All the courses lasted about 3-4 months and had a theoretical and practical component (accounting for 30% and 70%, respectively). Moreover, regardless of the industry they were focusing on, they included **a module on health and safety in the workplace** and a module on methods and practices for **setting up and running a start-up**.

Course participants were divided into classes of up to 30 people and had to pass a learning test about every four weeks. At the end of the course, those who completed the training and passed the final test were given a certificate of attendance recognised by the Ministry of Education. For the Hospitality and Tourism industry, the course certificate is indeed very important as it certifies people seeking employment in bars, restaurants, hotels, and other accommodation facilities.

By December 2023, more than 220 young people had completed the training and 75 youngsters were attending courses. Overall, the participants were 72% women and 28% men.

The courses covered the following topics:

- **Cold chain/refrigeration systems**

The course started in October 2023 and was aimed at about 20 people, most of whom were employed in companies or working informally in the industry. Management of electrical and mechanical systems, and repair techniques and maintenance of refrigeration systems were the main areas of the course.

- **Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)**

The course offered training in the use of tools and technologies concerning integrated telecommunication, audio-video systems, and related software that enable users to create, manage, and exchange information.

The beneficiaries were able to attend two different courses (basic or advanced) based on their previous knowledge of the subject. Depending on the level of the course, topics ranged from approaching the different computer interfaces and social media, to using e-mails, the Office package, and other methods and tools for market research.

- **Hospitality/tourism/hospitality and food preparation**

The courses started in August and September, and their practical part took place in the AMHL Professional Training Centre in Massawa. Most of the participants were women, either unemployed or employed in the informal industry.

The training covered several topics, such as: kitchen and warehouse management, selection of markets for the purchase of materials and raw materials, stock management, food preservation, hygiene and cleaning, customer management/reception, use and cleaning of kitchen utensils and equipment (fridge, fryer, oven, etc.), room safety, food preparation, cooking and food presentation techniques.

In December, about 10% of the people who attended the courses in 2023 were employed or started working in companies, especially in the tourism/hospitality sector.

ITC course basic level





ITC course advanced level



Hospitality/tourism/accommodation course, theoretical part



HEADING TOWARDS THE END OF THE PROJECT AND THE FINAL SEMINAR "WORK AS AN INSTRUMENT OF PEACE"

Several factors delayed the implementation of the planned activities: the Covid-19 emergency, the recent conflicts involving Europe, the entire Horn of Africa region and the neighbouring Middle East, the consequent increase in the cost of raw materials and services for the production and delivery of goods and equipment, the blockades and closures of the shipping route to/from the Red Sea ports, the increase in the time needed to deliver goods, etc. Being these factors beyond our control, we were forced to adapt some activities and reschedule others over the years, but we have always kept in mind our ultimate goal.



We have thus come to the end of the project "Dialogue, training, bargaining: work as an instrument of peace", which will come to a conclusion in April 2024. Many actors were involved in the project: the local counterpart NCEW (National Confederation of Eritrean Workers), the project partners (ISCOS-Italian Trade Union Institute for Development Cooperation, Progetto Sud ETS, VIS-International Volunteering for Development, ITUC-CSI Africa-African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation), the Italian trade union confederations CGIL-Confederazione Generale Italiana del Lavoro, CISL-Confederazione Italiana

Sindacati Lavoratori, UIL-Unione Italiana del Lavoro. In addition, the project boasted the valuable collaboration of the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS Khartoum office) and the Italian Embassy in Eritrea.

We want to cross the finish line by organising a final seminar to be held in April at the Social Media Centre in Asmara. This will provide the opportunity to discuss the importance of vocational training as a key element to create inclusive jobs and opportunities for personal and social growth, as well as **the importance of the promotion of workers' rights** as a leverage for social dialogue, for the construction of concrete and stable pathways to Peace, and for changes that can foster real socio-economic benefits for young people, workers, and all the citizenry.

A report on the seminar will be provided in the final project brochure.

NEXUS EMILIA-ROMAGNA ETS

Via Marconi 69, 40122 Bologna (IT)
 er.nexus@er.cgil.it
 www.nexusemiliaromagna.org
 Facebook: Nexus Emilia Romagna
 Twitter: @ONGNexus

**ITALIAN AGENCY FOR
 DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION**

Khartoum Headquarter - Asmara
 Office Italian Embassy in Asmara
 Street 171-1-171 N. 11
 www.khartoum.aics.gov.it
 Facebook: @AICSKHARTOUM
 Twitter: @AicsKhartoum
 Instagram: AICS_Khartoum

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