

## Delayed but Not Forgotten

Written by Kesete Ghebrehiwet

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The Central Denkalia sub-zone which covers seven administrative areas that comprise around 16 thousand inhabitants is one of the vastest geographical areas of the Southern Red Sea region. Let's see how the livelihood of the people who live in this area is? How social services such as: healthcare, electricity and potable water supply as well as educational service are progressing?

Some areas of this sub-zone had been utilizing salty water in every aspect of their daily activities, and not at all of such a resource. Besides, since water sources of Edi and its environs have been getting saltier, provision of potable supply have been secured through fetching fresh water from other areas of the sub-zone that are 25-30 km away. Providing the inhabitants with potable water at any cost has been a must do obligation of the administrative bodies. But, since fetching water from far-off places could only make a transient alleviation of the deficit, it is worth mentioning that a construction of huge surface water impounding infrastructure is a necessity requisite to sustainably secure water supply that could be distributed from a nearby reservoir.

Except for Assab Hospital, the entire Southern Red Sea region used to have no healthcare facility. This time, however, each of the four sub-zones of the region is having its own hospitals or healthcare institutions. Even though, deprived of all sort of social service rendering institutions, this sub-zone like many parts of the country have since independence been gaining access to varied decisive services. Of such basic and decisive services, healthcare service secures its place in the first step of the development ladder. Hence, built in the post-independence period, Edi Community Hospital and healthcare institutions of Beylul and Afambo have been offering good services.

Electrification activity with prior focus to the remotest part of the country has also been among the multifaceted national development undertakings. With this set out national program, Edi has become the first town of the sub-zone to have access of electric supply. Notwithstanding the installation of electric supply equipment, Edi is just gaining a daily access to electricity for a few hours. Thus, despite the availability of pre-installed telephone and internet infrastructure, "Such services have not yet been offered due to lack of sufficient electric supply" said Mr. Yishak

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Tu'um, Administrator of the sub-zone.

In terms of distribution, educational service is indeed the top most of all other services that have been rendered in the sub-zone. There are eight elementary and one junior boarding school in this sub-zone. Referring to



the sub-zone's educational statistical data, Mr. Idris Ibrahim, head of educational services of the Central Denkalia said that educational services have fairly been progressing that the number of new enrolment and particularly that of female students is constantly increasing. "With the ever-increasing participation of students, there is an increase in the number of teachers who have been nurtured in their respective locality," Mr. Idris said. Thus, six kindergarten, 36 primary school, and 15 junior schools have been offering service to the inhabitants of the sub-zone. Some of the teachers who are teaching now were former students of the schools within the sub-zone. "The teachers deserve an honor for their commitment," Mr. Idris said. "With the coming of more teachers who were nurtured in that respective locality, there would be sufficient numbers of teachers," He added.

Literacy program has also been part of the overall educational services of this sub-zone. What is encouraging about the literacy program is that women cover the largest number of the participants. This is in fact an indication that awareness raising programs have been very instrumental for the successful implementation of the charted out programs. The executive bodies that exerted concerted efforts towards the realization of a successful mission also deserve appreciation. Besides, female students who discontinued their educational pursuit due to various reasons have been made to continue through evening programs. These programs also pave a way for female students who get married before completion of their academic career to carry on their studies.

Afamob Junior boarding school which comprises an ICT and a library is a fully equipped modern educational institution. This school accepts students who came not only from the central Denkalia sub-zone alone but from southern Denkalia sub-zone as well. Geographically Afambo is the center of this sub-zone and there are also plans to make it economic hub of the sub-zone. However, the making of Afambo as economic hub of the sub-zone requires introduction of a

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viable transportation system. Lack of such a good transportation system stands as a major hindrance. Head of Fiancé and Administration of Central Denkalia sub-zone said that since the dirty road that passes through Afambo is at a poor conduction and bus owners have not been encouraged to regularly give services to the inhabitants of Afambo. As the inhabitants of this area have been always keen to partake in renovation activities, assuming a regular transportation activity would alleviate the problem. This would be indeed realized as a number of new buses have recently been imported to be deployed throughout the nation. All the basic social service necessities were delayed due to the prolonged colonialism but the Government has not for long forgotten the marginalized areas. And all the development accomplishments so far registered in the sub-zone are just fruits of independence.



While raising the Southern Red Sea Region's general progress issues, one could easily notice the very appreciable assistance of the Government to the resettlement of nationals who have been displaced due to volcanic eruption. The nationals who are now residing in much safer areas have become beneficiaries of due social services. What is more is that the Ministry of Labor and Human Welfare have given monetary assistance of 10,000 Nakfa to each of the 303 displaced families.