

Q&A

How did YESSERA Start?

In 2001, old time friends, having returned to the US from their separate visits to Ethiopia, felt they could make a real difference if they availed the strength of their friendship towards nurturing a modest project. To facilitate the mission on the ground, some like-hearted volunteers provided their time and talent. What started as a simple dream among a few friends has become a great effort to transform communities in Ethiopia.

How is YESSERA funded?

Initially, YESSERA training was funded mostly by its founders and their generous friends. The continued growth of YESSERA is now being made possible by contributions from sponsors and individual constituents.

Is membership a requirement?

There are no requirements to participate in our efforts. We only request that you share our vision, contribute your time, talent and funds as needed.

What are YESSERA's political views?

YESSERA, as an organization, is non-political. Its commitment and motto is “Let the work be done”. Since devising ways for creative productivity is hardly a partisan issue, YESSERA focuses on what matters most for Ethiopia — the future potential of its youth.

How did you choose the locations for the YESSERA programs?

We had to start somewhere. Hawassa, in the south, was our first choice because it showed the potential plant a firm YESSERA root in Ethiopia. Sure enough, it did. So, we chose to expand our efforts to the north, and we settled in Debre Birhan, then Ebinat. Today, YESSERA's commitment to all four corners of Ethiopia has graduates and trainees from Assosa, Bekoji, Metu, and Bonga. All women students from Addis have been YESSERA's focus this year and 2014.

With so many other charity organizations/NGOs, which have hardly made a dent on poverty or country development, isn't YESSERA's work just a drop in the bucket?

This is a good point for discussion. Some of the lessons learned, which YESSERA draws upon, are:

Start with something simple that can be multiplied.

Focus on strategic segments of the population, and sectors of the economy.

Recycle and revolve fast. For example, let students become teachers.

Network on many levels so that quick jumps are possible.

Be alert and be there to unleash the creative process.

Our goal of life-long learning is what empowers YESSERA to feel the whole ocean in a drop. The YESSERA Training Center will open itself to the best that is available to help us all journey into the beyond.