



## From the editor:

Greeting to all Ethiopians and friends of Ethiopia!!!

We are pleased to share with you our 6<sup>th</sup> newsletter and the many great news it brings your way.

We have continued our focus on our mission of educating, enabling and sustaining the youth. Our YESSERA team from Bekoji (Class of 2009) has engaged in the production of cinder blocks with support from YESSERA and the local community leaders. YESSERA-Assosa trainees have graduated from OICE in 2010 and are working on developing bamboo furniture enterprise in Assosa. Our class of 2011, YESSERA-Ebinat, was a collaboration between YESSERA and a team from Gonder area. They are on track to graduate in September. Our next candidates will be selected from Metu, Illuababor - another joint project between YESSERA and two Ethiopians from Metu. We are excited about our evolving joint projects which enable us extend our reach to the furthest part of Ethiopia.

On a related topic, we are pleased to announce the establishment of YESSERA-Ethiopia, a nonprofit organization incorporated in Ethiopia and fully supported by YESSERA. The formation of YESSERA-Ethiopia is a major milestone for YESSERA as it will give us the venue to collaborate with local as well as international NGO's.

Thanks to the continuing hard work of the board members, our support base has increased. More Ethiopians are supporting our cause. We are appreciative of this progress and are encouraged to continue recruiting more Ethiopians to join us. We urge you to continue your patronage and support. Please access our website at [www.yessera.org](http://www.yessera.org) for latest updates and to donate to our projects.

**PLEASE JOIN US! LET'S EDUCATE, ENABLE, AND SUSTAIN THE YOUTH OF ETHIOPIA!**

Negesse Gutema ([ngutema@comcast.net](mailto:ngutema@comcast.net))

## A message from the Executive Director:

Yessera has come a long way. A decade of continued labor has brought together hearts and minds, inside and outside Ethiopia—not only to keep hope alive among destitute youth, but also to fan among visionaries the flame of a transformed world. Much is in place thus—thanks to all those who've joined hands—to continue in the Yessera spirit of dreaming high and working hard.

- We want to deepen and widen Yessera's achievements. More volunteers, trainees, locations, and sectors of engagement and enterprising.
- We want Yessera to actively accommodate the personal visions of our volunteers so they can unleash their creativity in new approaches, technologies, diversified experimental subgroups.
- Time for Yessera to be a gathering place and a think-tank for the many differing energies aiming for the same good out there—forums, discussions, seminars and partnerships and collaborations with groups, organizations and innovative individuals.
- Time for Yessera to start on its mega collaborative venture that will house its dreams and actions. Yessera Training Center.

A decade ago, Yessera was a tiny candle flame in the hearts of very few. Now the illumined many corners, beckon us all—higher and higher. My sincere bow to the determined ones that have brought Yessera thus far. For a truly widening bright future in deed in the making, where else then, precious Yessera, but onward and upward!

Aklilu



Ebinat - Class of 2011 (10)



Debre Berhan - Class of 2008 (11)



Bekoji - Class of 2009 (10)



Assosa - Class of 2010 (10)

Metu – Class of 2012



Hawassa - Class of 2005 – 2006 (12)



Mr. Barrett Sundberg

## Taking Turns – YESSERA graduates have a major role to play *By Mr. Barrett Sundberg, YESSERA Board member.*

This year, Yessera reaches a milestone. When our newest graduation occurs this year, Yessera will have enabled more than 50 young people from poor families in Ethiopia to gain needed vocational training after high school. We have interviewed candidates from numerous regions and ethnic groups, paid for training in Addis Ababa at the OICE (Opportunities Industrialization Center - Ethiopia), provided careful supervision during training, and provided varied postgraduate support. Our graduates have formed cooperative businesses, become employers, and launched careers. Yet I feel this is only a start.

Going forward, we should focus on broadening the students' skills, and building a more general business ability. From now on, each group, existing and new, should be supported in developing a clearer idea of how to show responsible use of resources, so that donors (and, in the students' future, investors) can see that donations to Yessera will have concrete results – and the graduates can focus on plans where small investments bring large returns. Focusing more on computer skills instead of just the previous emphasis on construction could bring huge rewards, not only in jobs, but in communication. Our graduates should become part of a large network of talented people rising in life – not just by communicating with each other, but by sharing ideas with other rising people in similar situations throughout the world. There are many ideas and supportive people in the world; our graduates should gather numerous ideas, select the best ones, put them into practice, and be a crossroads for excellence in the developing world.

As the graduates improve their skills, from now on when they graduate, they should be ready to obtain capital for their ventures from sources outside Yessera. The program should shift to include developing ideas and submitting grants during training, so that grants for students' initial businesses are obtained by graduation. As a bridge to this stage, one or more Yessera volunteers could become an initial writer of grant proposals to websites that invite proposals throughout the world and link them with donors. The students can each be responsible for writing a proposal; the volunteer can paste or edit their proposals into the websites' formats. Later, the students can see what worked, and learn to do all the steps themselves.

One immediate grant idea would be an annual conference of all Yessera graduates. This could be planned for graduation week from OICE. The graduates can exchange successes, brainstorm on overcoming problems, build supportive relationships, and share information about opportunities. The conference would also provide a time- and cost-efficient location for experts and supporters from inside the country and outside, to provide further skills training in business, technical areas, and so on. Other rising groups' leaders could also be invited to attend.

**Yes, We can make a difference!!!**

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## To Donate to Our Cause...

1. Go to [www.yessera.org](http://www.yessera.org) and donate on line
2. Send funds to the following address  
**YESSERA.**  
P. O. Box 4242 Austin, TX 78765  
Tel / Fax. (512) 302-4222
3. Consider adding YESSERA to your company's charitable contribution list and matching grant list

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