



Agri Service Ethiopia

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*Fifty years of dedicated service to the rural
communities of Ethiopia*

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Establishment

ASE was officially established in Wolayta Soddo, fifty years ago, with certificate No. 53, Ref. 2277/5087, December 24, 1969, issued by the Ministry of Interior of the Imperial Government of Ethiopia. Later on it was re-registered as Ethiopian Resident Charity (No. 621/2009) by the Charities & Societies Agency of the Ministry of Justice, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It is recently re-registered for the third time as a local NGO by Agency for Civil Society Organization of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (file no. 0124). It is a non-governmental indigenous, not-for-profit development organization working in rural Ethiopia on integrated food security and Community capacity building programs. Starting its operation in Wolayita Sodo, ASE eventually expanded its projects to other areas of SNNP, Amahara, Oromiya, Benishangul Gumuz, Afar and Gambela regions with the objective of addressing the socioeconomic problems of the rural community through enabling them to critically approach their environment and encouraging being the leaders of their own development.



ASE's staff at early years who implemented the first women's project - Left to right: Camille, Kuribachew, Mamitu, Mulugonder and Yemisirach



Founders

As a non-sectarian and not for profit Ethiopian Development Association, ASE was established by three Frenchmen and two Ethiopians, namely: Messieurs Ravain Henri, as the first director, Enguehard François, as Secretary General and later on its director general, Fanta Wolde Michael, as assistant and later on headed the administration and finance department, Trequinaux Remy, as Treasurer, and Chekol Yacob, as member.



Founders and Farmer staff of ASE at Early Stage

ASE a center of excellence in organizing sustainable Community Based Institutions (CBIs) and Community Learning Forums (CoLF)

Multipurpose hall

ASE has a multipurpose hall at its Head Office which is well furnished and equipped for training. It accommodates 35 participants and is ideal for organizing workshops, meetings and conferences.

Resource center:

ASE has a resource center well stocked with books and other educational materials that focus on agriculture and related subjects. It is accessible to ASE staff and eligible guests.

Training & consultancy service

The revised Civil Society Proclamation allows NGOs to engage in related income generating activities including training and consultancy service delivery. ASE has the expertise and competencies to use this opportunity and re institute its earlier initiatives of providing high quality training and advisory services.

Partnering and Networking:

ASE has actively engaged in strategically important local, national and international networks, forums, research and higher learning institutions. It has also built strong networks with various NGOs and Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CCRDA).

Local government

- Local and grass-root counterpart government line offices and their staff
- Local and grass-root Kebele administrative officials
- Various local CSOs and theme-based forums
- Community at large
- Communities in the target Kebeles and Weredas

Number of beneficiaries in the past five years

Direct			Indirect		
Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
175,907	113,381	289,288	402,472	306,198	708,670

Management and technical capacities:

ASE management, technical and field staff accumulated practical knowledge, skills and capacities in designing, coordinating, and managing food security, agriculture, and environmental protection and other rural development programs and projects.

Centre of excellence in community learning and capacity building:

ASE has a leading-edge knowledge and competency in productive and sustainable community development approaches and practices. This makes

Vision

ASE aspires to see a society free from poverty and marginalization.

Mission

Enhance the capacities of communities to secure livelihood in the intervention areas of ASE

Values

People Centered, Respect, Participation, and Organizational Learning.

Goal

Contribute to the overall efforts of enhanced and sustained livelihood of the poor and marginalized communities.

Objectives

The objectives of ASE include:

- Improved household food security in ASE intervention areas,
- Increased income of the poor and marginalized community,
- Strengthen community resilience and adaptive capacity to climate variability,
- Improved social and economic equity of women and men,
- Enhanced organizational growth and sustainability.

Principles

ASE's major principles are grounded in the following ideas from the beginning in which all its interventions were guided for the last 50 years consistently:

- Rural population possesses knowledge and experience about its socio-economic conditions and therefore is taken as the driving force for its own development,
- Development is to be all rounded and providing technical knowledge and information to rural communities is a fundamental ingredient for its implementation and sustenance,
- As literacy progresses, more farmers can be reached through correspondence courses, learning centers and training of group leaders/animators,
- Participation of the community, especially women in development, forms the basis for ensuring effectiveness, continuity, self-reliance and emancipation,
- Cooperation and solidarity with grass-root communities, government and other national development agencies, as well as international organizations are to be maintained.

Governance & Management:

The highest governing organ of ASE is the General Assembly of 35 members. The next organ is the Management Board with five elected members from the General Assembly. Election of Members of the Board takes place every four years. The term limit is eight years.

Institutional Strategies Used

1. ASE embarked on a comprehensive organizational assessment process that led to realignment of the organizational capacity,
2. ASE gave due consideration to continuous staff development program based on the organizational expectation and individual employees need.
3. The information flow, cooperation and linkage between work units were clearly identified and integrated.

Program Focus Areas

- Food insecure Weredas with potentials for enterprising,
- Adjacent Weredas with potentials for clustering & economic integration,
- Poverty trapped rural towns and urban areas,
- Remote and less developed regions, and
- Sectors within ASE's competences for development advocacy, capacity building & institutionalization at National and Regional levels

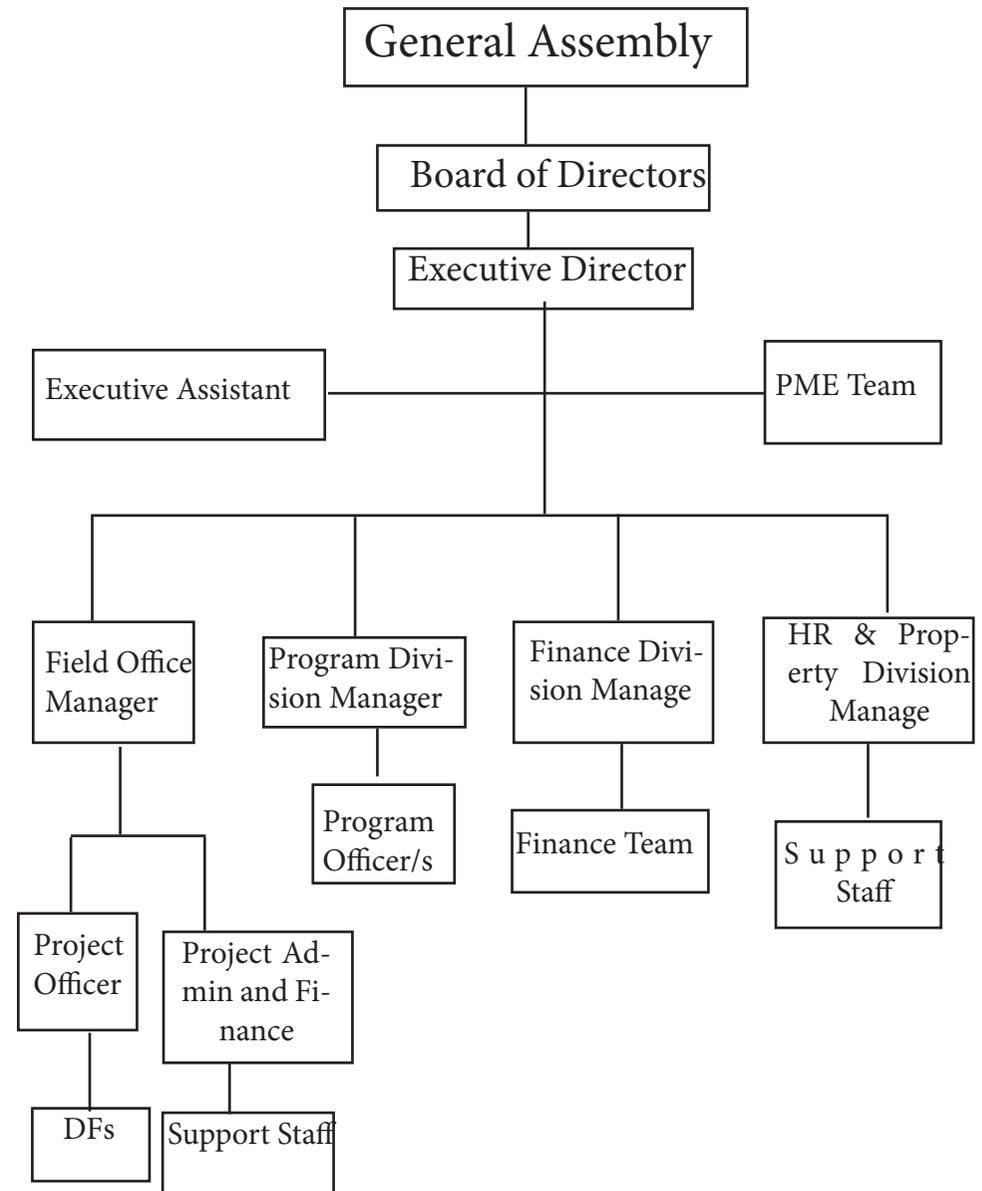
Targeted Groups & Beneficiaries

- Chronically food insecure people and households in rural areas,
- Smallholder farmers and productive urban poor with entrepreneur potentials and other value chain actors,
- Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups: landless & unemployed youth, women headed households and people living with HIV/AIDS

which has contributed significantly for its success. The partnerships were including government, non-government actors, private sector and the local community at the grassroots levels.

4. **Scaling up-Making a greater impact at the Regional and National level** - ASE established partnership and networks to scale up its action research approaches, results, extension system and community based development approaches that has contributed for maximizing the desired impacts.
5. **Formation and Strengthening of CBIs** – Community Based Initiatives were used as phase-in and phase-out strategy of projects and programs implemented by ASE. ASE provided technical capacity building support and that has contributed significantly in maintaining sustainability.
6. **Phase out strategy** - ASE used group formation approach such as community mobilization and discussion forums as an entry strategy; ultimately organized, strengthened, built the capacity of the community institutions/associations and enhanced them to take the initiatives over as an exit strategy.
7. **Community learning and capacity building** – It was continuously facilitated learning by organizing communities into groups through community mobilization and discussion forums, mass education, distance education, literacy and skill training which has significantly impacted the participation and performance of beneficiaries positively.

Organizational Structure of ASE



Offices

ASE has its own office premise of 3,469 meter square and planned to build a G+8 building which will serve as Head office and income generating resource.



ASEs Corrent Office



ASE's Head Office is based in Addis Ababa while program offices are based in every project Woreda in operation areas. ASE adopts and implements decentralized and participatory management approach. It also initiates and supports the formation and functioning of local Community Based institutions (CBIs), and Community forums to a shared vision

Phases of Development Interventions

In the past 50 years, ASE has undergone through seven development phases in response to the changing and growing development needs. These are:

- Correspondent/Distance Education Phase (1970-1976),
- Face to Face Training Phase (1977-1986),
- Action Oriented Training Phase (1986-1987),
- Integrated Rural Development Phase (1987-2000)
- Integrated Food Security Phase (2001-2006)
- Food Security Program Phase (2007-2009), and
- Community Empowerment Phase (2010-to date)

The intervention areas were mainly community capacity development, climate adaptation and mitigation, natural resources management, disaster risk reduction, recovery, resilience building, food security and value chain development and community empowerment. These projects were supported by donors such as DCA, CST, BfW, SLUF, ICCO, USAID, Oxfam Canada, Christian Aid, CARE, Action Aid, SNV, VERONIKA PERNTHANER, PCI and AGRA.

Program Implementation Strategies Applied by ASE

- 1. Community Mobilization and Organization** - ASE encouraged and committed to the community mobilization and organization approach to address the root causes of poverty. Throughout its endeavors, starting from the inception, ASE encouraged community members to form a group/collective association for better achievements and maintain sustainability.
- 2. Value chain development** - Pro poor small holder enterprise development through a value chain approach using the conventional and community led value chain tools was one of the strategies strictly applied all through by ASE.
- 3. Partnership and Networking** - ASE worked hard to strengthen and engage partnership both at national and international levels