

25TH

Silver Jubilee

Ethiopian Public Health Association
25th Anniversary
Feb 20 – 22, 2014 | AU, Addis Ababa

Editorial Note 1

Message From Minister of Health 2

Message From President of EPHA 3

Message from ED of EPHA 6

Congratulation Messages 7 ...

Editorial Note


This Silver Jubilee is a significant milestone in the history of EPHA. It signifies that EPHA is coming of age and is moving with enthusiasm to accept another big responsibility for its own development and to the interest of the collective fortune of its members, partners and the health sector development of the nation at large. It is gratifying to note that EPHA is marking its Silver Jubilee. We are certain marking this day will be another milestone to EPHA's continued effort.

We hope this Silver Jubilee would be a time to pause and reflect on all the good works done, the challenges faced and lessons learned and thereby revisit our strategies to bear a bigger success of the EPHA in its progress towards its vision.

Indeed, EPHA has achieved much during the course of the past 25 years, and therefore, has a lot to be proud of. The services EPHA has provided over a quarter of the century have brought a great deal of positive changes among the public health professionals in Ethiopia in terms increasing their participation in research works and capacity building programs. The milestones achieved by EPHA must be guarded with zeal. But most importantly, it must keep on pushing the frontier of possibilities further.

With no doubt, this is a historic moment to remember. It gives a sense of wonder and gratitude for the founding members of EPHA whose dedication, hope and struggles gathered this professional community under the same umbrella.

Therefore, it is of imperative that we all to recognize the contributions of those individuals who have made this dream come true and led EPHA into a preeminent professional Association of what it is today.



Congratulations to members and partners of
EPHA on the anniversary of EPHA's 25 vibrant,
productive and fruitful years!

Publication Unit



Congratulatory Message

H.E. Dr. Kesteberhan Admasu

Minister of Health

On behalf of the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), it is my pleasure to congratulate the Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) on the occasion of its 25th anniversary celebration.

In the past decade, with significant help from our health sector stakeholders, Ethiopia has made significant strides and achieved impressive results in making accessible health services to its large population, both rural and urban. For example, in the last five years (EFY 2000 to 2005), we have significantly increased the number of health centers and health posts, from 1,362 to 3,245 and 10,621 to 16,048, respectively.

Such readily access to health services has also resulted in the noteworthy improvements in maternal and child health indicators over the past ten years; the reduction by 50% of infant and under five mortality and a five-fold increase in the modern method contraceptive prevalence rate.

Moreover, recently, the United Nations also announced that Ethiopia succeeded in reducing its under-five mortality by two thirds between 1990 and 2012 - the required reduction for meeting the target of Millennium Development Goal 4 (MDG 4) on child survival, this is three years earlier than the promised target date.

At the heart of these successes are the 38,000 Health Extension Workers deployed to over 16,000 health posts, the Health Development Army (HDA), our international development partners and local partners, such as EPHA. The HDA is similar to the Health Extension Program in that it is women centered. It is regarded as the key vehicle that would help Ethiopia achieve its ambitious five year health sector development plan. The HDA is expected to promote participatory community engagement and adoption of healthy lifestyles, with particular emphasis on improving the uptake of critical maternal and newborn health services.

MOH would like to expresses its heart-felt appreciation for the contributions of EPHA and its members towards our health sector in general and the wellbeing of our citizenry in particular.

Congratulations on your 25th “Silver Anniversary” and we will be looking forward to a continued collaborative working relationship and celebrating with you, EPHA’s “50th “Golden Anniversary”.

Congratulations on a job well done!

Message from the President



It gives me utmost gratification and joy to be a part of this important land mark event where the Ethiopian Public Health Association is commemorating its 25th silver jubilee Anniversary. I would like to recognize that over the last 25 years every member of the EPHA has in one way or another made their contribution to the strengthening of EPHA and hence it is our collective effort and input that yielded the EPHA that we all are proud of. EPHA, is now one of the strongest

professional associations in the country having over 5,000 ever registered professional members spread throughout the country and abroad, and making their contributions to equitable health development.

For some of us, who were present when the Association was born, looking back through the years is like a dream come true, like witnessing your child grow, mature, and successfully lead an independent life. As the president of EPHA, I consider myself lucky, and I am very proud to be a part of the many outstanding achievements made by our Association in different areas including but not limited to project implementation on research, capacity building, professional training, community based engagements, policy advocacy, disease prevention, reproductive health, tobacco control and substance abuse, community awareness raising etc., depicting the contribution our EPHA made in the nation's health sector development. I am confident that EPHA would remain steadfast in upholding its commitments towards meeting its objectives of the attainment of the highest standard of health for all Ethiopians.

When EPHA launched its operation twenty five years ago, in 1989, it had very limited human resources and office facilities. Today, EPHA has transformed itself into one of the strongest and leading professional associations in the country withstanding the many challenges it encountered over the 25 years of its journey. The Association boasts of over 5,000 ever-registered members and some 3250 active members. Likewise, over 80 staff members are deployed within the secretariat and the EPHA regional chapters have reached 24. May I take this opportunity to inform everyone that EPHA has launched a new and interactive membership system using software uploaded on its website. It is my sincere hope that this website will witness dynamic interaction between and among members and also between members and the secretariat.

As EPHA commemorates its silver jubilee anniversary, we must all take pride in the steps taken to build our Association and expand its role. In this regard, the collaborative partnership it has established with institutions of higher learning, other sectoral ministries, bilateral and international organizations, NGOs, the private sector, research institutions and the media in the country and with a number of institutions and organizations outside the country has placed EPHA in prominent position to do more and benefit from synergy while also share lessons learned with others thereby increasing its credibility.

It is still fresh in our memory, where in 2012 EPHA made its historical mark when it successfully hosted the 13th World Congress on Public Health that culminated in the "Addis Ababa Declaration on Health Equity". This created an excellent opportunity for EPHA to demonstrate its scientific, organizational, networking and leadership capabilities to the world. Through this Congress Ethiopia has made its

contribution to national, regional and global public health and made its mark as an important player and partner in health. The success of this congress as we have witnessed was EPHA's ability to mobilize and engage all its members, sister associations, academicians, researchers, service providers, development partners, political leaders, administrators, sectoral ministries, NGOs, the private sector, and the community at large. All these players acted as one and moved ahead which resulted in a resounding success for EPHA that took our external partners by surprise!

In 2011 the EPHA also made significant contribution to public health development in Africa by playing a key role, along with the 33 Founding African National Public Health Associations and Networks, in the creation of the Federation of Public Health Association (AFPHA). This is an important platform for African public health and related professionals to voice their views towards equitable health for all Africans. In addition to being a founding member, I, as the Association President was also elected to serve as the Secretary General of the Federation. I am proud to share with you that at the foundation meeting, our Association's delegation made a defining contribution by lobbying to have the seat of the Federation in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia. The Federation now is located within the EPHA premise with the initial operational cost being covered by EPHA until the AFPHA is able to mobilize its resources and manage its business on its own. Globally, the EPHA, in addition to its being a member of the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) since 1993, also representing Africa, it is an active player in the Executive Committee and the Governing Council. And, our own Dr Mengistu Asnake, the immediate past president of the EPHA, was elected Vice President in April 2012, and will become the President of the WFPHA in May 2014.

While acknowledging the valuable contributions of all our members to where EPHA is now, I feel honored to thank those visionary founding members (some of them regrettably not with us today) who saw the wisdom in creating such an important Association. Along the years, our Association with support from its development partners in country and abroad, to whom I am very thankful, has made significant contribution in the sector. Having reached this far in our continued journey, I would like to respectfully invite the new generation, our young public health professionals in the country and abroad, to step-in with stride, vigor and commitment and building on what has been done in smooth and seamless transition take-over the EPHA to the next level for greater contribution and visibility to meaningfully and sustainably play its role (in partnership with others), at community, national, regional and global levels towards professional excellence and equitable health for all.

As we commemorate our silver jubilee anniversary, we must renew our commitment to work diligently towards its mission and vision so that EPHA will remain relevant through the years. We must take bold steps to address the many challenges among others, increasing public awareness to protect their health from communicable and non-communicable diseases, strengthen EPHA's capacity in training and research to strengthen the capability of its members and for evidence based advocacy for policy and strategy, and improvement in access to quality health services for all.

As public health increase in complexity there are more to be done. We need to make our EPHA gender sensitive and I urge our female public health professionals to become members and forthcoming to assume leadership role in the Association. Another area that needs more emphasis is to make EPHA financially

independent and ensure sustainability. Improvement in professional competence; emphasis on leadership in evidence based public health advocacy to influence policy is an area we need to excel. Vigorous involvement in professional standards and accreditation; stronger coordination and working partnership with sister professional Associations; public engagement and dialogue on national issues of public health concern; and critical thinking in strategic planning document development, implementation and evaluation; aspiring for excellence on performance standards and strict application of the organizational structure and guiding administrative manuals; creating enabling and supportive working environment to increase efficiency; increasing member friendliness of the association are some of the areas requiring urgent attention.

On another note, I would like to draw your attention to the resource mobilization effort initiated for the construction of the EPHA house. This house will serve as our head quarter, but more so it will also serve as “our national resource center for knowledge and excellence in public health”, including contributing to public health in the Region. The EPHA house will contribute to strengthening our role in research, and training and in our involvement in health sector advocacy, policy, strategy and practice.

I take this opportunity to call on every member of the EPHA to contribute to the construction of our EPHA house which I consider is our investment to contribute to bringing better services to the Ethiopian peoples. I believe every member and all communities will play a role in the realization of the construction of our Association’s home!

Finally, I would like to say that I have been blessed, lucky and honored to be a part of the EPHA’s 25 years of journey and make my modest contribution. I feel joy to be among those who founded the Association, and to have and to use the opportunities to serve EPHA in various capacities including:-as life member, as Editorial Board member of the Ethiopian Journal of Health Development, as member of the Advisory Council, Chairperson of the EPHA House Resource Mobilization Committee and Chairperson of the EPHA Executive Board. Furthermore I have been honored to represent EPHA and serve as the Secretary General of the African Federation of Public Health Association, and member of the Executive Committee and Governing Council of the World federation of Public Health Associations. Most of all I am humbled and it gives me utmost gratification to be elected twice to serve our Association as its President, first in 1991-1992 and secondly from 2010-2014. I consider myself most privileged. I am grateful to all members of the EPHA for having confidence in me; to members of the Executive Board for sharing my views; and many colleagues with whom I worked closely for the guidance and support provided; and to the Secretariat for creating the environment to contribute my share.

I would like to thank my family for their understanding and support that made it possible for me to give as much attention to the EPHA work.

Best wishes to all members and friends of EPHA in celebrating the Silver Jubilee Anniversary!

Long life and greater success to EPHA!

Tewabech Bishaw, President, EPHA



Message from the Executive Director

Building EPHA as an institution has been a long story. I consider myself as a living witness since I have passed and come with it from its inception. Understandably, the 25-year journey has many memories, good and bad. At the beginning, things were not so easy and smooth. Nevertheless, a group of few intrepid individuals, who had the courage and inspiration, started the journey.

Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) was established in 1989 soon after the Ethiopian Health Professional Union (EHPU) was dissolved. In transforming the late, two small offices (at the Sahle-Selassie Building in front of AA Stadium) and two secretary cashiers were transferred to EPHA and to the Ethiopian Pharmacy Association both of them to jointly administer and run the offices. About ETB 15000 was also transferred to EPHA's account for staff salary and office expenses. During this initial period, the main expenses were salaries of personnel for secretary -cashier and cleaner (amounting ETB 514), office rent (ETB 210) and petty cash (ETB 200) per month. As a matter of principle, during monthly meetings, EPHA officers (Executive committee Members) paid for tea and coffee from their own pockets. Because of this limited resources, we were forced to request stationary materials and duplicating papers from well established institutions. The Ministry of Health allowed us to print the Association's newsletter (Felege Tena) for free of charges at the Ras Imiru Health Learning Production Center. The EJHD was then published through donation obtained from the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with developing Countries (SAREC). In my view, the key for our success was good interpersonal relationships among colleagues at Ministry of Health (MoH), Addis Ababa University, Department of Community Health and the National Research Institute of Health (now EHNRI). The first scientific conference of EPHA was held in 1990 at the Ethiopian Red Cross Society. Altogether 212 public health professionals from AA and the regional health bureaus attended the conference.

At this juncture, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and admiration for those committed individuals who took part in the establishment of the Association and served in various capacities particularly from the first generation (Ato Elias G/Egziabher, Ato Hadis Teklemedhin, Ato Hailu Meche, Ato Tadele Tedla, Dr Haileselassie Tesfay, Dr Tesfaye Bulto, Dr Dereje Kebede, Ato Bekure Hawaz), 2nd generation (Dr Tewabech Bishaw, Dr Seyoum Tatichieff, Dr Hana Neka Tibebe, Ato Ali Beyene, Dr Hailu Yeneneh, Dr Wondemagnehu Alemu, Ato Assefa Cherenet, Ato Tsegaye Alemu, Dr Mesfin Kasaye) and, of course, the two secretary cashiers Aster and Fikerte. You would excuse me if I have missed some of the people that played a key role in EPHA's establishment particularly during its infancy.

Twenty-five years later, I am honored to see EPHA as one of the strongest professional Associations in the country. Its credibility and visibility have been growing from time to time. Presently, the Association enjoys a membership of more than 5,000 ever registered, chapter offices in the regions, more than 80 employees serving the Secretariat in a wide range of activities such as research, training, service, health promotion and the like.

I wish EPHA to continue as a meaningful association for the country and fulfilling its vision for the benefit of its members and the Ethiopian peoples at large.

Hailegnaw Eshete

Executive Director, EPHA



Message from the Dean of the School of Public Health of Addis Ababa University

Dear participants,

On behalf of the School of Public Health (SPH) at Addis Ababa University (AAU) and myself, it is my great honor and pleasure to welcome you all to the 25th Silver Jubilee of the Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) annual conference. The theme of the conference is: “Public health in Ethiopia: past, present and future” and I am confident that it addresses the core issues in the expansion and development of public health in Ethiopia. Public health as a profession is becoming more and more popular, and has recently received national and international attention. This annual conference brings together public health professionals, researchers, academics, educators, programmers, policy makers and trainees from all parts of Ethiopia and beyond to discuss, learn, and gain new expertise in the area of public health in the country.

The SPH/AAU works to contribute to the improvement of the health of the people of Ethiopia through excellence in teaching-learning, research and community services, and we cover all levels of courses ranging from undergraduate to specialized postgraduate training programmes. Since the past five years, the SPH/AAU graduates more than 80 postgraduate trainees each year. Since the inception of MPH programme, more than 800 trainees have graduated and many of them have joined EPHA as members. Many national and international partners have associated with SPH/AAU each year for a great experience of mutual learning from each other through research and training. I clearly recognize that the SPH/AAU would not have been what it is today without its long-term partnerships and collaborations with these national and international institutions.

The SPH/AAU jointly and closely works with EPHA and its members. The School collaborates with EPHA in the Ethiopian Field Epidemiology Training Programme, and short courses such as Leadership and Strategic Information, Monitoring and Evaluation in Population, Health and Nutrition Programs, and Health Research Methodology and Ethics. Through strong collaborative partnerships ranging from teaching-learning to research funding particularly for postgraduate students, we have made important achievements and hope the collaboration of the two institutions will be more strengthened.

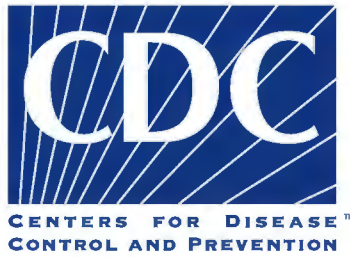
I am very much confident that this 25th Silver Jubilee / EPHA annual conference over three days will give us valuable experiences in public health. Finally, I wish you enjoyable and successful deliberations at this conference.

Wakgari Deressa (PhD)

Dean and Associate Professor

School of Public Health, Addis Ababa University

Congratulations Messages



On behalf of CDC Ethiopia, it is my pleasure to congratulate the Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) on the occasion of its 25th anniversary. The Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) is one of PEPFAR key implementing partners through CDC technical and financial support in Ethiopia since 2002. In this long partnership with CDC, EPHA has been playing a great role as a backbone for the FMOH and other government sectors through strengthening public health practices and service delivery of HIV/AIDS; enhancing evidence based decision making, building surveillance system, and disseminating and utilization of strategic information in the country.

I hope EPHA will continue its role to enhance the public health of Ethiopian people through promoting better health services and ensuring high professional standards and effective networking.

Jeffery Hanson

Country Director, CDC-Ethiopia



I would like to express my heartiest congratulations to the members, secretariat and board of EPHA on this historic celebration of 25 years of vibrant and productive contributions. Through the years, EPHA has grown from a humble start to become a national and international icon. The founders of EPHA deserve the utmost appreciation for their vision and leadership. Now that EPHA is in its youthful years, it must shoulder greater and definitive responsibilities in promoting the health and wellbeing of millions of people in Ethiopia and beyond. The David and Lucile Packard Foundation is proud of its long-term partnership with EPHA and extend its best wishes to the associations.

Yemeserach Belayneh

Country Advisor

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Ethiopia



Healthy lives. Measurable results.

The management and staff of Population Services International/Ethiopia are honored to congratulate EPHA on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary. The knowledge and service in public health that you have contributed during the past quarter century have undoubtedly improved the health of many people in Ethiopia. We value our partnership and our strong bonds of mutual commitment to the health priorities of the nation, as articulated by the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. We wish you all the best in your current and future endeavors.

Staci Leuscher,

Country Representative, PSI

Congratulations Messages



It is a great honour for me to congratulate EPHA in its silver jubilee anniversary! EHNRI is now officially renamed as Ethiopian Public Health Institute (EPHI). EPHI and EPHA share a lot of things in common which has been demonstrated in many public health areas where we have been working closely for many years. Just to mention a few, the long awaited study on Most at Risk Populations Survey (MARPS), and HIV Drug Resistance Surveys are some of the most salient ones. In addition, we have together helped the Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program to take a root in Ethiopia, not mentioning several Technical Working Groups where EPHA's contribution was exemplary.

EPHI's new mandate clearly indicates our role as a public health institute to undertake health researches based on national public health research agendas; conduct surveillances for the early identification and detection of public health risks and strengthen the national laboratory system. I believe EPHI and EPHA will join hands to work together more than ever in advancing the public health agenda in Ethiopia so that we could all achieve a healthy and prosperous nation as our vision.

Congratulations from all of us at the new EPHI and wishing you all the very best for many more decades to come and continued success!

Amha Kebede, PhD

Director General,

Ethiopian Public Health Institute



On behalf of the MSH implemented USAID Ethiopia Network for HIV/AIDS Treatment, Care and Support (ENHAT-CS) program, I extend my congratulations to the Ethiopian Public Health Association (EPHA) on the occasion of its 25th anniversary. Since its inception in 1991, EPHA has been on the forefront of Ethiopian non-governmental and non-profit professional societies for promoting better health services to the Ethiopian people and ensuring high professional standards through promoting professional competence, relevant policies, and effective networking. EPHA collaborates with both national and international partners and ENHAT-CS is proud to be one of its international partners. Since 2011, ENHAT-CS has collaborated with the EPHA on a variety of activities, including institutional capacity building, operations research, and health systems strengthening. What keeps us aligned is a shared commitment to improving the health and living status of the people of Ethiopia.

Bud Crandall

Chief of Party, Management Sciences for Health

Ethiopia Network for HIV/AIDS Treatment, Care and Support Program

Thank you for the long-term partnership with the Futures Group



The Ethiopian Public Health Association has been Futures Group's partner of choice since the commencement of the USAID supported Health Policy Project (HPP) in 2011 in Ethiopia. It has played a key role in contributing to the project's goal of strengthening health systems through developing the capacity of Family Planning/Reproductive Health (FP/RH) policymakers, leaders, and NGO consortia in strategic data use, stewardship and harmonization of planning, monitoring and evaluation of FP/RH programs at national and regional levels and across sectors.

The strong partnership and collaboration between Futures Group and EPHA has been demonstrated by the successful high quality trainings in using top-notch scientific models (Spectrum Suite), systems and methodologies to generate, analyse and use data and evidence for strategic planning, budgeting and monitoring of FP/RH policies and programs. Key partners and stakeholders including the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, the Central Statistical Authority, Addis Ababa University, the Population, Health and Environment Consortium have thus benefitted from EPHA's expertise and the FP/RH tools developed by the Future's Institute (partner of Futures Group) to effectively forecast population growth, the impacts on the health of women, children and youth and the country's economic development. In the Amhara region where early marriage remains one of the major causes of early childbearing and high maternal and child mortality, FP/RH experts and decision makers from major partners such as the Regional Health Bureau, the Regional BoFED and the Bureau of Women, Children and Youth Affairs and Gondar University have as well benefitted from the Spectrum Suite models trainings provided by EPHA to strengthen their capacity in generating sound data and evidence that support FP/RH policies and programs.

Following the two rounds of Training of Trainers provided by HPP and EPHA in 2012, 13 Master Trainers from the government's planning bodies such as the Policy and Planning Directorate at the Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH/PPD) and the Population Affairs Directorate at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED/PAD), have been using the knowledge, skills and application software on the various FP/RH models and continue to play an instrumental role in building the capacity of their fellow practitioners and policymakers in the increased use of evidence in decision-making.

The Master Trainers and the growing resource pool of experts who benefit from the subsequent Spectrum Suite trainings will continue to build the capacity of various government and non-government stakeholders in increasing the demand for and the use of sound and quality evidences for FP/RH decision making at the national and regional levels.

All these achievements could not have been possible without the cooperation of EPHA. In honor of the celebration of this important occasion, I want to express our gratitude on your continued support and hope that EPHA will not only continue to stand by our side in this great endeavor but also that our journey of success will continue to a farther distance through an increased, broader scale of partnership.

Today marks a breakthrough in the country's discernible progress in the arena of public resulting from EPHA's leading role. On behalf of Futures Group and as a member of the association, I am honored and pleased to express our wishes of a happy 25th year anniversary.

Dr. Kurabachew Abera

Country Director, Futures Group

Health Policy Project, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

EPHA should continue building itself as an entity of the public health organization and become the catalyst for linking a multiple of disciplines in the public health spectrum

***Davis Zakus
University of Alberta, Canada***

Grown up in the small city of Canada, David Zakus holds his first degree in Biochemistry. At the age of 21, he left his home and travelled to Europe, Africa and Asia. He returned to Canada and moved to Toronto where he studied his master of health with focus on nutrition.

He began his international career in Hondra, Central America for a nutrition program designed for malnourished children. David went back to the university and graduated in Master of Science and PHD in Health Service Management and Public Health.

He came to Ethiopia for the first time in 1991 and joined the Addis Ababa University as a visiting professor by McGill University which was based in Montreal. Indeed, he worked only for six weeks in Ethiopia as there was a change of government and instability. Despite his short service, he returned nine months later and stayed for almost three years working for the prestigious Addis Ababa University.

During his career in Ethiopia, he served as the university Professor in the then Department of Community Health Science. In due course, he was also appointed as the coordinator of the Masters Program coincidentally teaching Health Science Management and Research Method courses.

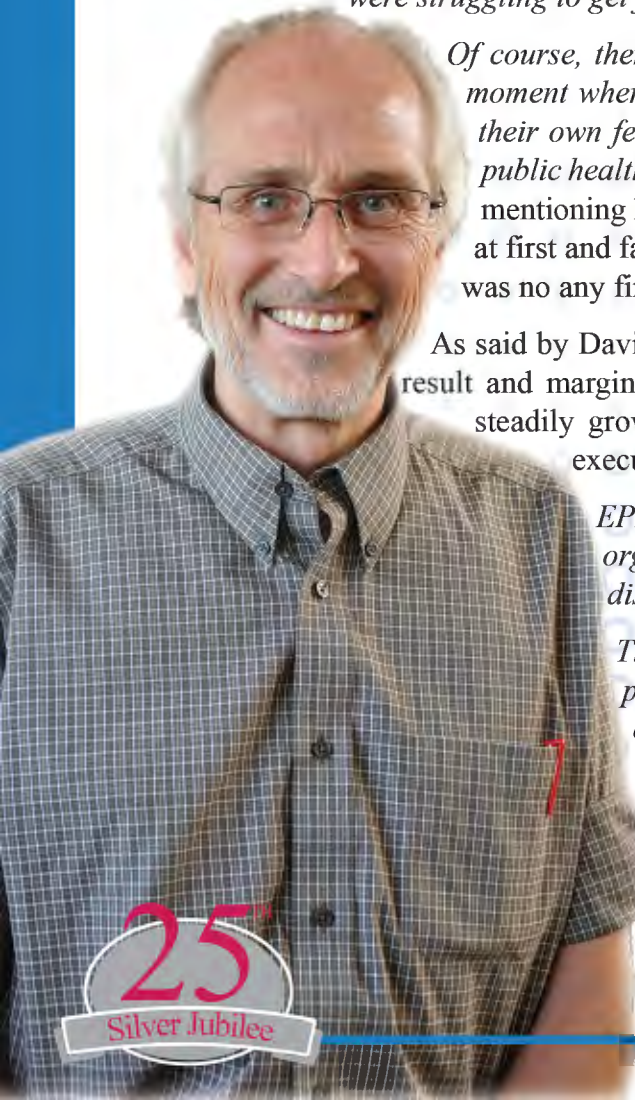
Among some of his accomplishments in Ethiopia, he mentioned his part to the establishment of a Master of Community Health Science Program, in AAU and the active role he made in the formation of a Professional Public Health Practitioners that has been transformed to EPHA in later stages. He was also one of the editorial team members of the first editions of the Ethiopian Journal of Health Development. *"We were struggling to get financial resources to publish every edition."*

"Of course, there was only little ties between DCH and EPHA as that was the moment where both of the entities were independently struggling to stand on their own feet. In fact, some of the people who graduated from the DCH as public health professionals were become prominent leaders in EPHA." Worth mentioning here that David Zakus was the one who linked EPHA with CPHA at first and facilitated to get seed fund for EPHA in difficult times where there was no any financial base to sustain the organization.

As said by David, EPHA is an excellent organization, full of energy, focused on result and marginalized and vulnerable people. The secret why EPHA has been steadily growing is nothing but attributable to the excellent and sustained executive leadership, and active and dedicated board members.

EPHA should continue building itself as an entity of the public health organization and become the catalyst for linking a multiple of disciplines in the public health spectrum.

The foremost important area EPHA should work for is to build public health in the multidisciplinary nature and thereby encourage various disciplines to work together in enhancing the public health situation of the country. The association should bring together various disciplines to deal with the current public health challenges and encourage the culture of conducting participatory research, David underscored as to what it has to be the future directions of EPHA.



Description of EPHA's 25 Years Journey



A story of 25 years is a long journey! And it is too difficult to write the whole story in this limited space. As expected, numerous ups and downs were there throughout the journey. I am pleased for being part of the journey from the initial up to the celebration of the 25 years silver jubilee. Indeed, I feel fortunate and proud.

As a matter of historical fact, EPHA first originated in the Gondar Public Health College. In 1960s and 1970s interested groups of health officers (HO) came together and formed the HO Association in Gondar. Gradually the information spread all over the country and the Association that started in Gondar became the National HO Association. In the first years of its operation, the association was restricted in producing and disseminating the Ethiopian Journal of Health Development. The publication of the Journal was interrupted for about two years. During the Dergue regime, the association was officially registered as a professional group and joined the Federation of Health Professionals Associations.

In early 1989, I was working in the Planning Dept., Ministry of Health as an expert and team leader for External Assistance. Our Dept. was serving as a meeting venue of health professionals who were coming from different quarters, from Addis and outside Addis to exchange ideas and professional experiences. The objective was to discuss about the establishment of a multidisciplinary association that would replace the former HO Association.

Based on this, a committee composed of Ato Hailu Meche, the late Haddis T/Medhin, Dr Tewabech Bishaw, the late YemaneTekeste, Ato Elias G/Egziabher, Ato Hailegnaw Eshete and others was established to prepare the EPHA constitution.

In August 1989, EPHA was officially established as a national association. After a year in August 1990, the first EPHA annual conference was convened with a total of 212 participants. The executive committee members during the first annual conference were Ato Elias G/Egziabher (chairperson), Haddis T/Medhin (secretary), and the rest were members including Ato Hailegnaw Eshete, Ato Hailu Meche, and the late Tadele Tedla.

In August 1991, EPHA held its 2nd annual conference at the office of central planning where I was elected to be EPHA board member. Since then, I worked for three years as a board member. In Oct. 1992, the executive committee members were Dr Tewabech Bishaw (chairperson), Haileselassie Tesfaye (Executive secretary), the late Dr Seyoum Taticheff, Ato Hailegnaw Eshete, Dr Dereje Kebede, Ato Ali Beyene and Dr Hanna NekaTibeb were members.

In 1994, I was formally employed to EPHA as a Project Coordinator. When I joined EPHA, the office in the Sahleselassie Building was almost empty except for one Amharic and one English old type writers, four old shelves, one telephone, two secretaries (Fikrte Asfaw and the late Aster Kebede,) one janitor (the late

Tsedale). For the first time, EPHA received its share of 15,000 birr from the Health Professionals Federation. But still there was no enough money to carry out its activities (annual conferences, transportation, communication, salary, membership promotion). Hence, I was going here and there looking for funding.

Later, agreement was signed by Ato Hailegnaw Eshete (EPHA) and Dr Dereje Kebede (AAU-DCH) to establish the Editorial Board of the Ethiopian Journal of Health Development. Both of them had prepared a project proposal and submitted to the Canadian Public Health Association (CPHA). In response, Ms Margaret Hilson paid a visit to EPHA at the end of 1993 and granted CAN\$10,000 for immediate needs. In the same year, EPHA/CPHA project was accepted to last for 2 years (1994-1996). The fund allocated was 80,000 – 90,000 CAN\$.

CPHA supported us for 9 years until the end of 2002. In the same year, EPHA/CDC project agreement was signed; that was a moment when we conducted our Annual Conference in Gondar. Today, I am really very delighted to be a witness the development of EPHA. I will also be happier, if I can see the 2 basement + 7story Building of EPHA.

At present, EPHA has several projects supported by CDC, David Lucile Packard and others. The EPHA staff has increased from 3 in 1992 to 80 in 2014. EPHA has 5-6 standing publications. Members of EPHA have grown from 212 in 1990 to 5050 in 2013, 24 representatives /chapters were established in various regions of the country. EPHA has received a plot of land (885m²) in the prime location of Addis Ababa. EPHA has good relationships with WFPHA, AFPHA, APHA. Dr Chanyalew Kassa was a board member of WFPHA and served for four years. At present, our life member, Dr Mengistu Asnake is elected as vice president and president elect of WFPHA, we are proud of him for his success. I thank the whole EPHA members, staff, board members, advisory committee members, partners, ex-Board members, the interested groups and individuals who have played a part and contributed to or continued development of better health care in Ethiopia.

Thank you very much

Ali Beyene

Director, Membership and Chapters Affairs, EPHA



Today, EPHA is nearing to possess its own office building, I recall in the early days, EPHA didn't even have an office accommodation hence, its executive officers used to convene in the office of the then head, planning and programming bureau of the ministry of health. Later, thanks to its far sighted and proactive past and incumbent executive officer/board members, the 25 years journey of EPHA is known for its sustained success stories. In my humble view, it is not an exaggeration if one says that the Association is considered as the celebrated association in Ethiopia, perhaps also in the African continent.

Ato Hailu Meche

Ethiopia Ratifies WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control EPHA's Advocacy Bears Fruit

The Ethiopian House of Peoples' Representatives ratified the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) on 21st of January 2014 for which the Ethiopian Public Health Association made a significant contribution. EPHA had seriously advocated over the issues by organizing a sensitization workshop and discussion forums with key governmental and non-governmental bodies including but not limited to parliamentarians, media personnel, and community leaders with the objective to decrease the demand and supply of tobacco and tobacco products in the country through the ratification and implementation of the convention by Ethiopia.

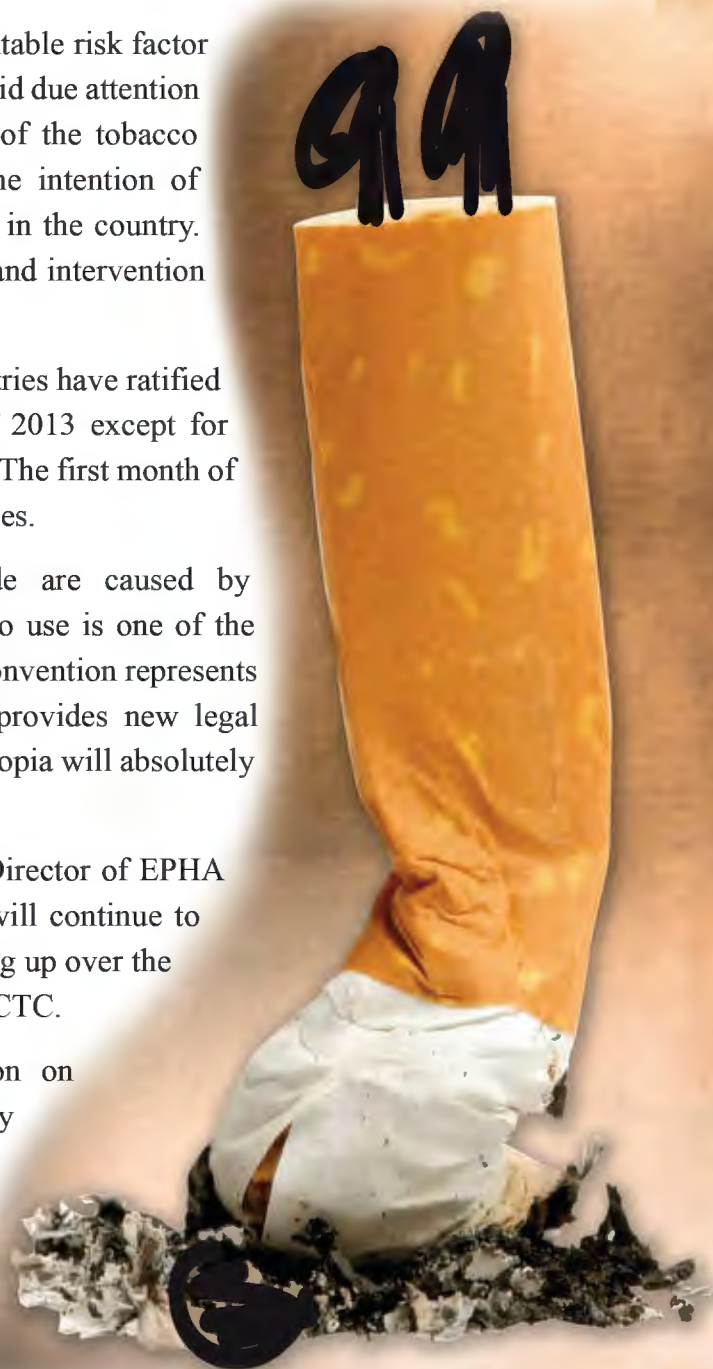
Provided that tobacco is one of the largest single preventable risk factor for almost all non-communicable diseases, EPHA had paid due attention to tobacco control in general and to the ratification of the tobacco control convention by Ethiopia in particular with the intention of reducing its burden causing on public health situation in the country. Tobacco control was one of the programmatic focuses and intervention areas where EPHA made sustained and integrated effort.

According to the WHO report, most of the African countries have ratified the FCTC (42 out of 46 countries) before the end of 2013 except for Ethiopia, Eritrea, Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The first month of 2014 yet celebrated Ethiopia to join the ratifying countries.

Studies verified that 63% of all deaths worldwide are caused by non-communicable diseases (NCDs), for which tobacco use is one of the greatest risk factors. In response to this challenge, the Convention represents a milestone for the promotion of public health and provides new legal dimensions for international health cooperation and Ethiopia will absolutely benefit from it.

As said by Ato Dereje Seyoum, Project Management Director of EPHA and Cancer Ambassador of Ethiopia, the Association will continue to collaborate with other committed organizations following up over the enforcement and speedy implementation of the WHO FCTC.

The ratification of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control was a result of determined advocacy effort of various health partners and civil society organizations in Ethiopia to face the non-communicable diseases epidemic in the country.





SYGE



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