

New Year Message (2016 EC)

Dear Esteemed EEA Members,

The New Year is a golden opportunity for individuals, families, communities, and society at large to evaluate (both formally and informally) their achievements of the previous year and set new goals. EEA, as a community of economists and allied disciplines, is no exception.

Last year (2015 EC) was particularly a busy year for EEA. It was at the forefront of researching the cause and effects of some of the economic challenges that Ethiopia has been facing. These include but not limited to *inflation* and *conflict*. EEA has a longstanding culture of disseminating its research findings through various publications and media outlets such as policy dialogue forums, publishing books, leaflets, policy briefs and media briefings.

EEA also held its flagship *international conference* from July 21-22, 2015 (Hamle 14-15, 2015) in which over 480 members attended and 32 papers were presented. The proceedings of this conference are under preparation.

The year also brought new partnership with the *International Centre for Evaluation and Development* (ICED) which held its 16th Evidence to Actin (E2A) conference at the EEA HQ. At the end of the conference, a *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) was signed between the two sister organizations to guide future collaborations. These are just a few highlights of the outgoing year. As I remarked at the international conference, our members, partners and the society at large expect more from EEA and it is our duty to deliver!

What does the New Year hold for EEA?

1. Over the past thirty years, EEA has been successful in its “membership drive” strategy and has a staggering over 5000 members. However, the *number of female economists* is *barely 20%*. Although this is a reflection of the overall education system, I believe we can do better and bring more female economists on board.
2. To this end, EEA has initiated a “*coaching and mentoring*” training to build the confidence of members, youth and female in particular, to come forward and engage in the affairs of the association. The plan is to institutionalize coaching and mentoring service which members can access as and when they need it.
3. In order to allow us deliver more efficiently and cost effectively, the Executive Committee (EC) has initiated an *internal review process* that is near completion and we wait for its findings and recommendations.
4. The *EEA book project* is progressing well. This project, although a side activity, has allowed us to engage with EEA founders and long standing members and more importantly proved that EEA can mobilize volunteers to accomplish an activity as demanding as writing book chapters – some authors are contributing 2 chapters.
5. Members and partners may remember very well that one of EEA’s flagship publications was the *Annual Report on the Ethiopian Economy*. In recent years, this has been changed to the state of the Ethiopia economy published every two years. Although there

were reasons for this shift, the publication was not found to serve the intended purpose. I am very pleased to announce that the Annual Report on the Ethiopian Economy has been reinstated.

6. EEA will continue to spearhead research in contemporary economic issues and challenges facing the country. The most recent phenomenon is Ethiopia's membership of the **BRICS** groups. Although EEA would have liked to see public debate on pros and cons of joining such a group, it is never too late! EEA has launched *perception survey* of its members to generate strategic ideas that could enhance Ethiopia's benefit from the membership.
7. **EEA School of Economics & Allied Sciences (ESE)** is much talked about over the last few years. Based on the preparations that I have witnessed, I honestly felt that EEA will commence teaching in 2016 EC. However, due to delays in getting the approval and new requirements added most recently (since our international conference), the school will not start in 2016 EC. I can assure you that EEA will continue its efforts to realize this goal! The good news is the association has launched a series of fee based short courses to which satisfactory responses have been received.

Finally, I thank the Executive Committee members, the Management and the entire staff for their tireless work over the previous year and expect not only hard work but smart work which is efficient and cost effective in the New Year! I also thank our partners who have supported all our activities and continue to believe in EEA that it can deliver. This is more than the money!

I wish you all our members and partners a **Happy and Peaceful New Year!** I very much hope that it is a **year you renew your commitment to your Association!**



Amdissa Teshome, PhD
President