



Saint Josemaria Escriva

Founder of Opus Dei

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Harambee – All Together for Africa – is a solidarity initiative that originated around the canonization of St Josemaria Escriva. Harambee promotes educational programmes in Africa and about Africa – developmental projects on the sub-Saharan region and awareness-building activities elsewhere designed to encourage a positive outlook on African culture.

Africa is a continent with enormous resources, and also serious problems. These problems constitute a pressing call to all Christians and to all men and women of good will. Saint Josemaría said: “A man or a society that does not react to suffering and injustice and makes no effort to alleviate them is still distant from the love of Christ's heart. Christians should be united in having one and the same desire to serve mankind. Otherwise their Christianity will not be the word and life of Jesus; it will be a fraud, a deception of God and man.”

In Kiswahili, [Harambee](#) means “all for one”. It is the cry of fishermen as they drag their nets ashore. This same word resounds when collective efforts are made for the common good, such as helping a family in need, or building a new school or church. Everyone does what they can, whether through their own personal efforts, donations in cash or kind, “all for one” – each and every one gives and, in turn, receives.

The Harambee project started with the organizing committee for the canonization of St Josemaria Escriva. As a concrete way of thanking God, following the new Saint's desires, Harambee 2002 asked everyone who came to Rome for the canonization, and anyone else who wanted to help, to contribute a modest sum of money to support educational programmes in Africa. The theme is always “training trainers”, generating a virtuous circle that will spread steadily outwards to every sector of society. Education opens the doors to work, independence, and material and spiritual progress. The real challenge for Africa is to enable Africans to design and implement their own progress, by developing their own potential.

In the years since 2002 Harambee has taken root and grown in new places. Since its inception it has supported thirty projects in 18 countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

The main work done by the NGO Harambee Africa International (HAI) is providing funding for educational projects in sub-Saharan Africa, normally set up and run by Africans.

In the second place HAI sponsors an International Communications prize for television reports and documentaries on Africa. It runs other formative and communication projects designed to spread a properly-balanced idea of Africa, so as to overcome the stereotypes. Examples of such projects are symposia or study days, Harambee Day celebrations, and study packs for schools.

In addition, HAI undertakes fund-raising through awareness-building events in state and private schools such as concerts or plays etc.), presentations to potential donors, working lunches with people in relevant professions, appeals to banks and businesses, and presenting cooperation projects to national and international organizations.

See further: www.harambee-africa.org