



VOICES OF AVCA

Cepheus Capital is an Ethiopian-based private equity firm that provides long-term growth capital to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The Fund is focused on the manufacturing, agro-processing, and services sectors - especially on fx-generating or import-substituting companies within these areas. A key mission of the firm is to generate both attractive returns and strong developmental impacts, with investments generally structured as significant minority stakes.

Beyond just providing capital, the firm offers strategic, financial, and operational support to its partners, and helps them adopt strong environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards. The firm has so far invested in six companies that operate in ceramic production, FMCG businesses, textile exports, beverage production, and the export of flowers, herbs and vegetables to European markets.

Berhane Demissie
Co-Founder and Managing Partner
Cepheus Growth Capital Partners



Tell us about Cepheus, highlighting key milestones and industry achievements.

Established in 2017, Cepheus Growth Capital Partners (Cepheus) is a private equity and growth capital firm based in Ethiopia, focused on investing in high-potential SMEs across sectors, such as manufacturing, agro-processing, and services.

The firm is backed by large DFIs (including BII, Norfund, EIB and IFC), institutional investors, family offices, and private investors, marking one of the largest SME-focused funds in Ethiopia. Cepheus takes significant minority stakes and provides hands-on operational and strategic support to help businesses scale sustainably. Its investments include Joytech, East African Lion Brands, Tabor Ceramics, Tinaw and JP Textile, where it has driven expansion, improved governance, and strengthened ESG practices. Through its work, Cepheus has become a leading player in Ethiopia's private equity landscape, promoting responsible growth, job creation, and industrial development.



Please share an overview of your key priorities, strategic objectives and corporate goals over the next 12 months

Key priorities over the next 12 months are to pursue successful portfolio company exits whilst continuing to engage with ongoing value-maximisation initiatives within these businesses.

Cepheus is developing its strategy to launch its second fund in 2026, whilst continuing to connect with existing and new potential investors. Cepheus' corporate goals are to deliver strong financial returns while driving sustainable economic growth and social impact, and integrating ESG principles.

Cepheus expects these achievements to support the mobilisation of capital and sustainable development across the continent.



What unique strengths, expertise, or strategic approach does your organisation bring to the industry?

Cepheus' team brings a unique combination of skills and experience in the Ethiopian market.

The team has a mix of global PE/fund management experience, extensive local knowledge/networks, strong research capabilities, and operations expertise.

In addition, the deliberate focus of our investments on export-generating and/or import-substituting companies provides a strategic approach that, in our view, helps mitigate against some common risks in the African PE landscape.



What are Cepheus' core values and how do they contribute to your success in the industry?

The core values and principles of Cepheus include integrity, accountability and long-term value creation.

Our principle to conduct our operations with transparency and ethical discipline has allowed us to build trust with investors, partners and portfolio companies. This trust helps provide the environment needed for successful strategic value creation activities, sustainable growth, and resilience we seek to implement.

Our team's ability to adapt to changing market conditions, coupled with continuous learning and a purpose-driven approach, lays the foundation for Cepheus to generate lasting financial returns while contributing to broader economic and social progress within the markets we operate.



What motivated Cepheus to join AVCA?

AVCA membership provides Cepheus with a strong network for knowledge exchange and experience-sharing among fellow GPs as well as the wider African PE ecosystem.

We strongly value AVCA's work in disseminating various data and research products, and periodic Africa-wide forums that allow for deep engagement with the PE community.



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