

MEETING SUMMARY

Date: August 16, 2016
9:00AM PST

Held via Skype. Notes prepared by Dacia Douhabi and Arnica Rowan.
Attendees: Arnica Rowan, Tawnya Pattie, Flora Meier, Menbere Muluneh, Dacia Douhaibi.

Meeting Minutes include formal meeting decisions, informal meeting discussion and tasks assigned to directors.

MEETING DECISIONS

MOTION	1ST	2ND	PASSED
<i>Arnica and other board members will not travel this fall to Ethiopia. Subsequent travel will be reconsidered in the spring.</i>	Arnica	Tawnya	Yes
<i>If the situation in Ethiopia does deteriorate, and we are not able to travel there, we will contract a local person to provide oversight for the board and work on program development with our partners on the ground.</i>	Arnica	Menbere	Yes
<i>Vulnerable Children Society is a non-political, non-religious organization and remains politically neutral in Canada as well as Ethiopia.</i>	Arnica	Flora	Yes

MEETING NOTES

A report was received from Hope for Children in Ethiopia August 10, 2016 and shared with board members via email.

The VCS Board convened an emergency meeting to discuss potential impacts of the current turmoil in Ethiopia on our operations. There were three main points of discussion:

1. Should the upcoming trip to Ethiopia still take place?
2. If the situation in Ethiopia results in Board members no longer traveling to Ethiopia regularly, what should we be doing to coordinate with partners/still have oversight?
3. If there is escalating conflict and instability, what does this mean for operations?

Travel to Ethiopia

Arnica has been in communication with partners and other NGOs operating in country to get a sense of how things are in Ethiopia right now, and what they may look like in the future months. Bisrat has confirmed that the Canadian Humanitarian offices are secure, and in the event of growing unrest in the capital (Addis), they should remain outside of danger because they are located far away from the city centre. Deb Northcott with Canadian Humanitarian is still planning an expedition in November. Although the Canadian government has not issued a travel ban or caution for Ethiopia, the board decided that Arnica should postpone making travel arrangements at this time and wait until the early fall to determine a course of action. There are no pressing our outstanding issues that need to be addressed face-to-face, and conversations regarding our contract renewal with CH can take place remotely, or occur when several members of the organization are in Penticton for a fundraiser.

Volunteers are being discouraged from traveling to Ethiopia on behalf of VCS.

Contingency Plans for Site Visits

If the situation in Ethiopia does deteriorate, and we are not able to travel there, it was decided that a local staff person could be employed to do oversight on the ground and also provide some insight into emergent needs

that we may be able to support. We have three people in mind that we have previously employed or worked with that could do the work.

Conflict and VCS Operations

The board determined that it is important to continue operations independently of the politics landscape in Ethiopia, and remain responsive and flexible, within reason, to any emergent and particular needs. As per our mandate and approach, our organization will also remain totally politically neutral about the situation – our priorities are to promote the safety of VCS staff and to continue operations.

TASKS TO DO

TASK	DATE	LEADER	HELPER
<i>To meet with Dick and Deb from Canadian Humanitarian</i>	Sept 2016	Arnica	