



VULNERABLE CHILDREN SOCIETY

Director Meeting Minutes

Meeting Title	:	Directors Meeting
Date	:	August 13, 2013
Time	:	2pm Pacific time, 5pm Toronto time, 6pm Atlantic, and 12am in Ethiopia
Place	:	Via Email
Chair Person	:	Arnica Rowan
Invitee List	:	Internal: Arnica Rowan, Dacia Douhaibi, Menbere Shiferaw, Nicole Bellefleur, Pam Carlson, Tawnya Pattie
		External:
In Attendance	:	Internal: Arnica Rowan, Dacia Douhaibi, Nicole Bellefleur, Pam Carlson, Tawnya Pattie
		External:
Absent	:	Internal: Menbere Shiferaw
		External:
Agenda	:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex Trade Workers Project • VCS Products for sale • Monthly Sponsorship Program future direction • Fiscal Report – Tawnya
Minutes Submitted By	:	Dacia Douhaibi
Minutes Submitted On	:	September 14, 2013
Next Meeting	:	Date: November 2013
		Time:
		Place: Skype
		Chair: Arnica Rowan

#	Discussion Items
1.	<p>Sex Trade Workers Project</p> <p>Arnica had circulated a proposal from Hope for Children in Ethiopia for a one-shot project for review before this meeting.</p> <p>Via email, the board expressed support and mostly would like to do the project. A few concerns were raised: that sponsors might see this project as too far away from our original mandate, the length of support and guarantees that we would have timely and accurate reporting. Discussion with Hope for Children indicates that support continues beyond the three month training - the training is 3 months and the support for housing, counseling, etc., is one year. Arnica will confirm. We did get a copy of a typical annual report and quarterly financial reports, and everything looks good in terms of reporting. Conditions have been laid out about sending pictures / personal stories.</p>

	<p>We anticipate this project moving forward in the very near future.</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>VSC Retail Items – Scarves and Coffee</p> <p>Several hundred dollars of goods for retail were purchased in Ethiopia and split between the east coast and west coast for sale. The revenue from these sales will be directed both towards projects and to offset our admin costs.</p> <p>A website shop is in progress.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Monthly Sponsorship Program</p> <p>Canadian Humanitarian (CH) was working with all levels of government to try to take over the sponsorship of the 60 kids in Ambo, Guder and Wonji. Arnica found out exactly 2 weeks ago that the regional (provincial) government was not going to let us take over sponsorship of the same kids, despite the support of the two local levels of government because they want to investigate Faya first. For the time being, those children are off limits to VCS. Despite much effort, meetings and proposals etc. to avoid this outcome, VCS is in a position of having to rebuilding our monthly sponsorship program.</p> <p>Canadian Humanitarian has two potential monthly sponsorship programs that they would love to work with us on. The board feels confident that this partnership would be beneficial both for VCS as well as the communities we want to support.</p> <p>Arnica presented the board with both proposals, as given below. The board was requested to discuss the options and to chose one of the sponsorship programs and get it up and running right away. CH is waiting to hear from us to proceed.</p> <p><i>Option #1 - Turgay</i></p> <p>This site would focus on 19 children in Turgay, which is just east of Shashemane, about three hours south of Addis Ababa. It takes about four hours to get there. They are in a rural area. The kids are all ages: K-high school. Currently, they are supported to the level of \$15 a month, which takes care of their uniforms and school supplies, but nothing else.</p> <p>CH would like to create (lease) an educational support centre there, with all the bells and whistles of tutoring, hot meal, shower, medical care, etc. If we take over this program, they lose the \$15 a month income and we would be able to assign each child to 3-4 of our sponsors, who would get an update that child. The centre and children would be under our sole responsibility for the next three years. CH would operate the centre, we would have strategic say, and fund it.</p> <p>The cost of this project is approximately \$20,000-25,000 per annum. It would take</p>

3-6 months to get it up and running, with reports and photos in the meanwhile.

Option #2 – Kality

When the Ethiopian government wants to build a highway or public building, they forcibly relocate residents (who often live in slums in such areas) to a new place. Kality is one of these places. No one works there, and all the people are displaced. Kality functions as a commuter slum and is right outside Addis Ababa.

CH is committed to 60 children in Kality, children that they want to see all the way to post secondary. Currently, CH has one sponsor assigned to each of these 60 kids, which covers their private school fees. CH wants to create a centre (lease) with all supports as mentioned above, and support the kids with food, medical care, tutoring, etc.

Discussing this project, Arnica's presented the following idea to CH: What if CH's 60 children came to the "Vulnerable Children Centre" each day? CH's sponsors would each be assigned to a child and send them to school, but sponsors would also create, furnish, and run an educational support centre, complete with urgently needed other supports. VCS sponsors would be centre sponsors, and get updates on several of the children each quarter. CH would manage the centre; VCS would have strong strategic direction over the centre, naming rights, and be responsible for funding approximately ½ of the centre.

The cost of this project would be approximately \$25,000 per annum. It would take only 1-3 months to get this program from the ground to fully up and running, as the kids are there and CH has already looked at a potential building.

Sponsor Feedback

Several board members had the opportunity to speak with sponsors that attended the Mehaber camp on these options. All six sponsors indicated that they were in favour of Option 2, for a variety of reasons.

1. Easy to get to and easy to visit
2. They thought this project would have a bigger impact
3. Displaced families are some of the most vulnerable in Ethiopia
4. They are comfortable not being assigned to one child, if they do get progress reports and can see that their money is making a real, visible difference
5. It can happen quickly, and they want to see us with a program again.
6. They think we should have levels of support for a centre.. and name a higher level of support and assign some additional benefit
7. They felt confident in the safeguarding of their money
8. They like the level of transparency and detail we share on our blog, etc, and they said that's what gives them confidence in us.

4.	<p>Finances</p> <p>We have 39,622.20 in our account as of the last statement.</p>
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#	Decisions
1.	The board agreed that we should move forward with the sex workers project.
2.	The board unanimously supported moving forward with the second project option – Kality. Kality seems to be the best fit for us - because: 1. we can make a bigger impact there; 2. having more involvement/control over the center will give us an opportunity to better establish our identity locally; 3. the center will be easily accessible to our donors/sponsors when they visit Ethiopia.

#	Carry-Over Items for Next Meeting
1.	Moving forward with the Kality project – discuss and monitor the progress
2.	Check in on the progress of the sex workers project