

ETHICA'S ETHIOPIA TRANSPARENCY SURVEY

SURVEY FOR U.S. ADOPTION SERVICE PROVIDERS PLACING CHILDREN FROM ETHIOPIA

Response from WACAP

Agency Name WACAP

Website <http://www.wacap.org>

GENERAL QUESTIONS

What efforts does your agency employ to ensure ethical adoptions in Ethiopia?

Considerable research and investigation prior to receiving our first license. This review covers but is not limited to how the system of adoption works, how does the government feel about intercountry adoption, can we work in the country without paying bribes, what are the rules and regulations to provide adoption services. Another aspect of the program set up which is very important to ensure ethical adoption practices is to research & investigate via various sources who we are considering to be our in country representative.

Meeting prior to hiring as well as training and discussions about our agency philosophy and ethics are all part of the hiring process.

Once the program is moving our US office staff travel during the year. Our representative will also come to our main office typically once a year or every other year. These trips are taken as opportunities to inspect operations, inspect projects, provide trainings, discuss challenging issues, meet with Embassy staff and Ethiopian government officials.

We repeat continually to our staff that we follow the rules of both the country we work in (Ethiopia in this case) and US government rules. If the rules of the government are in conflict then we discuss openly with officials how to solve the problem. Circumventing rules is not the solution.

The main office reviews all contracts that are signed with government offices or licensed agencies (We only work with government offices or licensed adoption NGOs).

Ongoing review of child documents, financial documents are standard protocol. Suspicious information is questioned.

Providing clients with substantial documentation and training covering topics such as transparent fees, child health preparation, challenges and benefits of birth relative contact, issues around inaccurate child information...

Encouraging conversation with clients pre- and post travel to discuss issues or concerns.

Having our representative be an active member of the "Adoption Network" in Ethiopia.

We work directly with the government offices or directly with the licensed adoption NGO without middle people. We maintain salary/hourly staff on the ground in Ethiopia, not contract workers.

How long has your agency operated in Ethiopia? In what year is your license up for renewal?

WACAP received our first NGO license in November of 2007. We just received our renewed license in December of 2009

Does your agency partner with any US agency that is not currently licensed to process adoptions in Ethiopia?

No

How many Ethiopian adoptions has your agency completed for the years 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009?

2008 - 28 adoptions, 2009 - 66 adoptions

How many waiting families, approximately, are currently in your program?

68 families

STAFF IN ETHIOPIA

What is the address of your agency's office(s) in Ethiopia?

Kirkos Subcity, Kebele 01/19, House No. 532
PO Box 434205
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia

What are the names of your in country representatives?

Ato Teklu Abera

Would you mind sharing pictures of your in country representatives?

Are your Ethiopian offices managed and run by your US office? If not, who runs them? Please explain.

Yes, We have an In-Country Director who is overseen by our VP of Adoptions in the U.S. We only have one office in Ethiopia. In addition to this one office we have a Transition Home where the children adopted by our clients reside until travel home.

What are the names of your agency's care centers/transitional homes? In what areas of the country are they located (zone or region) and what are the addresses (PO Box)?

WACAP House, In Addis Ababa
(we recently moved to this new home and I don't have the address immediately available)

Please give the number of people on staff at each center and whether they are full- or part-time, along with the average number of children cared for at any one time within the centers.

We typically have 7 - 20 children in our transition home at any one time.

Staffed by:

1 Gatekeeper
1 Cook
4 Nannies
1 House manager
1 Cleaner
1 Nanny supervisor
1/2 time Doctor

From what areas (zone or district) of the country do you receive children available for adoption? Do you have satellite offices there? If so, what are the addresses (PO Box)? Please give the name(s) of the person in charge of each satellite office and list the number of people on staff at each.

We have no Satellite offices.

We work with licensed adoption NGOs in Tigray, Amhara and Oromiya regions

Do you use freelance social workers or recruiters in Ethiopia?

No

Please list agency programs in any other African countries and briefly describe.

None

ORPHANAGES/FOSTER HOMES/NGOS

With which orphanages/foster homes/NGOs do you work? Does your agency have an exclusive contract with these orphanages/foster homes/NGOs? Does your agency donate money to assist these orphanages/foster homes/NGOs? Please note whether the orphanages/foster homes/NGOs are state run or private and in which city they are located, along with the director's name.

No exclusive contracts with any organizations. We provide donations for orphanage maintenance and several we have sponsorship programs for local community children as well as other projects.

BHA (Bete Hitsanate Association) - Private licensed NGO - Managed by Ato Menywab, they have projects and Centers throughout Amhara region with office in Addis.

FAYA - Private licensed NGO - (will follow up with director's name) Work in the Oromiya area

Operation Rescue - Private licensed NGO (Getachew ??(will follow up), Work in Tigray area around Mekele

Ajuuja - Private Licensed NGO (will follow up with name) located in Hawassa, Oromiya

The name of the orphanage directors are:

FAYA = Sister Meseret Demissie

Ajuuja = Eyasu Tagicho

Operation Rescue = Getachew Tesfay

Please list any other facilities/organizations from which you are referred children available for adoption and include the name of the facility's director.

None

What kind of oversight does your agency provide in orphanages/foster homes/NGOs to ensure that they are acting ethically and children are being kept safe and healthy?

Our In Country Director oversees. He visits homes periodically. Any questions that WACAP staff has with child documentation are given to our In Country director. Inconsistency about child age, birth family details and abandonment details are inquired about when inconsistent or questionable.

At what point in the adoption process are children moved from orphanages/foster homes/NGOs to your agency's care center?

After the court hearing

BACKGROUND OF CHILDREN FOR ADOPTION

How does your agency assess the adoptability of each child? Please describe what sort of investigation is done. Are adoptive families permitted to pursue their own investigation of their referred child's background if they so choose?

Review of the child's documents, discussion with orphanage staff, or local officials if any concern/questions about docs.

We have not had any family request to do their own investigation before placement. During our trip in 2/2010 we were told by our incountry representative and another agency that the Ethiopian government is not happy with families hiring private investigators. We have supported families doing this if they choose to after placement in the past. With this recent information about Ethiopian government now wanting private investigations we will likely not support a family to use private investigators before or after placement.

In what way, if any, does your agency assist prospective birth mothers with the relinquishment process? Are prospective birth mothers counseled as to options other than adoption? Do you accept children directly into your care from relinquishing mothers?

We have had no connection with relinquishing individuals (before or soon after relinquishment). We have not provided counseling to birth family members.

What percentage of children is available for adoption as a result of relinquishment vs. abandonment?

about 30 - 35 % are abandonment cases

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO PROSPECTIVE PARENTS

Do you provide medical information, social report, photos and video upon referral? What specific medical tests are run on children being referred (please specify type of test)?

We provide all info listed with the exception of video. On rare occasion we have had video of older children. We hope to have more video of older children in the future.

ICB Blood Test panel (including HIV, Hep B, Syphilis, CBC, Iron, + more)

Do you provide copies of your contract to prospective clients upon request and without charge?

Copies of significant contracts are included in our app packet. We are happy to share copies of more minor contracts upon request. We don't change contracts randomly.

Does your contract contain any gag clause? If so, why?

No

Do you provide clients with a copy of Ethiopia law pertaining to adoption and adoption agencies?

No, but we would if a family asked.

CONTACT WITH BIRTH FAMILY

Does your agency have any policy regarding contact between adoptive families and birth families either pre- or post-adoption?

We tell families that enter the Ethiopia program that they must be open to possible birth family contact (written) post-placement

We strive to facilitate meetings with birth relatives if possible.

When adoptive families travel to Ethiopia to complete the adoption process, are adoptive families and children able to meet birth family?

Yes

Is birth family contact information shared with adoptive parents?

No

Are adoptive families permitted to independently tape birth family meetings or have an independent translator available?

No client has requested this. We would allow if they requested.

FEES AND DONATIONS FOR ADOPTION

Does your agency directly accept tax deductible donations on behalf of a specific adoptive family? Does your agency partner with or is it affiliated with any organization that accepts tax deductible donations on behalf of a specific adoptive family?

No. People, not the adoptive family, can make tax deductible donations for adoption fees for waiting children. These donations can not be made to benefit a specific adoptive family. For this reason these donations are usually fundraised by our agency not received by relatives of adoptive clients

What fees charged to clients go directly to Ethiopia? How are these fees used in Ethiopia (care centers, orphanage support, etc)?

WACAP has a budget for in Ethiopia work. It is not based on the number of families or children that we serve (other than what we project during our budget planning period).

Are adoptive families charged periodic fees for maintenance for the child?

No, Only if the family chooses to delay travel by more than two months.

Do you advise prospective adoptive families about tipping individuals in Ethiopia such as nannies and lawyers? If so, what do you advise?

We advise clients that they do not need to tip WACAP staff. We advise if they choose to tip they must give the tip to our incountry Representative. he will distribute it to all staff involved.

We do not use attorneys

HUMANITARIAN AID

What humanitarian projects does your agency participate in? Are these programs run through a separate organization or managed directly by your agency?

WACAP's humanitarian aid projects are overseen by WACAP. The projects that we are involved with are:
Government child sponsorship programs in Tigray and Addis
Private licensed organaizations sponsorship programs with Beta Histanate
Multifaceted project to support both orphan and non orphan blind population in Tigray
Hospital support in Oromiya
High School Construction in Tigray

How much money does your agency dedicate to humanitarian aid in Ethiopia per year?

Approximately \$70,500 for humanitarian aid project like those mentioned above

How are your adoption and child service projects publicized in rural areas?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Is there any other information your agency wishes to share about its programs in Ethiopia?

Photo attachment didn't work. I will try and e-mail a few things.