

ETHICA'S ETHIOPIA TRANSPARENCY SURVEY

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

Response from Celebrate Children International

Agency Name Celebrate Children, Intl

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

GENERAL QUESTIONS

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

We have a training program that we go through with our employees regularly and with new orphans. This includes many topics including orphan definition, identifying children for adoption, etc. WE do this regularly

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

since Dec 2007. Our license, along with all agencies, was just renewed last month

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

We accept dossiers from one agency in Texas and one in SC but those families know that we are the placing agency

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

2008.. 30 2009... 93

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

STAFF IN ETHIOPIA

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

There is no hard addresses. Our office is in the Bole area near the large church.

What are the names of your in country representatives?

Dereje Yeshidinber is our main representative however we have numerous other employees

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.

I do not clearly understand your question. We have in country staff that run our office, including a secretary, a manager, an accountant, our in country rep and a number of social workers. They all do their part.

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)?

We do not have a name for our house. We call it the transition house. It is located in Alem Bank in Addis Ababa. There are no hard addresses there.

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.

agencies are not allowed to own orphanages. So, we partner with orphanages that are already in existence and the people who work there are THEIR employees, not our employees. They can include nannies, cooks, teachers, orphanage directors, social workers, etc. We are currently working with 6 different orphan centers but we may drop some and add some as time progresses

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 only have one office and it is in Bole in Addis Ababa. We work with orphanages in Debre Birhan, Debre Zeyt, the Beneshangul-Gumuz area, Hosanna, Holeta, Silte and Woliso

Do you use freelance social workers or recruiters in Ethiopia?

No

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

no other African programs

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.

We use an initial to indicate the orphan centers. We do not have exclusive agreements with any center. Each center is free to work with anyone they care to work with however we will not 'compete' for children and if an orphan center has other agencies where they can place their children, we prefer to work with a center where children have no other hope. We, like all agencies, provide humanitarian assistance apart from adoptions.. which can include child sponsorship, medical care, programs to assist women in that area, special projects, etc. We only have partnerships with private centers. We will give the initials of the orphan directors but not their full names

1. orphanage A. Run by E.A Town of Woliso
2. orphanage B. Run by J.G, Beneshangul-Gumuz region
3. orphanages C and D. church run orphanage run by M. S. towns of Holeta and Debre Birhan
4. orphanages E run by E.D town of Hosanna
5. orphanage H. town of Debre Zeyt.. we are not going to do any more adoptions here, just finish the few cases we have here
6. orphanage M in Addis Ababa run by D. H.

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

We have completed one adoption from a facility in Addis.. it is a public orphanage but that was a one and only case, and we do not plan to do more cases there.. it was just one case for one family

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?

We provide continual training to staff and our social workers regularly work with and visit the orphan centers to verify that documents are being done correctly and that the children are well cared for. Also the agency director visits all the orphan centers regularly.. at least several times a year. Also children are interviewed after they come home (older children) to learn about their treatment when living in the orphanage.

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

It varies greatly.

Most older children stay in their centers until the adoptions are completed because they need to continue to attend school there. We do a lot of older children adoptions. Younger children may stay in their orphanage or, if they have a medical need which needs treatment in Addis, they may be brought prior to the adoption being finalized.

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?

Our in country staff assess this. They understand what the US definition of an orphan is, and they verify that the status of the child meets US criteria but talking with the orphanage or any relatives of the child, if there is a question of some sort. The paperwork is processed through the local Kabele and Worida. We work in far away regions where many languages are spoken so our staff may not know all the local languages. The paper work in each region is different so our staff knows what is needed in the various regions where we work. We cannot imagine a family being able to travel 14 ! hours to a region with no electricity, water or hotels in order to do an investigation. We are happy to have families travel with us to meet surviving relatives but generally this would be done with the agency personal because our areas are remote and a family would not be able to go there alone

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?

This is done through the local orphan centers as our staff do not speak all the languages represented in the areas where we work. A large percentage of the birth mothers have died in child birth due to the remote area where we work and many times it is the father or a grandmother who comes with the child as they cannot nurse the child. The orphanage explains the nature of adoption and permanency of adoption however the children are not relinquished 'to be adopted' They are seeking long term care for a child they cannot feed, etc. No agency can accept children directly into our care from a relinquishing parent.. all children are relinquished to orphan centers... thus the children of Ethiopia fall under the category 'no known parents' on the I 600. If they had been relinquished to an attorney or an adoptive family, then they would meet the definition of 'one sole or surviving parent' but direct relinquishment to PAP's or agencies is not allowed in Ethiopia.

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

all children are 'abandoned' to an orphan center, not relinquished for the purpose of adoption and immigration. Probably about 50% of the children have a living parent and the other 50% are complete orphans, no living mother or father. This is especially true of the older children.

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 run)?

We provide what we can. We have children in very remote areas where there is only 1 MD for every 72,000 people so we cannot get thorough medicals.. we can only get HIV, HEP B and perhaps weight and length. With children closer to the city, we can get a more thorough and detailed medical report, with HEP A, B, C, TB, CBC, etc. We cannot say what we can provide for each and every case because it depends on where they are. Also each orphan center provides a different quality of referral information. Ideally we would like to provide a social report, a medical report and pictures. Sometimes video footage may be available but it is never guaranteed on each case.

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

Yes

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

CONTACT WITH BIRTH FAMILY

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

we do not prohibit this nor do we necessarily encourage it..we allow it when the family wants this and IF the birth family agrees and if the orphanage is able to arrange it.

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

see above

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 one has asked this.. I would have to think about it

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?

when an agency has a 501 3 c, it is prohibited to accept designated gifts (ie. for a specific family adoption). There are organizations that families may be in touch with who do this.. but this is not a partnership between us and that organization

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

the agency fee covers our expenses stateside. The in country fee is for everything in country.. staff, care of children, transportation (a big expense for us since we work in faw away areas), our transition house, etc.

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

not normally but we may begin to charge this if a family does not pick up a child when they are ready to be picked up

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

we do not have any lawyers in Ethiopia. Families are not allowed to give money to anyone expect taxi drivers, etc. They can bring donations of diapers, formula, clothing, etc for the orphanage where the child resided.....and gifts for nannies such as lotion, hair products, but never money

HUMANITARIAN AID

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

managed through orphanages and our staff. We have a number of projects going.. including child sponsorship, a project to enable women to learn a trade, etc.

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

I am not sure.. I would have to check with the bookkeeper.. but it is probably about \$80,000-\$100,000

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

We work with orphanages which were established before we even began to work with them so they are known in the area. No one is 'advertising' for children there.... the orphanages are known in those regions as that is part of what the Kabale and Worida do.. they know the people in their circles, knows what the needs are, and if a child becomes an orphan with no one to care for them, they can be referred to those facilities through their leaders or through the government

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