

**Notes from meeting with representative of America World Adoption
September 17, 2010**

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RELEASED IN FULL

Relinquishment	Inducements	Differences in Procedures Depending on Region	Bad practice
<p>90% of AWAs children are direct relinquishments.</p> <p>Said this is the same across the board (supports US Consulate stats of 87%).</p>	<p>Childcare institutions are requesting funding from adoption agencies on a per child basis (e.g., \$20,000 funding quid pro quo 10 child referrals).</p>	<p>In SNNPR, childcare institutions make arrangements with facilitators and local authorities so that upon birth of the child, everything is ready for direct referral to adoption agency (see diagram below).</p>	<p>Siblings not placed with same family, same agency or even same country (e.g., AWA and Italian case).</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;"> <p>REVIEW AUTHORITY: Barbara Nielsen, Senior Reviewer</p> </div>
<p>Majority of children are coming from specific regions.</p> <p>In AWA, there was a five day old baby from SNNPR. This shows that birth mother most likely had a pre-arrangement with facilitator prior to birth. Not allowing sufficient time for post-birth counseling of birth mother. Makes subsidiarity principle null.</p>	<p>Government officials at all levels are receiving inducements in terms of trips to US (with large per diems). This is being done through National Coalition on Adoption or Joint National Corruption Acts. Most recent visit was Siraj from CSA (responsible for accrediting all agencies).</p> <p>Childcare institution directors request direct deposit into accounts as "top-off" for salary. Gave example of one person in Hosanna requesting a direct monthly deposit of \$3000.</p>	<p>In Addis Ababa, referrals of children can only occur through AA BOWA. This is very limited and apparently BOWA staff not supportive of ICA. Although what is resulting from this are overcrowded childcare institutions where children are sick and/or dying; agencies moving children to SNNPR or other regions to process, false documentation</p>	<p>False documentation.</p> <p>Issues around informed consent.</p>

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<p>At AWA's transition home, there were approximately 40 babies under 18 months of age. This is one of two transition homes. Refer 20 children per month (240/year). This is typical for large agencies.</p>	<p>Birth families are receiving approximately 500 birr for relinquishment or a cow. Gave example of visiting a birth family and they specifically asked her for a cow.</p>		
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*It is important to note that these examples were about some of the top eight US agencies; 7 of which are Hague accredited in the US.

These eight agencies (refer to themselves as the G8) have formed a working group looking at PR within and outside of Ethiopia to increase positive opinion about ICA. Each agency was asked to contribute \$1000/month to pay for a lobbyist (former judge for ICA). Not clear how many have paid, but Gladney is leading the initiative.

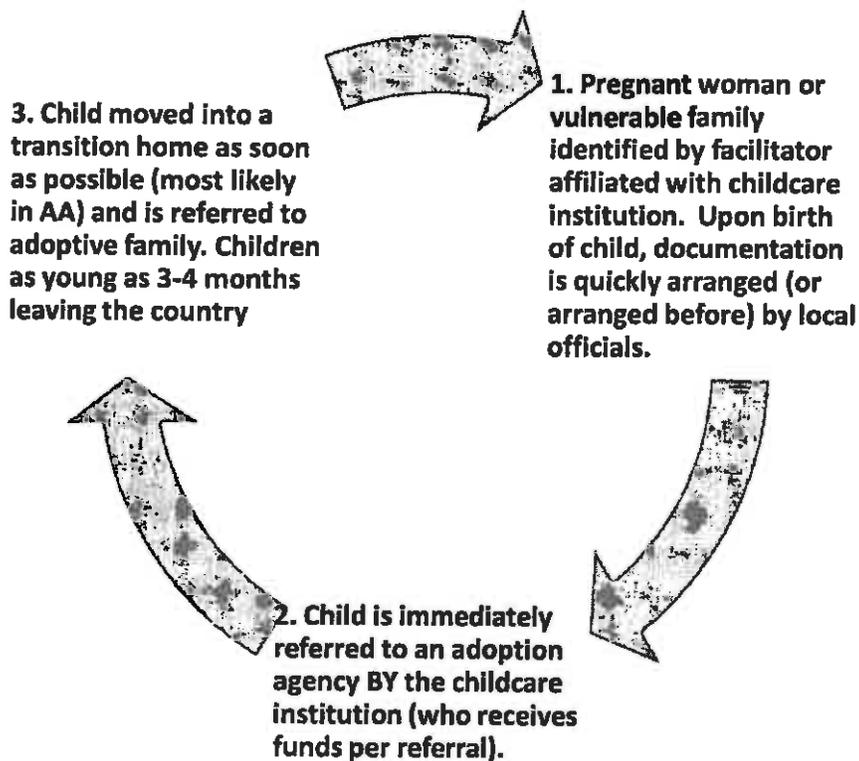
Specific concerns with Addis Ababa BOWA:

1. State-run institutions (Kechene and Kebebe Tsehay): Huge increase in number of children admitted in the past three months. It has increased from 90 children in one institution to 250 children; many of them street children and in need of different support.
2. Appears to not be supporting vulnerable families in crisis. Gave example of a birth mother wanting to relinquish children to childcare institution. BOWA said no and sent her away. Three days later, committed suicide and children placed in childcare institution. No referral mechanism for family support and direct social welfare services.
3. AA BOWA has forbidden direct relinquishments from childcare institutions since June 2009. AA BOWA (Zaid) is responsible for doing referrals but has voiced her opinion against ICA. Accused of only referring children from State institutions once they are very ill and close to death. Not in children's best interest. The effects of this attitude are outlined below:

Results of this:

- One specific child care institution takes ill babies as referrals and there is question as to whether she purposely does this to use dead babies' documents to process children with no documentation.
- Childcare institutions and adoption agencies are moving children from Addis and processing them in SNNPR.

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Discussion around domestic adoption:

The initial purpose of the meeting was to discuss AWAs domestic adoption campaign. In two month they have recruited (via paid radio programming on Radio Fana), eight Ethiopian families to adopt domestically. They are using a home-study format closely resembling what is used in the US. The staff MSW does a minimum of three visits to finalize the home study.

Ethiopian families are quite specific about type of child they wish to adopt and have specified that they want total orphans. This is most likely due to fear of biological relatives showing up at some point and reclaiming the child or requesting money. They also have requested children from 9 months-2 years.

The representative has visited both AA BOWA and State and non-governmental child care institutions requesting child referrals for placement in domestic adoption. In spite of more than 4,700 children being placed in ICA last year, the childcare institutions claim that they do not have any available children for domestic adoption.