

Accountable Now

Board of Trustees Virtual

Meeting

4 June 2021

Minutes

Present

Colm O'Cuanachain, Independent (Chair of the Board) *(Non-Member)*

Olivier Guth, Adra (Treasurer) *(Member)*

Amy Taylor, CIVICUS *(Member)*

Megan Colnar, Open Society Foundation *(Non-Member)*

Oscar Mushivochi, CBM *(Member)*

Mary Brezovich, SOS Children's Villages International *(Member, Incoming Trustee)*

Sekoetlane Phamodi, Accountability Lab *(Member, Incoming Trustee)*

In attendance from the Secretariat

Irina Neshikj, Interim Executive Director

Mary Sprague, Administrative Assistant *(Minute Taker)*

Hector Payo, Membership and Reporting Manager

Bethany Spendlove Keeley, Communications Coordinator

Apologies



Betty Ho, Taiwan Fund for Children and Families (*Member*)

Jo Thompson, Independant (*Non-Member*)

Dumiso Gatsha, Success Capital (*Non-Member*)

Welcome and agree on agenda (ACC 21/01 - ACC 21/03)

- The **last meeting minutes** were approved.
- Most action points from the last Board meeting have either been completed or are currently being processed.
- The Board Chair informed the Trustees that Rocio Moreno Lopez's parental leave will be extended, therefore Ilina Neshikj will remain the Interim Executive Director until January 17, 2022.

Report 2020 (Adoption) (ACC 21/04 - ACC 21/07)

The Executive Director and the Board Treasurer provided an overview of the **2020 Annual Report** and the **Final Accounts for 2020**. The Trustees discussed the draft **Audit Report**, which was the first full year of activities in Germany, including the auditor's recommendations.

- The **Treasurer reported that 2020 closed with a surplus**, therefore the **reserves are in good shape**. The Trustees have **adopted the 2020 Financial Statements**.
- For 2021, most of the income will be received as expected. Despite budget cuts resulting from the COVID pandemic, all members have paid or are expected to pay the **2021 Membership Fees**. Expenses for 2021 are slightly below budget at this point in the year, therefore it is expected that 2021 will close with a surplus.
- The Treasurer reported following the completion of bookkeeping until June 2021, we will **no longer be working with Schlarmann von Geyso** for bookkeeping services. **The Secretariat will prepare a call for new bookkeeping service providers.**
- The Treasurer and Executive Director updated the Board on the UK dissolution



process. HMRC raised an objection to the dissolution, therefore **the Secretariat is working with the UK Audit firm and tax advisers to fulfil the requirements of the HMRC** and resume the dissolution process.

- For 2020, the **tax advisor has requested that HMRC waive the requirement** to submit a return as the UK entity was dormant in this period.
- For 2021, the **Secretariat will have to file** for the period 01.01.2021 to present (once 2020 is cleared).
- The **Trustees have requested that the Risk Register is presented** with time for discussion in an upcoming Board meeting, in particular in regards to safeguarding crises.

Membership Discussion (ACC 21/08 - ACC 21/09a)

The Executive Director presented the Membership Scenarios Report and gave an overview of the four scenarios. Next, members of the Added Value Committee shared their insights on the report.

- Questions were raised whether the changes to the AoA recommended in the report would be a straightforward process. The Executive Director informed the Board that this is a simple process.
- The Trustees raised the issue of implementation of the scenarios, as this could be challenging. The underlined the need to prioritize actions in further developing the scenarios to be presented at the AGM. Some of the possible actions involved a tiered membership structure and/or opening membership to allow national-level organisations.
 - The Trustees recommended that the **Secretariat further develop and present the demand-side** (what Accountable Now members are needing/ would like to see).
- The **Chair recommended that the Secretariat present the proposed changes to the AoA at the AGM and get member endorsement for the blended model membership scenario** in order to move forward and develop this scenario into an action plan. The Trustees have agreed to **move forward with the blended model**.



Accountable Now's Membership and Reporting Manager presented the World Scouts Organization application.

Communication Strategy (ACC 21/10)

Accountable Now's Communications Coordinator shared the **2021 Communications Strategy**. One area that will **need to be developed with input from the Board** is the **vision and mission statement** that will help guide the communications strategy.

- The Trustees would like to see the Secretariat **continue to present the data on social media** and also **to move forward with reaching out to members to improve the visibility of Accountable Now membership on member's websites.**

Membership and Reporting (ACC 21/11)

Accountable Now's Membership and Reporting Manager shared updates on membership and reporting.

- The Trustees had a discussion on **member's safeguarding crises**. Accountable Now's Secretariat has been working with some members to provide support during these situations, however there is need for caution to protect Accountable Now's reputation. The **Trustees have recommended that all work to support member's in crises must be documented.**
- The Membership and Reporting Manager shared that reports from CBM, ChildFund International and ChildFund Australia, and Accountability Lab have recently been reviewed.
 - To date, almost all outstanding reports have been submitted. World YWCA will submit their report in June. ActionAid has submitted a draft version. Transparency International has submitted a revised report.
 - The Secretariat reported that following conversations to clarify the scope of the reports, the IRP has revised the feedback letter to Terre des Hommes.
- Members of the IRP shared updates on their work. One area discussed was that the **IRP would like to see future member reports be more specific in addressing the**



questions of the framework, rather than giving general statements on accountability. Another suggestion is that the IRP would like to see **more senior-level management engaged in the reporting process**. The Secretariat and the IRP are **pleased that more CEO's have been recently engaged in the feedback calls**. The IRP is **pleased to see more local-level data** shared in some recent reports.

AGM Updates (ACC 21/12 & ACC 21/13)

The ED presented the agenda for the upcoming (June 9/10, 2021) AGM and gave updates on the sessions. The Secretariat encouraged Trustees and members of the IRP to join for the open AGM sessions.

Any Other Business

The Chair informed Trustees that a performance review for the Interim Executive Director will be held in the coming weeks during which priorities for the next 6 months will be discussed.

The next meeting will take place virtually in Fall 2021.

END