



United Resilience Coalition

Meeting Minutes

Date: Tuesday, August 26, 2025

Time: 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM CST

Location: Google Meet

Attendees

- **Dr. Tolulope Ola** – Founder, Restoration for All (REFA)
- **Tomi Ola** – Senior Program Manager, Restoration for All (REFA)
- **Victor Obisakin** – Coalition Coordinator
- **Dr. Richard Oni** – Chair, Progressive Individual Resources
- **Elder Joshua Isaboke** – Vice Chair, Mortgage Banker & Certified Financial Planner
- **Siji Oluwaniyi** – Program Coordinator, Restoration for All
- **Joshua Negussie** – Founder, Journey Back (educator, youth empowerment)
- **Henry Momanyi** – Community Leader
- **Roselidah Nyaboke** – President, Monigetting Organization
- **Harriet Kerubo** – Community Outreach Liaison, REFA / Director of Organizational Development, Core Minnesota
- **Heritage Aluko** – Member; candidate for Secretary position
- **Helen Ghebre** – Staff, Department of Human Services; attending as community member

Absent: None formally noted.

1. Welcome & Opening

- **Call to Order:** Meeting was formally opened.
- **Prayer:** Led by Elder Joshua Isaboke, invoking wisdom, guidance, and unity.
- **Introductions:** Attendees shared names, roles, and affiliations, highlighting diverse expertise in community development, mental health, financial services, policy, and youth empowerment.

2. Coalition Foundations

- **Bylaws:** Reviewed and ratified.
- **Mission, Vision, and Purpose:**
 - *Purpose:* Create a supportive and inclusive coalition to empower refugees and immigrants in their mental health journey by fostering resilience, preventing suicide, and promoting overall well-being.
 - *Mission:* Unite community members, organizations, and stakeholders to provide culturally responsive resources, raise awareness, and create a strong support network.



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- *Vision:* A united and compassionate community where refugees and immigrants are resilient, supported, and free from stigma in mental health and suicide prevention.
- **Decision:** All statements were adopted unanimously.

3. Leadership Messages

- **Founder's Remarks (Dr. Tolulope Ola):**
 - Coalition is *not owned by REFA* but a community-wide initiative.
 - Envisioned the coalition standing independently in the future.
 - Encouraged collective decision-making and unity.
- **Chair's Remarks (Dr. Richard Oni):**
 - Coalition is “concerned citizens with a common goal.”
 - Urged members to treat the coalition as bigger than any individual.
- **Vice Chair's Remarks (Elder Joshua Isaboke):**
 - Stressed teamwork: *Together Everyone Achieves More.*
 - Advocated for collaboration over competition, listening to one another, and fostering resilience.
 - Inspired members with the metaphor of the lion’s courage and strength.
- **Additional Reflections:**
 - *Roselidah Nyaboke:* Highlighted the importance of speaking up for the community.
 - *Harriet Kerubo:* Called for cross-sector collaboration (policy, education, and economic development) and cultural pride.

4. Officer Selection & Roles

- **Confirmed:**
 - *Chair:* Dr. Richard Oni
 - *Vice Chair:* Elder Joshua Isaboke
 - *Coordinator:* Victor Obisakin
- **Vacant:**
 - *Secretary:* Two candidates (Heritage Aluko and Harriet Kerubo). Election scheduled for the September 23 meeting.
 - *Treasurer:* No volunteers yet. Recruitment ongoing.
- **Roles Overview:**
 - *Chair:* Preside over meetings, lead planning, and oversee committees.
 - *Vice Chair:* Support Chair, co-lead initiatives, assume duties in the absence of the Chair.
 - *Secretary:* Maintain agendas, minutes, and records.
 - *Treasurer:* Manage finances, provide reports, support fundraising.
 - *Coordinator:* Handle logistics, communications, and serve as interim support for vacant roles.



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5. Coalition Operations

- **Communication Plan:** Options discussed (Email, WhatsApp, Slack, Google Chat). Members to select preferred platform at next meeting.
- **Meeting Frequency:** Monthly meetings confirmed.
- **Next Meeting:** **September 23, 2025 – 1:00 PM CST.**
- **Shared Resources:** Google Drive folder created for bylaws, agendas, and meeting minutes.

6. Planning Ahead

- **Committees/Workgroups:** Proposed – Advocacy, Events, Research, Fundraising, and Policy. Membership and leadership to be confirmed.
- **Community Engagement:** Strategies to involve youth, elders, and culturally diverse voices.
- **Accountability:** Coalition agreed on the need for systems to track progress and report back consistently.

7. Open Forum

- **Henry Momanyi** cautioned that many coalitions collapse due to a lack of respect for leadership and accountability. Urged members to respect each other's space, leadership, and responsibilities.
- Members echoed the need for equity, collaboration, and cultural pride.

8. Closing

- **Final Reflections:**
 - Members expressed gratitude and optimism for the coalition's vision.
 - *Helen Ghebre* joined late, introducing herself as a DHS staff member and community member, committed to supporting coalition goals.
- **Closing Prayer:** Led by Roselidah Nyaboke, lifting up the coalition's leaders, members, and community.
- **Adjournment:** Meeting ended at 2:00 PM CST.

Action Items

1. Conduct the Secretary selection at the September 23 meeting.
2. Recruit candidate(s) for the Treasurer position.
3. Finalize communication platform (Slack, WhatsApp, or Google Chat).
4. Establish membership and leadership for proposed committees.
5. Develop a progress reporting and accountability system.
6. Transition meeting platform to Zoom for accessibility.