

DESTINATION MEKONG – SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & TOURISM RECOVERY WITH CHILD PROTECTION IN FOCUS

LAUNCH of THE CODE VOLUNTOURISM POLICY

24 August
3.00 – 4.30 pm (Bangkok time)

Registration

Agenda

As part of sustainable and responsible travel and tourism development, the industry must ensure that only responsible and safe forms of voluntourism are undertaken. Companies should exclude visits to orphanages from tourism packages as it drives institutionalisation which causes harm to children.

Without regulation and care, some forms of voluntourism allow un-vetted access to children that puts them at risk of being trafficked and sexually exploited. To address this issue, ECPAT International and The Code in cooperation with the [Destination Mekong Child Protection Experts Group](#) composed of ASSET-H&C powered by Institut européen de coopération et de développement (IECD), Sampan Travel and Myanmar Responsible Tourism Institute (MRT) through an Advisor, as well as other key partners developed a voluntourism policy for companies, organisations and entities to protect children.

[The Code](#) (short for The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism) is a multi-stakeholder initiative with the mission to provide awareness, tools and support to the travel and tourism industry to prevent the sexual exploitation of children. The Code's [Voluntourism Policy](#) can be used by its members and other organisations and entities, to protect children.

Speakers	Topic of the discussion
Jens Thraenhart , Vice Chair, UNWTO Affiliate Members, CEO of Mekong Tourism, Strategy Consultant & Entrepreneur	Opening remarks
Gabriela Kühn , Head of Programme, ECPAT International, Chair of Expert Group on Child Protection, Destination Mekong	Setting the scene: Sustainable travel & tourism recovery with child protection in focus – The Code Voluntourism Policy
Seila Samleang , Executive Director, Action Pour Les Enfants (APLE), ECPAT member in Cambodia	The need to regulate voluntourism with and for children and end orphanage tourism
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sophie Hartman, Regional Platform Coordinator, ASSET-H&C, Vice-Chair of Expert Group on Child Protection, Destination Mekong• Bertie Lawson, CEO - Sampan Travel, Member of Expert Group on Child	Panel discussion: The issue with voluntourism products with children and visits to orphanages in tourism programs Moderator: Damien Bronsan , Manager of The Code

Protection, Destination Mekong, Member of The Code <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nicole Häusler, Advisor to Myanmar Responsible Tourism Institute, Member of Expert Group on Child Protection, Destination Mekong	
Q&A session	Participants: private sector companies, CSOs, representatives of governments and academia
Closing	The way forward