



Promoting the Code of Conduct to Protect Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel & Tourism

The Training Experiences of DRV, GTZ and ECPAT

The DRV signed the Code of Conduct ('The Code') in 2001, and in doing so made a commitment to meet one of the criteria of The Code by training personnel in both Germany and in travel destinations.

Working together with ECPAT and GTZ maximises effectiveness and systematically promotes the implementation of The Code. As part of the partnership, workshops in two important destinations for the German Tourism Industry were carried out – The Dominican Republic (in May 2006) and Thailand (in June 2008). Sharing the lessons learned from these trainings will assist other stakeholders such as potential and existing code signatories and implementing partners in planning their own interventions to promote and implement The Code.

Objectives of the Workshops

The workshops carried out in The Dominican Republic and Thailand were specifically designed as 'take-off' trainings – the aim was to raise awareness of The Code and to provide the basis for future institutionalised training and other activities for DRV members.

Trainings in destinations are one of the most important measures to implement The Code as they strengthen cooperation between sending and receiving countries, provide a platform to exchange experiences/ lessons learned and create a sense of local ownership and commitment to protecting children.

The cooperation with the local partners of The Code signatories is important to raise awareness for the protection of children and to enhance local networks among different stakeholders.

A sensitive issue

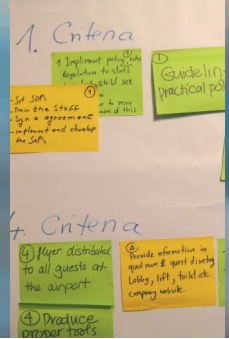
The protection of children is a core issue of the German tourism industry. Nevertheless, representatives of tourism and travel organisations in destination countries can be concerned about raising the sensitive issue of so called 'child sex tourism' with tourists. They fear damaging the good impression of the resorts, as they aim to organise trouble free holidays for their guests. However, talking about and taking action against the commercial sexual exploitation of children in tourism can be in the best interest of the tourism industry by promoting responsible and ethical tourism. On behalf of the activities of the DRV it demonstrates that German tour operators are committed to the prevention of sexual exploitation of children and make every effort to work with local partners who take a similar stand.

Essential Training Elements

Consider carefully the length of training – too short, and there is insufficient time to generate real interest and commitment to The Code. Too long, and there is a chance that participants will not be able to attend the entire course. Up to two days is about the right length as this gives sufficient opportunity for meaningful exchanges between participants, but at the same time does not seem to be onerous for organisations in terms of staff release.

Ideally take-off workshops should be facilitated by two co-trainers. One trainer should have a sound knowledge of The Code of Conduct and/ or commercial sexual exploitation of children in tourism, while the other should have extensive experience of the country where the training is taking place.

Invite participants from a variety of travel related organisations and from different positions within the companies, in order to differing ideas and perspectives.



Provide information on the commercial sexual exploitation of children, and related terminology, together with an appreciation of extra-territorial and local law and local organisations that can be approached as partners in country for help and assistance (such as police and local NGOs).

Use different training methodologies, from participatory exercises through to small groups and pairs work. Case studies introduce an element of reality. Working in this way increases participation and also helps participants think about the kind of methods they themselves might use (or encourage their companies to use) when undertaking institutionalised implementation trainings as a follow up to the 'take-off' workshops.

Include guest speakers, who can give an expert view on the situation, such as police and justice representatives and the local government or NGOs. They can speak with authority about the situation in their country and provide interest and knowledge.

Where possible include the experiences/ lessons learned of others who are implementing the Code, as this helps to generate ideas about how participants could meet the criteria of The Code. If this is not possible, examples from other countries in the region can be used.

Lessons Learned

Including perspectives from a political level lends increased prominence to The Code and the importance placed on it. In both The Dominican Republic and Thailand workshops, representatives from the local Government (via the relevant Ministry) and the German Government (via the Embassy) participated in the opening ceremony and gave speeches confirming commitment to the work.

While guest speakers provide interest, participants should be given the opportunity to share their own ideas and experiences. Therefore, sufficient time helps to encourage interaction and discussions so that participants may think about specific concrete actions to take back to their organisations.

Although experience has shown that participants enjoy having guest speakers, it is essential to be clear about the scope of the presentation guest speakers will make and to ensure that there is consistency regarding messages given.

Impressum

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Follow Up Activities

Not all participants may be in a position to give a commitment to The Code of Conduct on behalf of their companies. However, all participants can give an undertaking to take the learning from the workshops back to their managers and organisations.

The workshops should always contain an evaluation comparing the expectations and perceptions of the participants at the beginning of the course to those at the end. This helps to improve future training. Where resources are available an evaluation of the impact of the workshop is recommended, in cooperation with local partners and stakeholders.

The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism

The Code of Conduct is an industry-driven multi-stakeholder initiative which seeks to prevent the sexual exploitation of children in tourism. Since 1998, more than 800 tour operators, travel associations, hotels, ferry lines and other enterprises have signed The Code to commit to a set of criteria:

- To establish an ethical policy regarding commercial sexual exploitation of children
- To train the personnel in the country of origin and travel destinations
- To introduce a clause in contracts with suppliers, stating a common repudiation of commercial sexual exploitation of children
- To provide information to travellers by means of brochures, in-flight films, ticket-slips, home pages, etc
- To provide information to local “key persons” at the destinations
- To report annually



We protect children from sex tourism.

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