

## Workshop: Improving Child Safety during Project Visits in Tourism

### Collecting and Defining the Scope of Projects with Children in Tourism

- “Volunteer tourism” or “Voluntourism” - working while on a tour
- Visiting a project for a few hours
- Can include international travel as well as domestic or local tourism
- A huge variety of projects where children are involved:
  - Schools
  - Day care Centers
  - Sport Projects
  - Street work centers
  - Community visits
  - Cooking Classes with a family
  - Homestays
  - Art Groups
  - Orphanages
- Projects are FOR children and should support them → this is not always the case (e.g. Volunteering in orphanages fuels the growth of more orphanages; disrupts children’s development; puts children at risk of exploitation and abuse)

### Possible Impacts for Children during Project Visits

- Imagine yourself as a child in those projects - how would you feel if a group of visitors came to your project, took pictures with you, would play with you, make you sit on their laps, hug you etc.?
- Frequent Interaction with visitors disrupts the daily routine of children
- Children may be forced to play or to present a show
- It puts children at risk of exploitation and abuse, as perpetrators gain access and may coerce exploitative acts later on (even after the visit or during a next trip)
- Children should not be a tourism attraction
- In the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic the demand for “doing something good” on a trip might increase as well as the offer due to socio-economic impacts
- Keeping the impacts on children as a stakeholder group in mind during organizing and planning the tours → letting children participate in decision making
- Is there a difference between children being present and children being used as a tourist attraction (in the center)?
- Mitigating negative impacts by using a checklist of what needs to be done to make project visits child safe

## Good-Practice Examples of Studiosus Reisen

- Child Protection is essential part of sustainability measures
- Training Agencies and Tour Guides on Child Protection as not all projects can be chosen directly by Studiosus
- Having Child Protection clauses in contracts
- Developed a guide for project visits (for Tour Guides)
- Some Projects already have Child Protection Policies in place
- “We don’t visit schools during school time anymore” → visits with teachers e.g. in teachers’ room rooms to not disturb children in their daily routine; e.g. a nunnery visit without getting in contact with children at all
- Checking projects beforehand - are they aware of child protection issues; are we on the same page with conducting project visits

## Checklist

### Measures to improve child protection during project visits in tourism

- **Evaluate risks for children** in projects that are offered by your company or cooperating DMC
- **Training/Awareness Raising** for Tour Guides and Local Agencies (supporting them to feel confident in implementing the training knowledge)
- **Exchange with local communities and children** about possible risks during organizing project visits
- Include **child protection clauses** concerning project visits in contracts with local agencies
- Evaluate or establish a **visit schedule together with project partners that protects children** (e.g. visitors don’t come into contact with children directly)
- Do not visit projects for children during the daily business; visit when children are gone to not disrupt them or visit other premises that children don’t use during that time
- **Do not visit Orphanages** at all → Cooperate with other projects that support children and their rights
- **Inform travelers** before the visit about children’s rights and your decision; e.g. why it is not in the best interest of children to visit their school
- **Gather Feedback** from travelers
- Follow the **Voluntourism-Policy** of The Code