

National Consultation on Child Protection in Voluntourism



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**We protect
children in
travel and
tourism**



**A NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON
PROTECTING CHILDREN IN VOLUNTOURISM**

CONSULTATION REPORT

31ST AUGUST 2022

**Hotel Mirage
Colombo 6**

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Message of the Executive Director

Acknowledgment.

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MESSAGE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I warmly extend my gratitude and appreciation to everyone who collaborated on this National Consultation on Protecting Children from the harmful risks of Voluntourism.

When we sat down for Plenary Session 1, I shared the two broad objectives of the consultation:

- 1. Raise awareness on the scope of Voluntourism and its implications on children, and**
- 2. Contribute effective suggestions towards formulating a draft National Ethical Code of Conduct and Practices that will guide us to protect the children in our nation**

Objective 1 was designed to build a deeper understanding of Voluntourism and its potential risks for children. The insights and expertise of many international and national civil society organizations was invaluable as they have much experience in hiring and working with volunteers.

Building on the knowledge from Session 1, in Session 2, we worked towards formulating ideas and suggestions to draft a National Ethical Code of Conduct and Practices to direct our forward actions. This National Ethical Code of Conduct will be an important guide for us in protecting our children and will be an invaluable resource. Law enforcement agencies such as the Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women, the Police Tourism Division, the NCPA, members from civil society organisations and the tourism sector who attended, all contributed their knowledge and experiences at both sessions.

Voluntourism combines both the terms “volunteering” and “tourism”. It describes volunteering assignments of tourists as part of their overall vacation or travel. These are mostly designed to provide an experience to tourists without considering its possible harmful consequences or its benefit to the surrounding community.

Sri Lanka’s popularity as a tourist destination and its post-war development struggles encouraged an increase in Voluntourism both locally and internationally. Tourists can decide to contribute their skills, knowledge, and or labour in many forms in diverse sectors. However, volunteering at children’s homes, orphanages, schools, child centred societies, associations and other institutions demands regulation and observation to protect children from possible risks and other forms of abuse.

The growth in volunteering and orphanage tourism have created opportunities for child sexual exploitation and abuse as it allows unregulated contact with vulnerable children. Recent research conducted on benevolent harm in orphanages, Voluntourism and child sexual exploitation and abuse in South-East Asia evidence that institution-based sexual exploitation and abuse, including within orphanages, is on the rise in South-East Asia. The research report summarised practices that led to child sexual exploitation and its related harms that are within or facilitated by orphanages.

The Key Recommendations for the 2019 United Nations General Assembly Resolution highlighted concerns that well-meaning support for child centred institutions, volunteering or tourism can lead to possible harm for the children.

The Third Committee of the United Nations General Assembly held on the 18th of December of 2019 calls upon States to act to prevent the trafficking and exploitation of children in care facilities, or otherwise deprived of parental care. This includes addressing the harms related to volunteering programs in orphanages, including those in the context of tourism, which can lead to trafficking and exploitation. It is also important to note that for the first time, in 2019, the annual UN Resolution on the Rights of the Child calls for governments’ action on children without parental care.

Mohammad Mahuruf
PEaCE / ECPAT Sri Lanka

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

PEaCE acknowledges and appreciates the technical support extended by The Code, Gabriela Kuhn, the head of Programme on child protection in travel and tourism, ECPAT International towards this event.

We acknowledge in deep appreciation the financial support given by UBS Optimus Foundation, which allowed for the concept of a national level consultation to become a reality.

PEaCE is grateful to the speakers, Mr. Dhinush Jayasuriya, *Director, Education* SOS Children's Village, Ms. K. G. Tanuja P. Dissanayake, *Commissioner*, Department of Probation & Child Care Services, Ms. Renuka Jayasundara, *Deputy Inspector General of Police* (Women and Children Abuse Investigation Range) of the Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women, and Ms. Preethika Sakalasooriya, *Director (Legal)*, National Child Protection Authority, for their invaluable time in providing us their experience, knowledge, and expertise which benefited all participants.

Our sincere thanks to Ms. Tharanga Rupasinghe, *Director, Standard and Quality Assurance* of the Tourism Development Authority for connecting us with the Sri Lanka Association of Inbound Tour Operators (SLAITO).

The commitment of the National Child Protection Authority and the Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women of the Sri Lanka Police to protect children from all forms of risks and abuses of Voluntourism is very encouraging.

We also extend our gratitude to each of our participants for their engagement and inputs which allowed for lively group discourses and successful outcomes, captured in this National Consultation Report.

The exploitation of children in Voluntourism is a national problem and requires integrated efforts on a national level to protect children. This National Consultation marks the first critical step taken by engaged stakeholders who came together and are committed to end the risks and abuses of Voluntourism to our children.

RATIONAL OF THE CONSULTATION

The term Voluntourism is a combination of the words volunteer and tourism and is defined as a form of tourism in which travellers participate in voluntary work in social or humanitarian organizations or charities. It is sometimes referred to as volunteer travel or volunteer vacation. According to the Association of British Travel Agents Volunteer Tourism Guidelines¹ (2016) volunteer tourism is generally comprised of the following:

- **Travel experiences purchased as part of a package that includes flight, accommodation and/or other elements of the trip (e.g., work placement),**
- **The opportunity for tourists to ‘work’ while on a trip,**
- **The expectation that works is delivered ‘free of charge’ at the point of delivery,**
- **The concept that the work the traveller (or volunteer) does, will benefit the recipients and the tourist at the point of delivery.**

Regardless of its positive aspects, Voluntourism can have many negative effects including exploitation and abuse of children. Chief among them is the fuelling of financially driven orphanages who solicit support and funds while the orphanage children are neglected, forced to beg and or are trafficked. Most often, volunteers are misled to believe these children have no parent / guardian

whereas they have had monetary transactions with parents to keep the child at such institutions.

Research also shows short-term orphanage visits can cause attachment disorders as they experience constant rotation of visitors creating short-lived attachments and separation anxiety. Further studies present that repeated abandonment can have serious effects and generate trauma to children, in particular those who have been victims of various forms of violence. In the context of Voluntourism, strangers are provided with access (at times unregulated) to vulnerable children. This normalizes strangers approaching and connecting with children, their privacy being minimized which could expose them to physical and sexual abuse. Further, the constant drive towards short-term support detracts the focus from sustainable, locally driven development of child-care institutions and, more importantly, of children.

In a country where tourism is increasingly a key focus area, PEaCE / ECPAT Sri Lanka organized this national level consultation to bring together relevant public, private and civil society stakeholders in tourism and childcare sectors to illuminate the scope of Voluntourism, its implications on children, within and outside of institutional care, and to work toward mapping an actionable code of ethics and directives to protect children from the harmful effects of Voluntourism.

¹ ABTA (2016). Volunteer Tourism Guidelines. Practical guide for travel companies delivering volunteer tourism experiences

PEaCE / ECPAT SRI LANKA

ECPAT is global campaign to end child sexual exploitation and abuse in tourism that was launched in May 1990 when a small group of concerned individuals gathered in Chiang Mai in Northern Thailand. Organisations from around the globe heard the call to action and joined hands to provide support to End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT). Since, ECPAT has conducted comprehensive research to better understand the global web of child sexual exploitation and abuse in Travel and Tourism and has pushed hard to engage governments, intergovernmental institutions, the private sector, civil society, the general public, and the children,² toward the critical, systemic and societal changes necessary to eliminate child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Its Sri Lankan affiliate agency, Protecting Environment and Children Everywhere (PEaCE) is a non-profit organization that was launched in 1991. The primary focus of PEaCE is to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse of children while working hard to protect marginalized and vulnerable children from all forms of exploitation and abuse.

PEaCE works in collaboration with many stakeholders including government, civil society organizations, the private sector and

rights based activists with a special focus on law enforcement, education and tourism. Since 1991 PEaCE has engaged in raising awareness, capacity building of public sector officials, monitoring of legal cases and counselling, lobbying and advocacy to influence National Policy, research, data collection and many more. The organization has been conducting a wide range of activities to further expand the national scope of its mission. A series of consultations were conducted in 2017 with lawyers of the Bar Association of Sri Lanka (BASL) to discuss the existing legal framework in Sri Lanka relating to child protection and the improvements required to provide an empowered legal shelter to the children of Sri Lanka.

In 2020, PEaCE / ECPAT Sri Lanka published a legal gap analysis report to advocate legal and policy changes for the protection of children online, specifically with respect to online child sexual exploitation (OCSE)³. This study was done by Verité Research. The latest research was “Sexual Exploitation of Boys,⁴” undertaken by ECPAT International and PEaCE / ECPAT Sri Lanka as part of the Global Boys Initiative.

² [Our Secretariat - ECPAT](#)

³ <https://www.ecpat.lk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Report-on-Online-Child-Sexual-Exploitation-Legal-Gap-Analysis-ECPAT-Sri-Lanka.pdf>

⁴ https://www.ecpat.lk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/ECPAT-Global-Boys-Initiative-Sri-Lanka_EN-1.pdf

SESSION



**AWARENESS - BUILDING ON THE
SCOPE OF VOLUNTOURISM AND
ITS IMPLICATIONS ON CHILDREN**

1.1 Experience Sharing on Designing and Implementation of Voluntourism Programmes

Mr. Dhinush Jayasuriya, Education Director, SOS Children's Village



SOS Children's Villages is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit international development organization headquartered in Innsbruck, Austria. At present, SOS Children's Villages is active in over 136 countries and territories with over 500 SOS Children's Villages and 400 SOS Youth Facilities striving for the welfare of children in need of care

SOS Children's Villages provide the structure of an alternative family model to children without adequate parental care. About eight children of different ages and backgrounds live together in one house with a full-time parent, usually a woman whom they will refer to as “mother” to provide them the concept of a family. SOS Village is predominantly run with grants, donations and other forms of contributions. Volunteering is a key aspect within SOS Villages and it has a positive contribution towards its activities.

A large number of local and foreign volunteers and volunteer requests are received by SOS Villages, most being from students from universities abroad seeking to complete field assignments. Volunteers pay fee packages for their field assignments based on the length of their volunteering term which are typically short-term and combined with students' university / college vacations. Given the currency conversion rates and as a donor dependent organization, SOS Children's Villages is keen to receive these and other forms of contributions. However, since perpetrators can come in as volunteers and win over trust, leaving a high margin of risk to the Village's children, the organization engages in safe hiring practices of volunteers in order to not jeopardize the safety and protection of the children in their care.

SOS Children's Villages, globally, has had many experiences with volunteer contributors; positive, challenging and sometimes

uncomfortable experiences. An initial and typical point of contact for Volunteers and or individual contributors with SOS Villages is via an email, expressing a genuine and altruistic desire to engage in volunteering efforts at the organization, one which creates a positive aspect about the person, their offer and their aspirations. These introductory correspondence applications can, sometimes, be misleading and background reference checks and verifications are necessary. Many volunteers are necessarily not trained or skilled for the job they are volunteering. Additionally, at the end of their volunteering term, volunteers comfortably remove themselves from the volunteer work leaving the very children they aided in confusion and anxiety over their absence, wondering what happened to the ‘teacher’ or the person who was supporting them. It has been observed that children build special bonds with their ‘teacher’, especially foreigners, and how their departures affect children deeply. At times the nature of the Voluntourism could change depending on specific circumstances that prevail.

As an organization that is concerned about the wellbeing of children, SOS Villages obtains background references whenever possible and all volunteers sign a child protection declaration prior to entering the village. There have been instances where local volunteers who have visited the SOS Villages, perhaps with the best intentions, have tried to bring

⁵ <https://www.soschildrensvillages.in/about-us/vision-mission/>

larger groups inside, thereby creating difficult circumstances. SOS Villages obtains online verification services where-ever possible while requesting a minimum of a three months stay when the volunteer is visiting the country. SOS Villages interviews the person volunteering and seeks approval from the Department of Probation and Child Care Services.

The Village also signs a memorandum of understanding with the service providing organizations such as AIESEC, a global youth leadership platform and programme, and or a contract with the relevant individual. The individual contract outlines the nature of the

contribution / service and also the number of hours to be contributed. Generally, SOS Villages expects a minimum of 25 hours to a maximum of 40 hours contribution weekly, leaving two days off for tourist activities. SOS Villages provides all volunteers with a formal orientation so that volunteers are informed and aware of the cultural differences at the country level, as well as the SOS Village culture where the children are being raised, so volunteers are sensitized along with being provided guidelines on minimum standards in regard to dress codes. It is very important for volunteers to understand and follow specific guidelines about volunteering.



1.2 Can volunteering in an Orphanage Do More Harm than Good?



Ms. Tanuja Dissanayake, Commissioner, Probation & Child Care Services

The Department of Probation and Child Care Services was founded in 1956. Previously, the Department has reported separately to the Ministry of Social Services and the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs. Since 2015, however, the department has been functioning under the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment (MWCA) which is also referred to as the State Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Over 10,000 children in orphanages in Sri Lanka come under the protection of the Department of Probation & Child Care Services. The department also has the responsibility of supporting children in marginalized groups, communities and vulnerable situations. Provincial Commissioners and officers are tasked with carrying out the related activities in the above groups and situations.

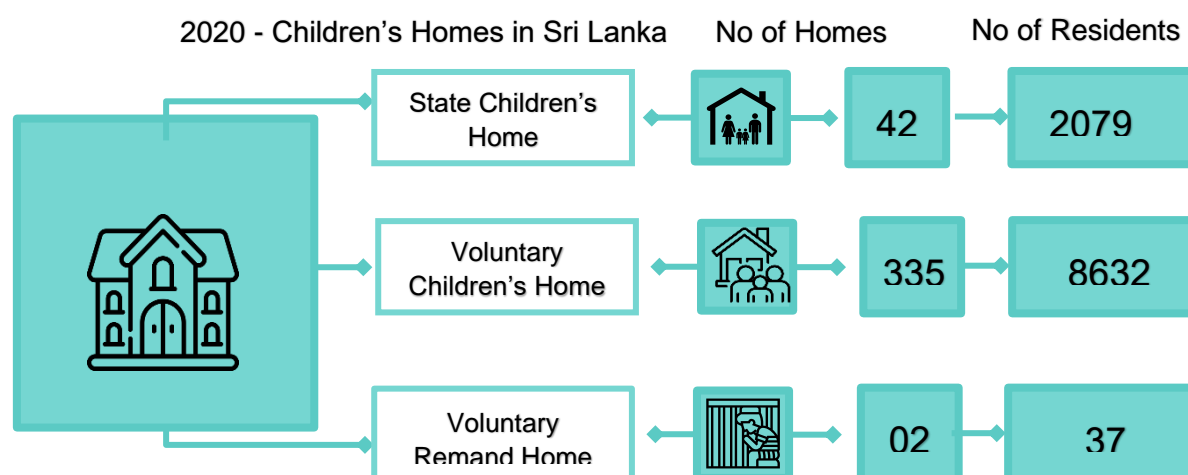
While the department is committed to ensuring that each child is provided a home with love, affection and protection, nevertheless, Covid-19 and its aftermath and the current socio-economic situation has created many difficult circumstances for children around the country. In fact, many children have dropped out of schools in marginalized and vulnerable communities during this crisis.

Currently the department is struggling to address these issues. Inundated as they are with destitute and abandoned children requiring

a roof over their heads, the priority is getting all reported child cases of abandonment or orphaned into the system. The department, therefore, is challenged to attend to the quality of the lives of the children living in orphanages.

The department acknowledges that Voluntourism has both its positives and negatives. While the department charges the supervision of the engagement of tourists with children within the orphanage system up to the individual institutions and believes that these exchanges are typically supervised by institutional senior staff, there have been no cases of child exploitation and abuse within the system reported to the department. While Voluntourism has very positive benefits, the Department is vigilant with regard to the extent an external party is able to engage with children.

The department will always seek to extend their support with regard to all programmes relating to protecting children.



1.3 Outcomes of Group Discussion 01

Voluntourism: Is it Beneficial or Harmful for Children in Sri Lanka?

Led by: Mr. Sanjeewa de Mel, Executive Director, SERVE

Benefits

Child and the family can benefit directly by way of

- Direct financial, infrastructural, material aid and or scholarships
- A family member might get a job opportunity
- The children and perhaps family members will become familiar with foreign languages
- They will be exposed to a new culture, and modern perspectives and outlook to life
- Given the general social reaction to people struggling for a living, a child receiving special attention and care at least for a small time would mean a lot for the family and child
- A volunteer's engagement with a child may provide for the entire family unit to move onto a better life

Harmful

- The child can be sexually exploited or abused in return for financial or other forms of benefits
- The child can be used to be involved in illegal activities such as transporting drugs
- The lifestyles and culture of the tourists might not be suitable for child's development
- Development of a dependency mentality as a result of continued support.
- Challenges with regard to socializing to normal lifestyles, benefit schemes or earning quick money through illegal or inappropriate activities
- Children's organs being sold in the pretext of sending them for foreign education, employment or other.

1.4 Outcomes of Group Discussion 02

Impact of Volunteering on Children in Orphanages and Childcare Centres

Led by: Ms. Nirmalee Perera, Senior Probation Officer, Dept. of Probation and Child Care Services

Positive

- Children's Homes depends on external support
- Volunteering contributes by way of labour, services, knowledge, developmental assistance and also opening doors to the external world
- Volunteers may provide visibility to the Children's homes which would pave the way for other potential volunteers, donors and or well-wishers to also contribute positively
- Volunteers or well-wishers may also provide contributions toward a foster parenting system

Negative

- Continued visits could contribute the child being further disappointed and or being misused
- Child offenders can visit the homes as volunteers and abuse this privilege
- There are organizations and individuals who will try to manipulate the truth or spread false information
- The child could be used or misrepresented in many ways that would impact the child's image, future growth and development
- The gross cost-impact benefit of Voluntourism must be assessed to ensure that the social cost a government has to bear is lesser than its direct economic benefit



1.5 Outcomes of Group Discussions 03 and 04

Challenges in Managing and Monitoring Volunteer Programmes in Childcare Institutions

Led by: Mr. Nalaka Siriwardane,
Country Manager, Child Fund

- Identifying and measuring the success of the impact of these programmes is a challenge
- A volunteer is allowed to work with children to the degree of their contribution. Where the line may be drawn on the extent and how their involvement is screened is a challenge as children can become very close with them
- Volunteers' need of translation assistance and this at times is a challenge
- Unexpected random visitors who drop by seeking volunteering opportunity while holding a tourist visa
- Volunteers must be able to meet the social and cultural sensitivity standards or able to adjust their behaviour to meet these standards
- The qualifications of the volunteers
- There is no specific standard on agreed processed protocol and other aspects
- There are no guidelines or rules etc. with regard to this sector
- Special capacity building skills are required such as translation skills, volunteer monitoring skills, understanding body language etc.
- How any misbehaviour is informed and identified in itself is a challenge that requires training
- Short and long term impacts have to be taken into consideration and Voluntourism must be rejected if there is no impact or if the negative impacts far outweigh the positive

Role and Challenges of Law Enforcement Agencies in Facilitating a Child Abuse-Free Tourism

Led by: Mr. Nawas, Senior Superintendent of Police, Director, Police Tourist Division

The Tourist Police is the special division dedicated to address issues connected to foreigners (Tourists)

- The Language: Tourist Police do not have the necessary human resources to speak with foreigners of different languages and at times English cannot also be understood depending on the dialect.
- Clarity for the general public especially the vulnerable / at risk groups with regard to the protocol and reporting systems to follow when facing the abuse and exploitation of a child
- Often law enforcement agencies are unable to identify the issue and at times they address a different issue
- Relevant officials may be addressing a different aspect or problem whereas the problem itself is another
- There are many laws relating to child protection and many laws have been amended and updated however none of this information is available to the public or to the institutions working in the child protection sector
- The access to information is limited and many who have met with injustice ends up unaware of what actions need to be taken, or that they have rights to seek justice
- Solutions must be simple and easy so any average person can understand
- One point of contact, a number or desk / hotline for all related issues concerning the child should be established









SESSION



MAPPING AN ACTIONABLE ETHICAL CODE AND DIRECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

2.1 Legal Interventions to Protect Children from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Travel and Tourism



DIG R. Jayasundara, Women and Children Abuse Investigation Range

The Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women was established under the Crimes Division at Police Headquarters in Colombo 1994 for the prevention of abuse of children, young persons and women, to receive complaints, conduct investigations and to take remedial actions. Educating the public and creating awareness on harassment and abuse of children and women are important functions of the Divisional Bureaus.

The law of the country is the same to everyone including tourists. The Sri Lanka Police Tourist Division get involved when a violation is carried out by a tourist and the crime is informed to the relevant embassy. The International Police, or INTERPOL, ensures that a perpetrator is placed immediately on the Green Notice list which warns authorities globally about a person's criminal activities, where the person is considered to be a possible threat to public safety as well as about those who have committed child exploitation or abuse. Police also notify the immigration and emigration office who will take necessary steps at the time the said perpetrator is entering or leaving the country per their discretion. Recently, 5 such persons have visited Sri Lanka of which 2 persons have been deported.

Under Sri Lanka's legal system, an individual below the age of 18 years is considered a child. Under criminal law, Penal Code Amendments to Act No. 22 of 1995, Act No. 16 in 2006, and Act No. 2 in 2021 clearly defines the age of a child. Section 28 of the Penal Code, which makes the possession of obscene content for sale, distribution, or public exhibition, including uploading such content on to the web space an offence, has been Amended to include persons aged 18 and below. Importantly, Act No. 16 of 2006 discusses child abuse to a broad extent including adoption, financial transactions, forced labour and more, notwithstanding the minor's consent. The above Amendments have provided for a broader scope of the law to bring justice to victims and survivors.



Penal Code Amendments

Act No 29 of 1998



288 - procuring a child for begging or receiving alms or of inducing the giving of alms



288 (A & B) coercing a child to procure any person for illicit sexual intercourse or traffic

Act No 16 of 2006



286 C – use of premises and has knowledge of such premises being used for abuse of a child



360 C – engaging in buying or selling or bartering a person for money or for any other consideration



350 – Kidnapping and Abduction



360 D - placing any person in adoption



358 A - debt bondage, serfdom, forced or compulsory labour



360 E – taking the child to a foreign country without the consent of his parent or lawful guardian



360 - procuring the child for adoption from an institution or centre, or intimidating the mother or any person for same

Although the age of consent is 16 years under 308E of the 2006 Amendment to the Penal Code action can be taken against a perpetrator if the individual is under 18 years of age. According to the law every child should have a guardian at all times. This could be the legal guardian or a temporary guardian. An example of a temporary guardian per the courts would be the police, childcare centres, or even a vehicle driver where, for example, an incident takes place while the child is traveling in the vehicle. In cases of elopement, when the individual is below 18

years of age, the responsibility lies with the person who takes him / her. A child sexually abused by a schoolteacher thereby psychologically impacting the child's natural behaviour is another example of a guardian committing child sexual exploitation and abuse. Child exploitation and abuse also occurs in cases where children in Sri Lanka's hill country are forced to work as domestic aides in houses. Specific laws may be applied to those individuals between the ages of 16 - 18 years of age in seeking justice for victims and survivors.

| No | Penal Code Section | Duration of Imprisonment |
|----------|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 286 (A) | Obscene Publications | 02 – 10 Years |
| 308 (A) | Torture of children | 02 - 10 Years |
| 310, 317 | Physical Harm | Extend to 10+ Years |
| 345 | Sexual Abuse | Up to 5 Years |
| 350 | Abuse | Up to 7 Years |
| 353 | Kidnapping & Abducting | Up to 10 Years |
| 360 (A) | Procurement | 02 – 10 Years |
| 360 (B) | Trafficking | 05 - 20 Years |
| 360 (C) | Rape | 03 - 20 Years |
| 363 | Defilement of girls between 12 & 14 | 10 – 20 Years |
| 364 | Unnatural offences | 07 – 20 Years |
| 365 | Gross indecency between male persons | 10 – 20 Years |
| 365 (A) | Acts of gross indecency between persons | 10 – 20 Years |
| 365 (B) | Grave sexual abuse | 10 – 20 Years |

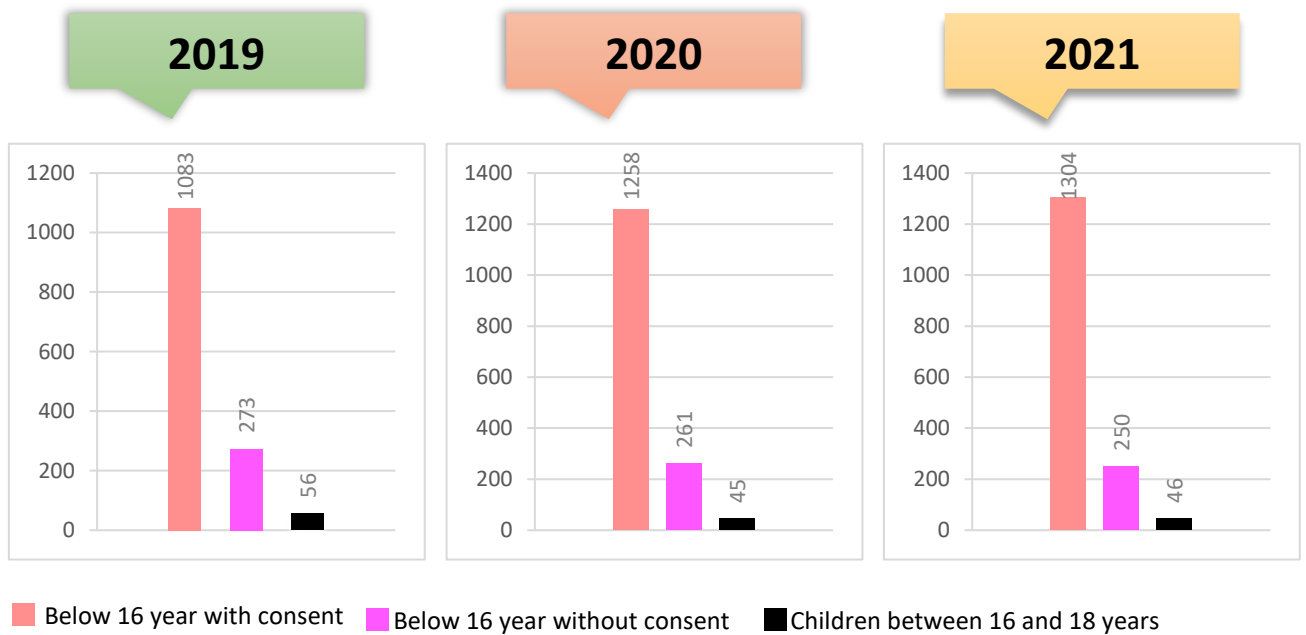
Amended Sections 286B and 286C of the Penal Code Act No.16 of 2006 states a person(s) who provide services using a computer, who witnesses, or is aware of misuses in computer related facilities (286B), and or a person who is aware of, or a witness to a premise being used (286C) to perform offences related to child sexual abuse should be immediately reported to the nearest police station. However, the extent of this law in practice still remains a question. In this context, “the person providing service by computer” is broad to include a CEO of an international or large corporation to a freelance, homebased worker. The lack of clarity with regard to the law and its definitions is a significant challenge in law enforcement. This can

also include computers, phones and other electronic devices belonging to an organization.

The National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), the US based non-profit organisation maintains a database connecting nearly 150 countries including Sri Lanka. The Sri Lanka Police benefits from this database to identify instances of suspected child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Sri Lanka's laws are very strict with regard to computer crimes and the law can be enforced under Children and Young Persons (harmful publications) Act No. 47 of 1956 Obscene Publications Act of 1982 and the Computer Crime Act No. 24 of 2007.

Child Rape (Female Children)



The Bureau is currently located at Grandpass, Colombo 14 with island-wide jurisdiction. The Bureau has 1,200 female officers with at least one women officer at each police station. The officers are duly trained to address the above issues and are carrying out investigations. The Bureau monitors petty complaints, crimes against women and children, and family disputes at any police station

and takes over investigations when and where necessary.

Contact numbers are shared to report any issues or abuse pertaining to the violation of the Rights of the Child. Collaborative efforts in addressing these issues ensure apprehension of perpetrators and successful outcomes in protecting the rights of children.

2.2 Challenges in Law Enforcement in the Travel and Tourism Sector



Ms. Preethika Sakalasooriya, Director (Legal), NCPA

The National Child Protection Authority was established by the parliament of Sri Lanka by Act No.50 of 1998 for the purpose of advising the government on policies and laws on the prevention of child abuse and the protection and treatment of children who are victims of such abuse and the co-ordination and monitoring of action against all forms of child abuse.

The Sri Lanka Code of Criminal Procedure provides power to the police to enforce relevant sections of the Penal Code related to sexual exploitation and abuse. Law enforcement, especially the Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women headed by DIG Renuka Jayasundara, are faced with many challenges on a daily basis.

Most challenges fall under 5 key areas:

1. The Incident

The non-recognition or the late recognition of the incident is the biggest challenge. Key barriers to the recognition of a violation against a minor are parental attitudes and social perceptions towards the victimized child and family. *Unawareness* of “an act of abuse” by the child is a critical challenge since the child does not know to disclose the incident with anyone since they are unaware that what has occurred is wrong. Further, parents / guardians ignore, take for granted, or expects the child to forget or not talk about the abuse, or when a child shares such an incident, considers talking about the abuse as inappropriate. These instances are high with regard to the boy child due to the dominant social perception.

2. Reporting Crime

The police cannot act without a complaint from the victim / family. The insensitivity of parents about the incident and or a lack of knowledge of the rights of the child. *Unawareness*, combined with the belief that visiting the police station will be a disgrace to the family, the

psychologically confused and stressful situation of the victim and or family, and the fear of reporting due to threat and intimidation by the perpetrator, prevents reporting of a crime at the police station. Social perceptions, a victim blaming and shaming culture, and devaluation of victimized children, prevents the incidents being reported or disclosed. Amendments to Section 286B and 286C of the Penal Code Act No. 16 of 2006 demands responsible behaviour of citizens by reporting child abuse in relation to computer(s) or premises.

3. Crime Investigation

Inadequate human and physical resources, the competency level of officers, technical and technological issues, and language and communication issues are all challenges during the investigation or evidence collection process. Since Volunteers are traveling back, recalling them for further questioning and investigation and or to carry out related processes are also challenges.

4. Court Process

A gap in the Penal Code Section 288A with regard to hiring or employing children to act as procurers with regard to sexual intercourse for instance evidence that there are many areas in the law that needs amendment and or further interpretation. The delayed legal process exhausts the victim and his/her family. The victim is not provided with necessary support and there are many challenges to a victim obtaining support. The inability to find

sufficient evidence against the perpetrator in court, the time lapses due to court proceedings, evidence found during the investigation process being tampered with, or the cross-questioning nature of the prosecutor are also crucial.

5. Regulation and Coordination

The absence of data is a critical challenge since the lack of information prevents and delays in taking definite actions with regard to the regulatory process. All the stakeholders of the travel and tourism sector and child protection sector must work together as a network and should coordinate and connect regularly and work together. Further, it is important for an integrated approach to address these issues.

Recommendations

Cabinet has approved the national policy on child protection to which the action plans are being formulated. NCPA will be joining hands with CSOs to implement the action plan as a way forward.

While government institutions have come together it is important to collaborate with non-governmental organizations.

New information has not been produced about the Sri Lankan context. This is a significant gap. The policy decisions, action plans and all related activities are not designed or based around proper research findings. Emphasis must be given in producing new knowledge, information and data with regard to the existing situation on volunteering and related context, and also in distributing this knowledge among all stakeholders. The public and all stakeholders of this sector must have clear knowledge of the criminal justice process and the system of court proceedings. The NCPA is not mandated to train judges. However, providing knowledge with regard to best practices for judges is of utmost importance. The challenges pertaining to law enforcement in child sexual abuse within the travel and tourism sector can be addressed effectively if all these are implemented. The key is for all stakeholders to network and collaborate, functioning in an integrated manner.





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

Mr. Sahan Wiratunga, Senior Project Officer, PEaCE/ECPAT Sri Lanka

“The Code” is the short term for The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Travel and Tourism. It is a multi-stakeholder initiative with the mission of providing awareness, tools and support to the travel and tourism industry to prevent the sexual exploitation and abuse of children. The Code is a voluntary set of criteria that members commit to in keeping children safe.

The Code’s policy specifically considers and applies to Voluntourism activities that involve direct or indirect contact with children. Activities with children encompass those at residential centres for children including orphanages, day-care centres, teaching, sports activities, and creative classes. Activities that put children in direct contact with adults, in particular when criminal background checks are not required, present risks that may not be eradicated. However, they may be minimised. This is consistent with the approach of The Code’s initiative; while it is understood that zero risk does not exist, the initiative works with travel and tourism companies to manage and minimise the risk of trafficking and sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

This policy outlines the risks of various forms of Voluntourism, including the critical risks noted in orphanage-related activities in relation to child protection, and states the criteria by which organisations, private commercial companies, social enterprises and charities, may apply to join The Code. This document is mainly intended for use by the Secretariat of The Code and Local Code Representatives (LCRs) when assessing a membership application, and as a guide to potential Code members outlining the conditions under which they can be considered for

membership. This document may be used by other organisations and entities to protect children.

Establishing policies and procedures against sexual exploitation and abuse of children is of significant importance. Many service providers do not have a proper child protection policy and procedure. These policies may be included in their training manuals and internal literature.

Having policies and procedures in place will encourage staff to report any suspicious behaviour that may lead to the sexual exploitation and abuse of a child.

Good policies should include:

- Informing staff that the organization is fully committed to preventing and combating child sexual exploitation and abuse
- Emphasizing that no staff will be penalized in any way for reporting cases of child sexual abuse
- Train employees in Children’s Rights, the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, and how to report suspected cases, ensuring that all staff personnel such as cleaning staff, cabin attendants, managers, reception, cooking staff, travel agents, tour operators are included in the training
- Workplace management should educate staff on how to recognize, report and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse
- A clause should be included in employee and vendor contracts throughout the value chain stating a common repudiation of contract and a zero-tolerance policy of the sexual exploitation and abuse of children
- Provide information to voluntourists on laws pertaining to child protection, the

prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, and how to report suspected cases

The Code stresses that supporting and collaborating with stakeholders and informing all stakeholders on the reporting of, responding to, and the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse of children is an important area for consideration. Annual reporting by stakeholder organizations on how The Code's policies above are being utilized organization wide as per the above six areas is important.

An annual report of an organization's progress in complying with The Code's policies allows all

stakeholders supporting each other to obtain a clear view of the global context of complying with these policies and in tracing the progress of the policies.

The CODE states that "Voluntourism is not associated with orphanages" and demands that organizations conduct a criminal record check or obtain other 'proof of good conduct' from the volunteer. It further states that the relevant organization should provide information about child protection to the volunteer prior to them traveling for their voluntary assignments.



2.4 Outcomes of Group Discussions 01 and 02

Sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism - why child protection laws fail and how to improve them

Led by: DIG Renuka Jayasundara, Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women

- Much support and intervention should be provided to low income families subjected to and at risk for commercial sexual exploitation and abuse
- The law enforcement process, police, courts, and the judicial process must be sensitive to the child including how to ask questions from a child
- The sensitivity of media and how they report such acts of violations have a significant impact not only on the reputation of the victim, but also their family
- The investigation must be revisited to ensure the dignity of the child
- Training to media personnel on privacy and related aspects such as social conditions
- External pressure by the perpetrator
- External pressure faced by law enforcing institutions

Code of conduct, ethical considerations, and monitoring tools for volunteer programmes

Led by Sushetha Gopallawa, Senior Manager Counter Trafficking, Save the Children

- Take into consideration the National Policy on Child Protection when developing a set of ethics and guidelines
- Do No Harm must be policy practiced at all times by everyone from grassroots to national level
- A child friendly approach should be used
- Media violations and taking action
- Commencing investigation within 24 hours
- Protecting privacy by all law enforcement institutions and other stakeholders
- A monitoring and follow up system at all levels.



2.5 Outcomes of Group Discussions 03 and 04

Responsibility of childcare organizations towards safeguarding children with regard to volunteer programmes

Led by: Chandila Colombage, Technical Advisor, Child Protection and Child Participation, World Vision Lanka

- Check the background of the organisation
- Child protection to be practiced by all police officers and all officers to be sensitive about such incidents
- Mandate of the UNCRC must be used
- each organization must act accountably
- incident reporting culture must be introduced
- The process of complaining and reporting should be known by all
- The Grama Niladari must be given proper awareness and notice
- Obtain support of religious leaders
- Obtain support of relevant stakeholder organizations
- Awareness among Children's societies, youth clubs etc.
- One common policy must be practiced throughout
- Children's Institutions should have Social Workers on staff who will supervise visits and exchanges between children and all visitors to the institution including voluntourists. In fact, all child institutions and schools should have a social worker (s) on staff

Role of the state and non-state actors in promoting sustainable tourism while safeguarding children

Led by: Ms. Preethika Sakalasooriya, Director (Legal) National Child Protection

- The Convention of the Rights of the Child, Act No. 34 highlighting the role of the State in protecting children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse should be taken into consideration
- Must do proper in-depth studies to understand the real situation in the country
- Providing proper guidelines to volunteers and foreigners
- Separate guidelines for local and foreign tourists must be introduced
- Guidelines should be adjusted according to stakeholder internal operations
- Education system should include awareness on such situations
- Children should be empowered
- Children whose livelihood is connected with tourism are labelled by society which has a negative impact. They should be made conscious of the negative aspects in relation to tourism
- Schools, community centres, places of worship and other gathering places in villages and small towns must be provided with necessary information

2.6 KEY POINTS FROM GROUP DISCUSSIONS

The participants engaged in live and active discussions at the end of each presentation bringing out valid and useful areas to consider in moving forward with this national consultative.

- **Who Can Volunteer**

There should be minimum standards with regard to who can volunteer and what background information is required for both local and foreign volunteers.

There should be a screening process entailing background checks and other information including cultural sensitivity.

Further, the impacts, positives and negatives of Voluntourism for the institution / organization must be assessed at the outset, with the positive impacts clearly outweighing the negatives.

- **Skills Development**

Skills of the institutional care staff and the children themselves must be developed to protect them. Knowledge about the tourist sector, the harmful risks of voluntourists, and how they should act, must be included in the school curriculum system and regular orientations

- **Children Outside of Institutions**

Many children in the travel and tourism context such as homestays do not have a structured system where the persons responsible is clear. Such children would be at higher risk than institutionalized children. In the homestay context, tourists are provided accommodation within the same home as that of the child. Therefore, for the safety of the child / children, the behaviour of the tourist must be regulated and an informed parent / caretaker must be present when tourists are engaging with the family and or the family children

- **Awareness and Information**

Widespread awareness on Voluntourism among the tourist sector stakeholders and childcare institutions is essential. An alternative to limiting the extent to which a tourist engages with an institution, is to provide child protection guidelines to all tourists

- **Nutrient Parenting, Foster Parenting & Sponsoring a Child**

A few participants felt that these programmes contribute towards a long-term negative impact on a child resulting in him / her being abused repeatedly and contributing towards a dependency mentality

- **Issues Pertaining to Visa**

Although volunteering is illegal for tourists who travel under the visit visas there are many tourists traveling on a visit visa who seek to volunteer. Relevant tour agents and institutions must be aware of and not support tourists volunteering under a visit visa. The issue with regard to short-term volunteering may be addressed by changing the visa structure and perhaps introducing a volunteering visa category. The Ministry of Tourism should take the lead in child protection while concentrating on increasing tourism to the country.

- **Research and Studies on Voluntourism**

Some countries have conducted research on Voluntourism and its negative impact on institutionalized and other children. They have shared good practices, impact and outcome measuring systems which can be replicated or adjusted. Majority of the participants agree that no one is really aware of the actual incidents taking place with regard to Voluntourism in Sri Lanka. In-depth research is necessary to assess the actual situation and identifying proper solutions to such situations

- **Monitoring of Tourists / Volunteers**

When a tourist visits a village there should be a person taking responsibility for the tourist, or tourist group's behaviour and their interactions with children. A Grama Niladari (Village Headman) may act as the independent representative monitoring the interactive process or a similar government monitoring protocol. While it is challenging to monitor the behaviour of tourists, and to control their behaviour, nevertheless, it is an important criteria in ensuring child protection. Tourists must be informed of child protection guidelines as discussed above and when planning their visit must have a clear understanding of the guidelines and repercussions so they may decide if they want to volunteer or not. They must take responsibility for their behaviour.

- **Organizational Level Responsibility**

There are many organizations working with children and each institution must be responsible to act accountably toward the protection of children. SERVE and Sarvodaya has many rules and regulations on interacting with children. It is important that existing Child Protection policies are clearly visible to all, including members of the media.

- **Law Enforcement**

Participants stressed the need for a one-stop shop (an app, a phone number) to report and regulate the issues relating to children and for the coordination between and among relevant institutions for an increased level of institutional awareness. A hotline should be operational 24 hours in all 3 languages. Furthermore, the importance of clear, well-defined protocols, a centralized monitoring system that extends directly to the smallest village, along with widespread awareness of these protocols, and the knowledge of how to access the justice process, must exist. The NCPA highlighted that many gaps exist in the interpretation of the laws in Sri Lanka and in some instances, the NCPA will refer to precedents set by similar court cases in India for the appropriate legal interpretation and actions to take on a reported case.

- **Tourism Policy**

The necessity to incorporate Voluntourism as a subsection within the overall Tourism Policy with a special focus on institutional engagement and issues relating to homestays was identified. Currently Sri Lanka is attempting to have one million tourists for a year. In contrast, Greece reports one million visitors in a week. Sri Lanka must be ready for this influx of tourists and make attempts in advance to address possible issues that might occur

- **Protecting Privacy**

The media tends to violate the privacy of the victims and their families by disclosing information and at times sensitive photographs (e.g., Seya) and supports a victim blaming culture. This type of negative media coverage can have a negative bearing on a criminal investigation. In India, the death penalty was issued to those who released photograph(s) of the medical student who had been abused. Law enforcement officers must take necessary steps to protect the privacy of the victim not only in media but also within the law enforcement process. When members of the public at large observe the negative media it leads to non-reporting of incidents for fear of the negative repercussions to the family, education of their children and the future (e.g., Marriage) of the child. The NCPA informed that, if necessary, there are laws pertaining to privacy and releasing of personal information with regard to such incidents. According to the Penal Code, 19 D the media is prohibited in exposing the identity of the child and legal action can be taken against the respective media institution, editor, or an individual.

2.7 CONCLUSIONS

The National Consultation on Child Protection in Voluntourism was attended by 67 participants representing 35 organizations. The Consultation sessions concluded with productive and practical outcomes combined with a commitment by participants and stakeholders to take immediate follow-up action to make this Consultation an integrated and sustained effort.

An important outcome of group activities was the active collaboration by representatives of civil society, public as well as the corporate sector stakeholders. Clearly this was a positive, 'multi-stakeholder' consultation, representing core sectors and fields on a single platform to discuss the severity of the problem and to identify solutions to protect children from all forms of risks.

This key achievement was possible because of efforts and a collective commitment by governments, private / corporate sector stakeholders, civil society, NGOs and other related parties. This is the first time that all the stakeholders convened to discuss the issues at hand from various, and sometimes contradictory perspectives.

Focusing on addressing gaps pertaining to the relevant acts and revisiting tourist visa issuances, advocacy, and government lobbying for necessary changes were considered important priorities. Conducting island-wide awareness to shape opinions, attitudes, perceptions and ideas on Voluntourism and child protection to children and parents were also considered priorities. Incorporating concerns with regard to volunteering and the formulated tourism policy was considered an important first and crucial step. The institutional level accountability including formulating child protection guidelines within a reporting system with regard to volunteers, staff capacity building, and monitoring was considered essential.

Policy decision-making, action plans and activities are not being designed based on existing data and research findings. Emphasis in producing new knowledge, information and data with regard to the existing situation in volunteering was considered vital.

It was encouraging to note the commitment voiced by stakeholders to increase their efforts towards ensuring child-safe, sustainable tourism in Sri Lanka. Stakeholders collectively agreed the needs towards a collaborative approach consisting of a leadership structure that represents public, private and CSOs.

Names of the following organizations were proposed to meet within the next few months to discuss a workable, operational structure, and to discuss future direction:

- Police Tourist Division
- Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women.
- Department of Immigration and Emigration
- Sri Lanka Tourism Development Authority
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- National Child Protection Authority
- Department of Probation and Child Care Services
- National Secretariat for Volunteers
- Sarvodaya
- SERVE
- SOS Children Villages
- Child Fund
- Save the Children
- World Vision
- Association For Small & Medium Enterprises In Tourism (ASMET)
- Sri Lanka Association of Inbound Tour Operators (SAITO)

List of Participants

| No | Name | Designation | Organisation |
|-----|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. | Ms. Thanuja Dissanayake | Commissioner | Department of Probation and Child Care Services |
| 2. | Ms. Renuka Jayasundara | Deputy Inspector General of Police - Women & Children Abuse Investigation Range | Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women |
| 3. | Mr. M. A. M. Navas | Senior Superintend of Police Director | Police Tourism Division |
| 4. | Mr. Kamal M. Gunewardana | Assistant Superintend of Police Deputy Director | Police Tourism Division |
| 5. | Mr. Chandila Colombage | Technical Advisor - Child Protection and Child Participation | World Vision Sri Lanka |
| 6. | Mr. Dhinush Jayasuriya | Education Director | SOS Children's Villages Sri Lanka |
| 7. | Mr. G. L. Bandula Senadheera | Director | Sarvodaya International |
| 8. | Mr. Sushetha Gopallawa | Senior Manager - Counter Trafficking | Save the Children |
| 9. | Ms. Niluka Wickremesinghe | Senior Mental Health Specialist | LEADS |
| 10. | Ms. Nevedita Jeevabalan | Manager | LEADS |
| 11. | Mr. Sanath Marasinghe | Assistant President | Association of Small and Medium Enterprises in Tourism Sri Lanka |
| 12. | Mr. Arosha Jayasundara | Director | Association of Small and Medium Enterprises in Tourism Sri Lanka |
| 13. | Ms. Gayangi Wirasinha | Managing Director | Abercrombie & Kent Sri Lanka |
| 14. | Mr. Rohan Abeywickrama | Executive Director | Hawk Travels |
| 15. | Ms. Dinanja Kumarasinghe | Manager | Walkers Tours |
| 16. | Mr. M. T. Saifdeen | Treasurer | Sri Lanka Inbound tourist Association (SALITO) Youth |
| 17. | Ms. R. Esther Goonathilleke | Manager sales and Marketing | Columbus Tours |
| 18. | Ms. A. A. Mihiri Perera | Coordinator Volunteer Programme | Child Action Lanka |
| 19. | Mr. R. S. de Mel | Executive Director | SERVE |
| 20. | Mr. K. D. R. D. Fernando | Coordinator | SERVE |
| 21. | Ms. Bianca Abeygoonawardana | Advisor / Freelance | Freelance Researcher |
| 22. | Rev. M. A. Don Jayalath | Director | Blooming Buds Social Foundation |

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|-----|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 23. | Mr. A. C. M. Rumaiz | Executive Director | Child Vision |
| 24. | Mr. S. Nimal Kumar | National Secretary | Sri Lanka Red Cross |
| 25. | Mr. Nalaka Siriwardena | Country Manager | Child Fund Sri Lanka |
| 26. | Mr. Kaushal Attanayake | Child Protection & Advocacy Specialist | Child Fund Sri Lanka |
| 27. | Ms. K. N. Pathirana | Communications Lead | Emerge Lanka Foundation |
| 28. | Ms. K. G. Inoka | Manager | Sambol Foundation |
| 29. | Ms. Thimasha D. Thaapalage | Teacher & Safe House Caregiver | Sambol Foundation |
| 30. | Mr. S. P. Tharindu Kasunpriya | Manager for Centre Operation | The T. E. A. Project |
| 31. | Ms. N. H. Rehana Wettasinghe | Manager - MJF Centres | MJF Charitable Foundation |
| 32. | Mr. Reggie Paul | Programme Officer | MJF Charitable Foundation |
| 33. | Ms. Chathurani Hettiarachchi | Programme Officer | Caritas Sri Lanka |
| 34. | Mr. Supasan Deemantha | District Governor Programme Coordinator -Youth Empowerment | Leo Club International |
| 35. | Mr. M. W. Ashan Shanaka Silva | Child Development Coordinator | Kithu Sevena |
| 36. | Ms. I. S. Sayuri Weerasooriya | Programme Coordinator | National Christian Council of Sri Lanka |
| 37. | Ms. Shavindri Darius | PA to General Secretary | National Christian Council of Sri Lanka |
| 38. | Mr. R. A. Roshan Fernando | President General Manager | Rural Enterprise Network Derana Media Network |
| 39. | Mr. W. K. Lahiru Lakmal | Journalist - Assistant News Producer & News Presenter | Sri Lanka Rupavahini Cooperation |
| 40. | Mr. M. Nimesha Silva | Journalist - Assistant News Producer & News Presenter | Independent Television Network (ITN) |
| 41. | Ms. Methmalie Dissanayake | Journalist | Ceylon Today |
| 42. | Ms. R. Priyadarshini | Journalist | Tamilan / Freelance |
| 43. | Ms. Preethika Sakalasooriya | Director - Legal | National Child Protection Authority |
| 44. | Ms. A. G. Dimuthu Gallappatti | Assistant Director - Planning and Monitoring | National Child Protection Authority |
| 45. | Ms. K. Kalaatharshani | Programme Officer | National Child Protection Authority |
| 46. | Mr. Suren Dickmadugoda | Counsellor | National Child Protection Authority |
| 47. | Ms. M. V. M. Edirisinghe | District Psychosocial Officer | National Child Protection Authority |
| 48. | Ms. W. A. R. Tharanga | District Psychosocial Officer | National Child Protection Authority |

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| 49. | Ms. T. M. Udeni Pushpakanthi | District Psychosocial Officer | National Child Protection Authority |
| 50. | Ms. M. U. Pannigala Gamage | Child Protection Officer | National Child Protection Authority |
| 51. | Ms. T. L. Liyana Gunawardana | Child Protection Officer | National Child Protection Authority |
| 52. | Ms. W. T. Senani Silva | Child Protection Officer | National Child Protection Authority |
| 53. | Ms. Sandareka Liyanaage | Assistant Commissioner | Department of Probation and Child Care Services |
| 54. | Ms. Dilini N. Gamage | Deputy Director | Department of Probation and Child Care Services |
| 55. | Ms. D. Peshala R. Abeyasooriya | Provincial Commissioner (Western Province) | Department of Probation and Child Care Services |
| 56. | Ms. Sandeepanie N. Dammullage | Deputy Commissioner (Southern Province) | Department of Probation and Child Care Services |
| 57. | Ms. Nirmalee Perera | Senior Probation Officer | Department of Probation and Child Care Services |
| 58. | Ms. Inoka Wijesinghe | Probation Officer (Western Province) | Department of Probation and Childcare Services |
| 59. | Ms. M. N. K. F. Manthrinayake | Lawyer | Freelance Lawyer |
| 60. | Ms. Amali E. Ranasinghe | Lawyer | Freelance Lawyer |
| 61. | Mr. Mohammed Mahuruf | Executive Director | PEaCE |
| 62. | Ms. Lasya Hettigamage | Programme Officer | PEaCE |
| 63. | Mr. Sahan Wiratunga | Senior Project Officer | PEaCE |
| 64. | Ms. Vivetha Guneratnam | Project Officer | PEaCE |
| 65. | Ms. Indira Aryaratne | Moderator | Freelance Consultant |
| 66. | Ms. Nadee Jayaweera | Rapporteur | Freelance |
| 67. | Mr. Roshan Priyadharshana | Reporter | Freelance Consultant |

Agenda

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 08:45 – 09.30 | Registration and morning tea / coffee |
| 09.30 – 09.35 | Introductions Moderator. Ms. Indira Aryaratne |
| 09.35 – 09.45 | Opening Address Mr. Mohamad Mahuruf, Executive Director, PEaCE / ECPAT Sri Lanka |
| 09.45 – 10.00 | Experience sharing on designing and implementation of voluntourism programmes Mr. Dhinush Jayasuriya - Education Director SOS Children's Village |
| 10.00 – 10.15 | Volunteering in an orphanage could do more harm than good Ms. Tanuja Dissanayake - Commissioner, Department of Probation and Child Care Services |
| 10.15 – 10.25 | Introducing focus areas of the group discussions, group topics, group leaders, structure and group presentation format. Moderator, Ms. Indira Aryaratne |
| Managing Sustainable Travel and Tourism while Safeguarding Children | |
| 10.25 – 11.25 | Group 1 Voluntourism - Is it beneficial or harmful for children in Sri Lanka Leader: Mr Sanjeeewa de Mel, Executive Director, SERVE |
| | Group 2 Impacts of volunteering on children in orphanages and childcare centres. Leader: Nirmalee Perera, Senior Probation Officer, Department of Probation Child Care Services |
| | Group 3 Challenges in managing and monitoring volunteer programmes in childcare institutions. Leader: Mr. Nalaka Siriwardane, Country Manager, Child Fund Sri Lanka |
| | Group 4 Role and challenges of law enforcement agencies in facilitating a child abuse-free tourism. Leader: SSP Nawas, Senior Superintendent of Police, Director Police Tourist Division |
| 11.25 – 12.15 | Facilitating the group presentations & key points consolidations Moderator, Ms. Indira Aryaratne |
| 12.15 – 13.00 | Lunch |
| 13.00 – 13.15 | Legal interventions to protect children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism |

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| | Ms. Renuka Jayasundera, DIG, Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women - Sri Lanka Police |
| 13.15 – 13.30 | Challenges in law enforcement in the travel and tourism sector Ms. Preethika Sakalasooriya, Director (Legal) National Child Protection Authority |
| 13.30 – 13.45 | The international code of conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in travel and tourism Mr. Sahan Wiratunga, ECAPT Sri Lanka |
| 13.45 – 13.55 | Introducing focus areas of the group discussions, theme of each group and the group leaders. Moderator, Ms. Indira Aryaratne |
| Mapping an Actionable Ethical Code and Directives for the Future | |
| 13.55 – 14.50 | Group 1 Sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism - why child protection laws fail and how to improve them. Leader: Renuka Jayasundera, DIG, Bureau for the Prevention of Abuse of Children and Women - Sri Lanka Police. |
| | Group 2 Code of conduct, ethical considerations, and monitoring tools for volunteer programmes. Leader: Sushetha Gopallawa, Senior Manager-Counter Trafficking, Save the Children |
| | Group 3 Responsibilities of child-centred organizations towards safeguarding children from abuse and exploitation when conducting volunteer programmes. Leader. Mr. Chandila Colombage - Technical Advisor - Child Protection and Child Participation, World Vision Lanka |
| | Group 4 Role of the state and non-state actors in promoting sustainable tourism while safeguarding children. Leader: Ms. Preethika Sakalasooriya, Director (Legal) National Child Protection Authority |
| 14.50 – 15.50 | Facilitating the group presentations & key points consolidations Moderator, Ms. Indira Aryaratne |
| 15.50 - 16.15 | Directives for the future Ms. Indira Aryaratne |
| 16:15 – 16.25 | Vote of Thanks Ms. Lasya Hettigamage, Programme Officer, PEaCE/ECPAT Sri Lanka |

