



## **ECPAT International REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

### **Consultancy:**

**Theory-based Evaluation of The Code  
to protect children in travel and tourism**

#### **ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT**

ECPAT International is a global network of organisations working together for the elimination of the sexual exploitation of children (SEC) in all its manifestations i.e., exploitation of children in prostitution, online child sexual exploitation, sale and trafficking of children for sexual purposes, sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism and some forms of child, early and forced marriage. The ECPAT Network currently consists of 125 members working at national and local levels in 105 countries.

The ECPAT International Secretariat coordinates the global work of the organisation and is based in Bangkok, Thailand. The Secretariat designs and implements global and regional level programmes, and undertakes programming, advocacy and research and facilitates a range of network initiatives.

#### **THE CODE - CONTEXT**

Codes of conduct have long been embraced to promote corporate social responsibility, the importance of self-regulation, and voluntary rule-setting.<sup>1</sup> Corporate codes of conduct are often considered important by companies and stakeholders, but they are not the only instruments for addressing complex issues of child protection like the sexual exploitation. The opportunities they offer to engage in child protection, but also the limitations they face to contribute to societal changes, are not always clear, or not evaluated, and impact their effectiveness.

The issue of the sexual exploitation of children by traveling offenders was brought to the attention of the public in the 1990s by the ECPAT movement and the travel and tourism sector has taken the lead within the private sector to prevent child sexual exploitation. [The Code](#) of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism (The Code) emerged from the 1996 World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm. Following a meeting in the Swedish Parliament, ECPAT Sweden consulted stakeholders to decide on the steps that the private sector needed to take in order to prevent tourism from 'enabling' the sexual exploitation of children. The Code was implemented for the first time in 1998 by Fritidsresor, a Swedish travel company with a strong interest in

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<sup>1</sup> Kolk A., Van Tulder R. *The Effectiveness of Self regulation: Corporate Codes of Conduct and Child Labour*. European Management Journal. 2002.



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sustainable tourism. Over time, The Code was gradually adopted by other suppliers.<sup>2</sup> At its original inception, The Code was not intended as a tool for global implementation. However, it was subsequently adopted by others, specifically the ECPAT network, and later gained the support of The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).<sup>3</sup>

Since this, there have been various developments in the area of private sector engagement – moving from the concept of corporate social responsibility to their responsibility to respect and uphold human and children’s rights. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights were adopted in 2011 and the Children’s Rights and Business Principles developed by UNICEF, the UN Global Compact, and Save the Children define the scope of responsibility towards children. As part of these principles, the development and implementation of child protection codes of conduct for business operations are promoted.

The international travel and tourism industry has concentrated efforts on educating members on child sexual exploitation and offering them guidance on how they can contribute to its prevention and eradication. The codes of conduct have been among the key strategies for regulating this industry. Some umbrella organisations have established standards to control and regulate membership and some governments mostly in Latin America, have included compliance with The Code and/or with national codes of conduct within licensing of accommodation or tourist operators.

The Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism is an initiative developed in cooperation with the industry and ECPAT International. The Code has currently 400 members in 56 countries, working closely with civil society organisations on the ground. More about The Code and its criteria: [www.thecode.org](http://www.thecode.org)

### THEORY-BASED EVALUATION

In 2012, UNICEF reviewed the impact of the Code via a literature review and case studies of implementation and impact in Costa Rica, Thailand, and the Netherlands.<sup>4</sup> There was generally positive feedback from the case studies but the poor definition of outcomes in all three countries made it difficult to assess change and the impact. In 2016, a new publication on child sexual exploitation and travel and tourism from UNICEF in contribution to the Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism urged on the need to generate knowledge through research and documentation of promising experiences and lessons learned, and monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes to assess the impact and generate evidence on effective approaches.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Unicef Innocenti Research Center. *Assessing the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism – Discussion Paper*. 2012

<sup>3</sup> Unicef Innocenti Research Center. *Assessing the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism – Discussion Paper*. 2012

<sup>4</sup> Unicef Innocenti Research Center. *Assessing the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism – Discussion Paper*. 2012

<sup>5</sup> Unicef. *Government, civil society and private sector responses to the prevention of sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism. A technical background document to the Global Study on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism*. 2016



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Some of the limitations to such assessments is that The Code does not have a clearly defined theory of change, linking activities to intended results. Without this, it is difficult to establish useful indicators and measure progress<sup>6</sup> beyond the defined 6 criteria with which all the member companies are requested to comply and report on annually.

**ECPAT International is looking for a consultant or a group of consultants/consultancy company to conduct an evaluation of The Code – in three pilot countries** (tentative options Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, and The Netherlands).

The evaluation needs to consider the evolving context of business and human rights, including due diligence obligatory laws and standards, as well as the global understanding that what works best is a “smart mix” of obligatory and voluntary measures.

A **realist evaluation** is recommended for this work to identify “**What works, for whom, in what respects, to what extent, in what contexts, and how?**”.<sup>7</sup> In order to answer that question, it will be critical to analyse the underlying mechanisms that explain ‘how’ the outcomes were caused and the influence of contexts.

### EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

- **A global Theory of Change** for The Code developed with international stakeholders from various tourism businesses, from sending and receiving countries developed ex post to reconstruct the theory and change pathways initially expected
- **National-levels Theory of Change** developed with local stakeholders, ex post based on field level data from the selected countries
- **A synthesized report presenting the findings of the evaluation** of The Code, based on the theory-based evaluations conducted in the selected countries to identify (40-50 pages max)
  - What was achieved through The Code implementation?
  - What has worked for what type of actors (governments, tourism companies, local CSOs, children etc)
  - How have The Code theory and interventions evolved in different contexts?
  - How does The Code, as a voluntary initiative, complement or contribute to the industry standards such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) criteria, Travel life standards, and others?
- **A report presenting a set of recommendations** to strengthen the Code’s interventions and a scale-up strategy
- **A documented methodology, process and all related tools** for replicating realist evaluations of the implementation of The Code in other contexts and for other actors

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<sup>6</sup> Unicef Innocenti Research Center. *Assessing the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism – Discussion Paper*. 2012

<sup>7</sup> Van Belle S., Westthopr G, Marchal B. [Realist Evaluation](#).



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### TASKS

- A- Participate in a Steering committee:** composed of 6-8 key stakeholders to provide feedback
- B- Develop the process, methodology and tools** for the theory-based evaluation
- C- Lead the development of the various programme theories at global and national levels.** This will imply
  - a. **Undertake literature review** to understand and analyse the contexts and to identify theories and existing evidence or realist reviews to contribute to understanding the way in which The Code contributes
  - b. **Conduct key informant interviews at global level** (15 to 25) to document knowledge, experience and assumptions of the ones designing the interventions of The Code and how they expected it will work
  - c. **Conduct key informant interviews in the selected countries** (approx. 20)
  - d. **Lead workshop analysis** with multi-sectoral stakeholders in each of the pilot countries to develop the theory/ies of change
- D- Collect additional data for the evaluation** as needed - the data collection methods and tools need to be developed by the consultant in consultation with a group of experts and will consist in both quantitative and qualitative data
- E- Analyse the data collected:** done by the consultant with joint review with key stakeholders at local and global levels
- F- Refine the Theory of Change** for The Code based on the various evidence and data collected
- G- Write the report on findings and recommendations**

### CONSULTANT PROFILE

The consultant or groups of consultants need to have

- Demonstrated experiences in conducting similar evaluation processes
- Expertise in theory-based evaluations
- Experiences in working on child rights/child protection issues
- Previous collaboration with the private sector is desirable
- Working capacities in English and Spanish languages
- Ability to conduct the work in the selected countries.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- This is a home-based position using its own equipment. The consultants should be available for travels and for online calls including with different time zones from Latin America, Europe and Thailand where ECPAT International Secretariat is based.
  - The Consultant is expected to act at all times in a manner consistent with the values of ECPAT International and in compliance with the organisation's policies and procedures including Child Safeguarding Policy and the Code of Conduct.
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**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST:** please send to [vacancy@ecpat.org](mailto:vacancy@ecpat.org)

- A technical and methodological proposal (5 pages max)
- A financial proposal – with details of costs (daily fees, etc)
- CV and examples of previous work

Mention in the subject header: **Your name and “The Code Evaluation”**

**Deadline: 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023**

ECPAT International is committed to keeping children safe. The selection process reflects our commitment to the safeguarding of children.