



Research Report - Research to Identify Human Rights Issues and Solutions in Thai village Tourism

*Field research, qualitative interviews and round table to prepare actionable solutions
for stakeholders to better support human rights in Thai village tourism.*

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Introduction

Between May and October 2022, Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA) and Fair Tourism conducted field research on Human Rights in Thai village tourism. Their main goal was to better understand human rights issues in Thai village tourism and to deliver recommendations for actions that tourism stakeholders can take to better support human rights in Thai villages.

There are many definitions of human rights. This report uses the United Nations definition:

“Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone is entitled to these rights, without discrimination.” - United Nations (n.d.)

Human rights are an integral but often overlooked part of the tourism industry, and a necessary consideration in creating more inclusive and equitable services and opportunities.

Since the scope of this research is on human rights in Thai village tourism, it aims to provide clear recommendations for how tourism businesses and stakeholders can work together, to realise the aim of happy community members, living in peace, without fear, and the ability to earn a decent living while providing a warm welcome and a good experience for tourists.

During the past twenty years, a growing number of tourists have sought out ‘authentic local experiences’, and it has become easier and more common for tourists to visit a village as part of a tour program. There are many touch-points where tourism in local villages can support or undermine human rights including women's empowerment, access to decent work and working conditions, uplifting quality of life, the right to represent one's own culture in one's own words, respect for different cultures and human dignity, community participation, creating job opportunities, and fair income distribution to involved people.

We can see that tourism has the potential to relieve poverty, support the dignity of local community members providing services to tourists, and thus improve the human rights within a destination. However, tourism is frequently based on unequal power relations. Too often, the wishes of tourists are placed above the needs of the local community (Cole & Eriksson, 2010).

This research is one of the outputs of the EU SWITCH-ASIA funded Tourlink project. Tourlink aims to support Thai tour operators and suppliers, from hotels to transportation companies and community-based tourism, to achieve common standards for sustainability; and to strengthen and promote Thailand as a leading sustainable tourism destination. This is essential to create and facilitate tourism services that are sustainable, equitable, and beneficial to communities, tour operators, suppliers and tourists.

Within this frame, human rights is one focus area to make Thai tourism more sustainable. In general, useful work has already been undertaken on human rights in Thai tourism by ‘Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism’ (Human Rights Round Table, 14 September 2022). Our team has studied and utilised outcomes of this existing work. This research, as part of Tourlink, aims to build on this, by focusing specifically on human rights in Thai villages that welcome tourists.

As a part of the Tourlink project, this research aims to improve tourism stakeholders' ability to provide their services in a more sustainable way and create a better experience for both tourists and locals. Understanding the specifics of human rights issues within Thai village tourism will enable organisations and companies along the tourism supply chain to design more effective measures to make the industry fairer and better for those participating in it.

The research consisted of 4 key steps:

- 1) Desk research
- 2) Field research
- 3) Human rights Round Table
- 4) Research analysis and recommendations

Desk research consists of information study from articles, research, and websites which are related to human rights issues in Thai village tourism context.

Field research consisted of semi-structured interviews with community members in several villages as well as non-profit organisations working on human rights in Thailand. In the tourism supply chain, Destination Management Companies (DMCs) play a core role offering tour operation services covering the whole destination of Thailand, from major sights to remote villages, to European outbound travel agents and tour operators. DMCs were also a core target group, interviewed to learn about their hands-on experiences related to the topic.

On 14 September 2022, a multi-stakeholder **Round Table on Human Rights in Thai Village Tourism** was organised, attended by X Thai DMCs. This event created a space for DMCs to meet professional human rights organisations, share perspectives and brainstorm solutions and best practices. It was a fascinating blend of principles and practice. Recommendations from the round table informed Tourlink training for tour guides and community representatives in September 2022.

Research analysis was undertaken as a team between European (Fair Tourism) and Thai (DASTA) partners, with input from other Tourlink project partners.

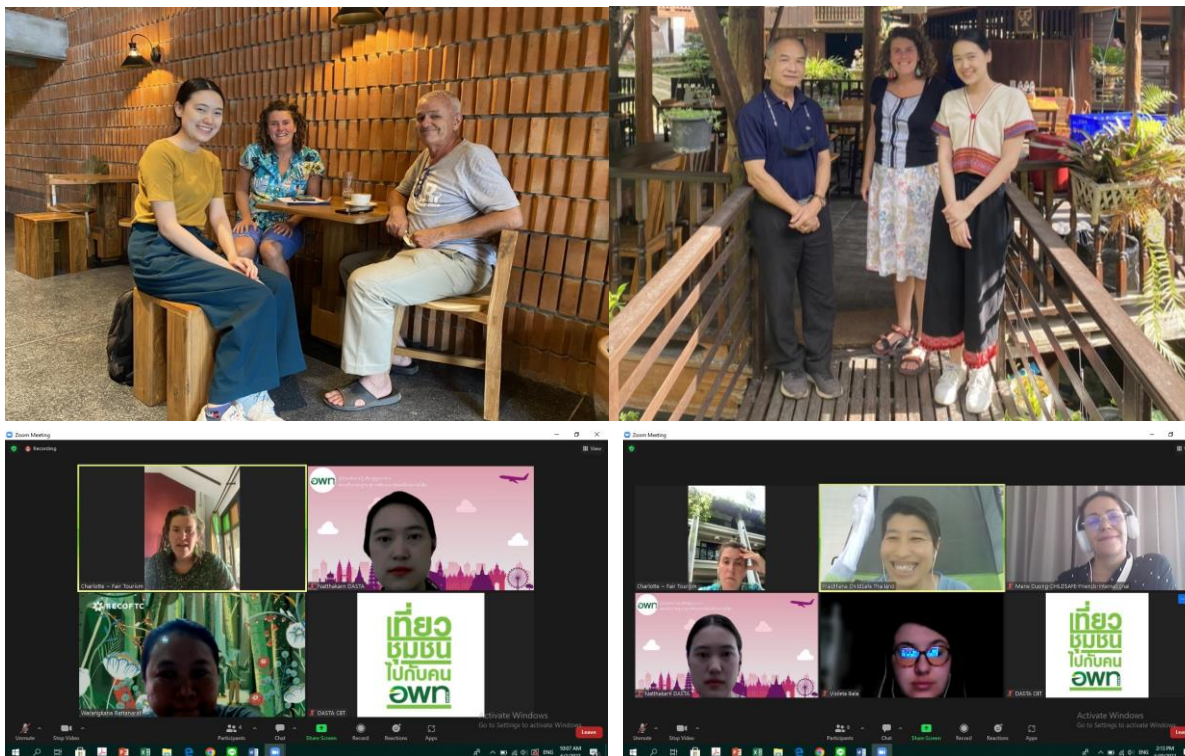
The team identified 6 key human rights issues connected to Thai village tourism.

These are:

- 1) protecting children in local communities,
- 2) treating ethnic minorities with respect,
- 3) working to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation related to tourism in local communities,
- 4) supporting equality of opportunity in local communities offering tourism services,
- 5) reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities and
- 6) supporting fair and safe working conditions for local community members offering tourism services.

In this report you can find the key results of this research and the **recommendations on actionable solutions** improving Human Rights in Thai village tourism.

This report consists of 4 parts. Part 1 is the executive summary with the key findings of this research. In Part 2, the research methodology will show the lessons learned from desk and field research, including results of 1) interviews with DMCs during the DMC research, 2) field interviews and 3) the HR round table recognised as separate steps of the methodology. Consecutively, these lessons are synthesised to reach the overall conclusions and recommendations. In Part 3, the 6 key human rights issues in Thai village tourism are explained. In this part, each issue will include the insights from desk research, communities, human rights experts and NGOs, DMCs as well as the solutions. In Part 4, the conclusions and recommendations for improving Human Rights in Thai village tourism are set apart.



Photos of different parts of the process, showing FT / DASTA team working together in the field and online

The executive summary below provides more information concerning each issue, provides desk research, communities and NGOs' views on it, as well as proposed solutions and recommendations.

Executive Summary

The TOURLINK project aims to raise sustainability standards along the Thai tourism supply chain, and link sustainable Thai tourism products and services to the European tourism market, where sustainability is an essential decision making factor. Human rights is one highly important issue for the tourism industry, including in the context of tours to villages.

The research “Human Rights in Thai village Tourism” aims to ***identify the human rights issues in Thai village tourism and identify practical solutions for improving human rights issues in Thai village tourism which leads to sustainable tourism in Thailand.***

The collaborative research, conducted by an EU-Thai team (Dutch NGO Fair Tourism and Thai ‘Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration’ (DASTA) aimed to ***identify how Thai tourism stakeholders can support human rights in Thai communities.***

The research delivered the following core findings and solutions, categorised under the six categories of ‘human rights issues in Thai village tourism’, which were identified:

1) Protecting children in local communities:

Children are involved in some village tourism activities such as performances and serving food. When these activities are conducted safely and do not disrupt school, they can have positive benefits, including learning traditional arts and cuisine, and participating in cross-generational activities promoting cultural continuity and self esteem. However, tour organisers (e.g. community based tourism group, tour operators and guides) need to ensure safety and appropriate working hours. Sensitive activities like school visits need very careful planning and operation, and visits to orphanages should be forbidden.

Raising awareness, education, economic development and fair income distribution can help to avoid child labour. Creating decent work for adults can make it easier for parents to send their children to school. ***Communities can*** collaborate with child protection organisations and schools to raise awareness in local communities by training and educating children to understand child rights and privacy, and how to prevent abusive situations by tourism. However, this needs to be done in a delicate manner and requires significant trust building.

DMCs should implement child protection policies and a code of conduct, provide support to children in the community by creating positions as part-time youth tour guides, training their staff on child rights, providing information to tourists before visiting the community and donating to organisations that provide support to children. DMCs should educate the visitors before they interact with the community. They should also not support suppliers which use child labour and should not make or encourage donations directly to children.

The Department of Tourism and DASTA should work with updated CBT standards for child protection in tourism and consult with communities on creating policy regulations. ***Government and NGOs can*** work together on creating child protection policies, code of conducts, and homestay guidelines, as well as provide training for stakeholders in order to avoid child labour and sexual abuse. Creating a strong network is also necessary to build relationships and trust for all stakeholders to work together on child protection.

2) Treating ethnic minorities with respect: There are some disrespectful behaviours towards ethnic minorities from visitors and tourist guides including noise pollution (village 3), exploitation, invasion of privacy, lack of respect, and attempts at haggling for handicrafts (other stakeholders).

Other issues are unequal payments, exploitation and some negative attitudes towards ethnic minorities among the Thai population. There are several solutions that could facilitate better treatment for ethnic minorities. **Ethnic minorities can** discuss with the Human Rights NGOs and DMCs to understand disrespectful behaviours for them, then create their regulations to prevent disrespectful behaviours from tourists. Furthermore, they can participate in training for better understanding of different cultures, tourists' expectations and false advertising prevention.

“There is a problem with people from outside not knowing the context of this community and make loud noises.” Village 3

Governments and NGOs should collaborate to develop regional policies and code of conducts for every stakeholder to protect ethnic minorities. Providing joint training for stakeholders including suppliers, local guides and local communities can create better understanding and sharing work and experiences to each other. Since each community is different, the first step is to consult with the villagers to clearly understand what is disrespectful to them. For example, expectations of levels of privacy are very different in the West and between one culture and another (even within Thailand) and so need to be understood from the inside out.

DMCs and tourist guides should confer with the community about village visits or activities before launching a tour program, to create an equal partnership. They can also provide information to tourists about the local way of life, what is considered to be respectful or disrespectful behaviour, local norms, the value and fixed price of handicrafts, etc to prevent uncomfortable situations. DMCs can implement a code of conduct to encourage more respectful behaviour and discourage high commissions for professional guides. **Professional guides and local guides can** agree on roles and responsibilities when visiting the community for better and equal work collaboration.

3) Working to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation related to tourism in local communities: Violence and sexual harassment needs to be reduced and prevented in local communities. As the issue is very sensitive, **DMCs can** take action to prevent it by creating and implementing guidelines and policies. Collaboration with **NGOs can** raise awareness about the issues of sexual abuse and exploitation, and how to protect community members, tourists and tour staff. **Governments can** include good practices in codes of conduct, guidelines and standards such as CBT standard and homestay guidelines, check whether these standards and guidelines are followed, provide training for stakeholders, and promote among others to implement guidelines and policies. **Related government organisations can**

be responsible for preventing these issues based on their roles and responsibilities such as police, tourist police, Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, etc.

4) Supporting equality of opportunity in local communities offering tourism services:

Opening opportunities to all community members to participate is a key to success for this issue. Women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities should have opportunities to participate in tourism, based on their expertise. **Governments and NGOs** can provide knowledge and training to all stakeholders, as well as using community-based tourism (CBT) as a tool for community participation and broader income distribution.

Thereby, tourists can contribute to empowering women and enhancing their pride and self esteem. This can facilitate more equal participation of women in tourism related activities. Additionally, giving training to village heads about Gender Responsive Participatory Budgeting (GRPB) and local administrative actors can lead to an equal share of income. **Communities can** have an informal community meeting to work together and provide more job opportunities in the community. Communities should open up their CBT activities to new, potential members at least one time per year. Furthermore, **DMCs can** create a policy of no commissions for guides. **DMCs and communities need** to work together as partners to make decisions for offering tourism services.

5) Reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities: Communities face many environmental impacts from tourism including pollution, waste, water shortages, and natural degradation. Possible solutions include **communities** implementing resource management systems and carrying capacity with the support of government and NGOs. Open communication and transparency are necessary for communities to improve natural resources management. **DMCs can** protect the environment by supporting local natural resources with funds and CSR activities like planting trees, cleanups and working with environmental organisations for nature protection. **Governments can** invite experts and provide training to tourism stakeholders on water, energy, plastics saving measures and other environmental topics to tourism stakeholders. Certification systems (backed by authorities) can help communities to access and manage natural resources in their area. **NGOs and universities can** also provide training and raise awareness of natural protection as well as create local education standards to all stakeholders. By following the *Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)*, land grabbing can be reduced. Additionally, all tourism stakeholders can use the 7 Greens Concept, launched by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) as a guideline for reducing the negative impact on the environment.

6) Supporting fair and safe working conditions for local community members offering tourism services:

Fair and safe working conditions in tourism are a top priority for most communities. However, issues like unsafe working conditions, anti-social hours, unfair distributions of profits between stakeholders, market saturation, and informal work still take place. **Communities can** have a regular community meeting to consider / define fair and safe working conditions for local community members offering tourism services. **Governments and NGOs can** provide training to communities and all stakeholders to gain more knowledge and skills in CBT and tourism services. CBT can be a tool for facilitating fair income and employment opportunities, which can help solve problems like unfair income distribution, unemployment, and unsafe working conditions. Additionally, travel companies and tour operators can voluntarily put *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)* and *Responsible Tourism*

policies in place to prevent exploitation. **DMCs can** create a policy to support communities like no commissions for guides. Furthermore, DMCs can also work together with villages to develop CBT with fair cost calculation and price to ensure that they share tourism profits to the community and every member is benefiting from tourism. Another approach is to teach local communities how to add value to their tourism services so they can command a higher price in the market. When there is a lot of competition for cheap experiences, it might be better to focus on improving the quality of the tourism services and charging more instead of trying to negotiate lower prices.

Throughout the report a lot of insights are discussed from different points of views that were gathered during the desk research, interviews and the round table. The table below shows a summarised overview of the insights from desk research, the communities, Human Rights NGO's and DMCs that are discussed in this report.

Insights from desk research	Village views / needs / Insights from communities	Insights / recommendations from Human Rights NGO	Insights / recommendations from DMCs
1. Protecting children in local communities			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Economic development and fair income distribution can reduce poverty and provide ability to finance education for the children (also potentially reducing pressure on children to work) 	<p>A positive situation for villagers is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children only work outside of school hours / only a few times a month - Children can learn from cultural interaction with tourists - Interaction always supervised; prevention of abuse - Children and parents decide together if and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Education, health and development should not be at risk - Children should never be alone with tourists - Children begging and jumping at you is a red flag - Gift giving (incl. money) could cause conflict among community children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn begging into giving donations - During homestays: separate bedrooms for owners and guests and no unattended children with guests

Insights from desk research	Village views / needs / Insights from communities	Insights / recommendations from Human Rights NGO	Insights / recommendations from DMCs
	when the work - no enforcement		
2. Treating ethnic minorities with respect			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NGO's are major source of information for migrant workers - Negative attitude of Thai population towards migrant workers, which is slowly improving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disrespectful behaviour of tourists towards ethnic minorities - Noise pollution in villages - Negative attitude of Thai population towards ethnic minorities - Exploitation by companies in tourism industry, such as taking majority of the profit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local communities should be better understood and respected - There should be equal partnership between local communities and DMCs - There should be equal income opportunities - Ethnic minorities should not be used as photo opportunity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies to prevent disrespectful behaviour must be created - It is important to constantly evaluate visits with the community - Expectations of the visitors should be managed so they know what to expect
3. Working to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation related to tourism in local communities			

Insights from desk research	Village views / needs / Insights from communities	Insights / recommendations from Human Rights NGO	Insights / recommendations from DMCs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mainly women working in spas and housekeeping are at risk of sexual harassment in the workplace - Children are at risk of sexual abuse - Policies, interventions and eliminating child labour can prevent sexual abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No sexual threat in the communities spoken to (Note :that this isn't surprising due to low trust and context of short interview) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human-trafficking risks come from within the communities - Violence towards women from people under influence of drugs - drugs received for example from visiting guides - Thailand's reputation as sex destination causes sexual threats towards women - Homestays have an increased risk of harassment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Including sexual exploitation in the code of conduct could help prevent it - Staff should be trained on risks and impact - People with disabilities are at higher risk - Actions to protect female DMC staff, like tour guides and drivers. Many stories of female guides and drivers being threatened.

4. Supporting equality of opportunity in local communities offering tourism services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empowering women - giving training about Gender Responsive Participatory Budgeting (GRPB) 	<p><i>According to the communities we spoke to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No gender differences - No discrimination towards women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based upon community forestry, women are less employed in management/ governance positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equality within the community by promoting system - Equality between guides by support local guides in getting their professional licence
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5. Reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities

Insights from desk research	Village views / needs / Insights from communities	Insights / recommendations from Human Rights NGO	Insights / recommendations from DMCs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementing development strategies to reduce negative impact on the environment: waste and water waste management, resource efficiency - Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) launched the 7 <i>Greens Concept</i> - There are 9 tools available to support sustainable natural resource management (SNRM) in communities from RECOFT, DASTA, DEQP, and TGO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Noise and waste pollution - Land grabbing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using the natural surroundings for tourism could destroy it - When the environment is suffering, it has an impact on humans - Villagers themselves are also accountable for the pollution - Local communities experience water shortage because when water is distributed, preference is given to businesses and tourism facilities rather than to local communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biggest responsibility of DMCs: choosing a village where environmental protection measures are taken and nature is being respected - Education and long term thinking is key
6. Supporting fair and safe working conditions for local community members offering tourism services			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many international tour operators are exploiting local communities and benefit from the “eagerness” of locals - Travel companies and tour operators have now voluntarily put <i>Corporate Social</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Including locals in CBT management is necessary - Decent pay in tourism communities - Community fund is helpful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Informal workers in tourism do not have access to social security - Commission payments to tour guides are hindering economic inclusion - Some villages in the North are completely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A fair and competitive remuneration was given to people actively involved in a project - Giving equal opportunities, the working conditions become more fair

Insights from desk research	Village views / needs / Insights from communities	Insights / recommendations from Human Rights NGO	Insights / recommendations from DMCs
<i>Responsibility (CSR) and Responsible Tourism policies in place</i>		dependent on tourism income	

Table 1 : Village Views and NGO Views of Human Rights Issues in Thai Village Tourism

The human rights solutions identified by NGOs and village representatives, during the field research and the round table, are summarised in the following table. Thereby, HR issue 1 & 3 are grouped in column one. The same applies for HR issue 4 & 6, which are grouped in column three.

Child Protection/ Sexual Abuse Prevention	Treating ethnic minorities with respect	Supporting Equality of Opportunity/Supporting fair and safe working conditions	Reducing Environmental Impacts
Training of stakeholders: take villages context into account, build trust and relationships first	Creation of policies that need to be followed by guides: No commission for guides and loss of job if not followed	Collaborate to help everybody to come and work together– informal community meeting	Work with certification systems (backed by authorities)
Educate about privacy of students: photos etc pose threats, exchanging contacts can be dangerous	Involve local guide: agree who does what, training together, national guides as interpreters	Give opportunity to grow and get job promotion	Local education standards: set the example
Homestay guidelines	Training for (ethnic) minorities– empowerment	Flip thinking of overseas agents: invest and help us improve if you want to visit thailand	Transparency: where does the money go
Creation of policies, guidelines and code of conduct	Prevent false advertising/ manage expectations	Sharpened Solutions: 1. policy DMC→ no commissions for guides	Open communication
Build a strong network	Assess at levels:	2. Guidelines to follow	Take carrying

Child Protection/ Sexual Abuse Prevention	Treating ethnic minorities with respect	Supporting Equality of Opportunity/Supporting fair and safe working conditions	Reducing Environmental Impacts
	operational/ management etc.	otherwise lose job	capacity into account
Do not support suppliers which use child labour	Regional policy/code of conduct for every stakeholder to protect ethnic minorities	3. Training: guides and community	Stop blockage of natural resources (ie by hotels), so that communities can access them at all times.
Update CBT standards with additional criteria related to child safety / CSE	Education: - staff needs to understand code of conduct - guides need to know do's and don'ts - visitors need to know how to act	4. Empowerment training for ethnic minorities: capacity building so that communities can run tourism by themselves	
	Ask community about village visits/collaboration	DMCs +communities need to work together as partners to make decisions	

Table 2 : The solutions derived from the Human Rights Research and the Round Table

Finally, the most important recommendations for improving human rights in Thai village tourism are a) creating a code of conduct and expansion of the company code of conduct, b) stakeholder training at the destinations, c) conveying the message to tourists, d) community training, e) ethnic minority empowerment training, f) reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities, g) creating a strong network among stakeholders, h) equal collaborations between DMCs and communities, and i) guidelines on the responsible governance of land tenure. According to these recommendations, all stakeholders can understand and assist each other to improve human rights in Thai village tourism.



Methodology

The following section describes the methodology of this research. The main aim of this study is ***to find out what human rights issues are present in Thai village tourism and what are potential solutions.***

The research methodology consists of desk research, field research, interviews, and human rights roundtable. Initially, desk research was undertaken to get a better understanding of the state of knowledge and initiatives related to human rights issues in (Thai) village tourism. Several reports, websites and articles related to human rights issues in (Thai) village tourism were studied. Some of the most important were, first of all, a report written by the Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism presents the key findings of a human rights impact assessment conducted in Thailand and in Myanmar. Secondly, the International Labour Organisation presented useful information about public attitudes towards migrant workers in Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand and a Toolkit on Poverty Reduction through Tourism. Hagedoorn (2013) wrote an article on Child Labour and Tourism, How travel companies can reduce child labour in tourism destinations. Lastly, the United Nations presented 17 Sustainable Development Goals including useful potential solutions. Among others, these reports, articles or websites were studied and useful information on human rights issues as well as potential solutions collected from this desk research were included in this report.

Following this, six Human Rights NGOs, six CBT villages (including two ethnic communities) and one supplier were interviewed about their experiences with human rights issues and actions they use to have positive impacts.

Based upon the interviews, ***six categories of human rights issues*** were identified.

1. Protecting children in local communities;
2. Treating ethnic minorities with respect;
3. Working to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation related to tourism in local communities;
4. Supporting equality of opportunity in local communities offering tourism services;
5. Reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities; and
6. Supporting fair and safe working conditions for local community members offering tourism services.

As a follow-up on the desk research and interviews, a round table on human rights issues in Thai village tourism was organised to work towards creating actionable solutions for tour operators to better support these human rights. Next to the Tourlink team, present during this round table event were Ms. Pradhtana Suwanpiam (ChildSafe), Mr. Ben Svasti (FOCUS), Mr. Udom Srimahachota (THA), Mr. Hayo Massop (Destination Asia), Ms. Grace Minnock (Intrepid Travel), Ms. Suvaree Uamkhao (Easia Travel), Ms. Nattaya Sektheera (Andaman Discoveries), Mr. Sommanat Manop (Destination Asia), Mr. Ronnakorn Triraganon (REFOCTC), Ms. Ingeborg Fallet Kristensen (Krabi Spezialisten), Mr. Narupon Pleanchuen (Asian Trails), Mr. Sam Goodey (Discovery Travel), Ms. Chiwan Suwannapak (PEAK DMC/Intrepid Travel) and Ms. Venus Pitinanon (EXO Travel).

The following section will describe the lessons learned from desk research, and the lessons learned from field research, including results of 1) interviews with DMCs during the DMC research, 2) field interviews and 3) the HR round table. To conclude, overall solutions are presented.



Round Table participants 14 September 2022 in Bangkok

Human rights issues

The following chapter will describe in detail which human rights issues were identified during desk research, and during field research interviews; by Thai villages, human rights experts active in Thailand, and DMCs.

The chapter is divided into six sections, representing the following *human rights issues*:

1. Protecting children in local communities;
2. Treating ethnic minorities with respect;
3. Working to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation related to tourism in local communities;
4. Supporting equality of opportunity in local communities offering tourism services;
5. Reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities; and
6. Supporting fair and safe working conditions for local community members offering tourism services.

Each section is divided into five subsections, describing insights from 1) desk research, 2) communities, 3) Human Rights NGOs, 4) DMCs, and 5) overall solutions.

The next section will focus on **HR Issue 1: *Protecting children in local communities***. Protecting children in local communities who are exposed to tourism and an influx of tourists is of high concern in the focus on securing human rights. This report includes a key focus on potential concerns occurring in Thai village tourism such as sexual abuse and inappropriate behaviour as well as children's loss of privacy, and risks of stimulating child labour and begging. This section of the report focuses specifically on the vulnerable population of children within the Thai tourism industry, and the potential risks that they face.

HR Issue 1: *Protecting children in local communities*

Generally, children are seen as a vulnerable group within tourism. Either because they are prone to child labour and some of the risks that come along, or because they risk being harmed by visitors (Baum et al., 2016; Canosa & Graham, 2016). The following section will provide insights from different stakeholders regarding the impacts of tourism on children in local communities and how they can best be protected.



Photo from DASTA

Insights from desk research

Child labour remains regular in the tourism industry. According to estimates, 13 – 19 million children under the age of 18 work in jobs related to tourism. The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines child labour as “work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development” (*Toolkit on Poverty Reduction Through Tourism*, International Labour Organization, 2013). This definition includes work that interferes with the schooling of the children e.g. work circumstances that denies them to attend school or to leave school earlier. Additionally, it includes work that harms children in a mental, physical or social way (*Toolkit on Poverty Reduction Through Tourism*, International Labour Organization, 2013).

The reason for much child labour in the tourism industry can be explained using the cycle of child labour perpetuating poverty. Thereby, it starts with families living in such poor conditions that they cannot afford sending their children to school (Hagedoorn, 2013).

According to human rights expert organisations, ***Child labour is usually encouraged by the parents***. They believe that they will have a better income when children take part in the tourism activities because the presence of the children touches people's hearts (Rahayu, 2019). The decision to stop going to school is usually an unilateral decision by the parents regardless of the desire or achievement talent possessed by the child itself. As a result, the children may receive little to no education and grow up without any basic skills and education which lead to the fact that they remain in low-paying work (Hagedoorn, 2013).

To avoid child labour, ***attention*** must be drawn to the problem once the most urgent and important cases are identified. Public attention can be achieved by the public and private sector, which may help to reach political action. ***Economic development and a fair income distribution*** can help to reduce poverty in a village or family (Bekele et al., 1995).

This evolves in a better financial situation and therefore, ***education*** for the children can be financed and they are not dependent on the salary of the child. Thus, the cycle of child labour perpetuating poverty can be dissolved (Hagedoorn, 2013).

The next sections will provide insights into the risks that children in communities face, described per stakeholder, followed by overall solutions. The first part will focus on the insights learned from communities and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from communities

Child labour

Every village has children working in CBT, however the reasons for their participation differ. Sometimes they want to take part themselves and will ask if they can do so, but in other cases adults ask children to participate. However, children's education is a priority for the villagers, so employment of children in CBT activities is only possible ***outside of school hours***. The majority of the activities are performance based with dancing or playing musical instruments, and in some cases, the children serve food. On the other hand, child participation in tourism activities can contribute towards continuity of culture, chance for exchange and learning between generations, stimulate pride in local identity etc. Many children involved in a limited way in CBT do enjoy it, so long as not too often, long or late at night.

Contact with tourists

This means that children may have direct contact with tourists. For some, this is seen as a good thing, because ***“children can preserve their culture and learn about the local wisdom, and also earn money from that.”*** (Village 2) There is not considered to be any sexual danger for the children, because ***“tourists don't do these things to children. No touch.”*** (Village 1)

The next section will focus on the insights learned from Human Rights NGOs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from Human Rights NGOs

Sexual abuse and inappropriate behaviour

Even though the communities spoken to did not experience sexual danger for children, the human rights NGOs do see this danger. Simply by welcoming visitors in their village, children are already being put at risk. Interviews with Human Rights NGOs state that, therefore, children should never be in contact with visitors— either for work or in their daily activities— without **adult supervision**. Children should also not be left alone in homestays to slightly mitigate the risk of abuse.

Other solutions that were being provided during the Tourkink Human Rights Round Table (Sep 22) were to have **homestay regulations**, and **educating** both community children and visiting tourists what is appropriate and what not. Children can for example be educated in school and tourists should receive information on the topic from the tour operators. In case sexual abuse does happen, a Child Safe agent can be called or the child abuse hotline, which in Thailand is 191. Even though *“tourism is not the cause of child exploitation, it does contribute”* (**NGO Panellist 1**) and it is important that everyone knows how to respond when they acknowledge a certain situation.

Children begging for money

The interviewed experts on child safety also acknowledge other potential risks for children in Thai village tourism, the first one being children **begging** for money. Because tourists give money or presents to the children directly, an increased amount of children will develop the habit of begging— either by their own choice, or by their parents telling them to do so. This also entails that they often **do not go to school**. Sometimes **organised crime** is also involved in the problem of begging, but this is rarely the case for Thai village tourism. In addition, gifts can cause conflicts amongst community children as not every child will get a gift or a gift of the same value, which can create jealousy. The distribution of money also creates issues, since the community often does not have a distribution system. The traditional solution is to stimulate tourists to not hand gifts or money to children even if they are begging. Tourists that are willing to help the community are advised to confer with their tour guide or tour operator about different long-term projects they can support.

Children becoming a tourist attraction

The next risk that children face is becoming a tourist attraction because tourists visit orphanages and schools. **Orphanage visits should always be a no-go, and potential school visits should be handled with the utmost care**. School visits can bring in money for the community, so it can be beneficial for them to offer these experiences. Many people want to donate to the school out of good intentions and therefore, it is also important to have good **regulation** in place for that. However, there is a continuous debate over whether these visits should be completely forbidden to protect children within the industry. The child safety expert does not advise a complete stop of school visits, but proposes that DMCs consult with the school principal when they can visit the school outside of classes. *“The DMCs then need to make the tourists understand that when it is the time to learn, they are interfering with that. The DMCs need to explain them.”* (**Human Rights NGO 4**) During the round table, it was

added that when children are not at school when tourists come, there is also no risk of exchanging contacts resulting in online abuse.

Children copying tourists

Another risk is that of children wanting to be like the tourists. This can happen in many ways, but **copying of their behaviour and looks** are things that frequently happen. An example mentioned in interviews was local children start dressing inappropriately for temple visits. Additionally, children face the risk of becoming **photo opportunities** and consequently having their right to **privacy** breached when travellers share their photos on social media. At a young age, children are still unaware of their privacy and why it could be important, and are therefore not able to make a well thought out decision.

Child labour

Lastly, child labour is often still happening in the tourism sector. In itself, this is not necessarily a bad thing, as it is integrated in Thai culture to help out the parents at work. **Human Rights NGOs therefore do not see child labour as a no-go, as long as the education and health of the children is not disturbed.**

Creating strong networks

Overall, it is important to create a strong network to protect the children in local communities, because *“it should be everyone’s responsibility to protect children from any harm or abuse regardless of their situation”*. **(NGO Panellist 1)** Everybody working on the touristic product, like the head of villages, homestay owners and DMCs, should be **on board and educated** about the issues. In collaboration, the stakeholders can tackle the problems best. **Training** about these topics can be sensitive, but NGOs, like Child Safe from Friends International, are experts and able to provide training. **Tourists** can also play a role in the protection of children by speaking up about what they see and intervening when needed. Children can be taken to a safe place whilst alarming the authorities. The DMCs can provide them with the necessary information about what to do when a situation occurs.

The next section focuses on the insights learned from DMCs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from DMCs

Education on child abuse

During the round table, the DMCs mostly spoke about solutions to prevent child abuse. DMC 1 states that the message about child protection should be spread to the tourists. In their opinion, the **DMCs are responsible to educate tourists** on *“how to do tourism the right way”*. These actions should already be taken before the tourist goes to the destination.

Turn begging into donations

In addition to that, the DMCs also proposed several measurements that can be taken on location. Begging and homestays were mentioned by the DMCs during the small group activity of the round table as activities that could be changed. Begging children is something the DMCs

absolutely do not support and they advise their tourists not to give to beggars. However, tourists often want to be able to contribute something and therefore, it might be interesting to **set up a fund that the tourists can donate to** via, for example, the DMCs. Local schools could be one of the beneficiaries to receive donations and supplies. This way, all children benefit and not only the ones that are lucky enough to receive a gift.

Homestay regulation

The other potentially harmful activity mentioned by the DMC representatives at the round table is staying at homestays. In order to minimise the chances of children being alone in the room with tourists, DMCs require **separate bedrooms for home owners and guests**. To avoid ruling out the poor who only have one bedroom and enlarging the income gap, there is a possibility to separate one big room into two by hanging curtains. Nonetheless, it is always **unacceptable to leave children unattended with tourists as well as exchange contacts or take photos of the children**.

Overall, it is important for the DMCs to not support the wrong supply chain. They will focus on working with suppliers that are known to work on child protection. The following section will present the overall solutions found during the interviews, round table and desk research.

Overall solutions

Due to a lack of careful consideration and management of child safety issues, children are very exposed in local communities. As everywhere, different types of child abuse can be present in local communities. Child labour, sexual abuse, begging and children becoming tourist attractions are some of the examples mentioned in the research. This abuse can come from within the community, but also from outside visitors. Tourism is not the cause of child exploitation, but it does contribute to the issue, and is therefore an essential consideration in bolstering human rights protections within the industry. From the perspective of risks to tourists and tourism staff, female guides, tour leaders and drivers are a high risk group, tourists can feel intimidated by local community guides if they join drinking in the evening etc. Sometimes, male village guides who may have had some sexual experiences with consenting tourists in the past, can become very pushy. Below, all potential solutions will be discussed per type of abuse.

Sexual abuse and exploitation

Child protection policies

Human Rights NGOs have mentioned that it is one of the responsibilities of DMCs to support and protect minors who are prone to sexual abuse. Implementing **child protection policies** and a **code of conduct** could help in protecting these children. Many policies are already present, which can be used as an example. In terms of content, regulations should include homestays and adult supervision. Homestays should always have separate rooms for hosts and guests, and children should not be allowed to interact with adults without adult supervision. Additionally, these policies should not only cover sexual abuse of minors, but include all potential risks that children in tourism can encounter.

Consulting with communities to create **policy regulations** is also essential for community safety and wellbeing, the operationalisation and long term success of policies. Knowing the individual norms and values of their society is beneficial in order to prevent policies being formed which take an incompatible “Western” perspective on issues and solutions. These policies could be reinforced with the aid of proper **training for the community members, DMC staff and guides** by organisations like DASTA, CBT-I or TRTA.

Raising awareness amongst the community

Raising awareness in local communities is another possible solution. What is considered appropriate sometimes differs per context. Regulations about appropriate behaviour are often proposed from a Western perspective. Village members might be familiar with these standards, and therefore awareness about this should be raised within these communities.

Understanding of child protection and welfare are necessary to the community. The community needs to identify their situation of children in tourism and raise awareness about issues which the villagers may lack experience with. Training and support could be performed by **outsiders**, but a **village head** could also provide support and explanations of the positive and negative impacts of certain issues. Risk recognition should be part of the training, e.g. understanding potential risks (red flags), do’s and don’ts and how children can protect themselves. As an outsider, one should be very cautious when it comes to giving advice. Additionally, village training collaborations would require being on the same page with the village head or leader.

Children from local communities could be **educated in schools** on how to interact with strangers, so personal information, such as personal phone numbers and social media accounts, are not readily shared. Educating children on the dangers of having direct interaction with visitors or taking photos with them could also contribute in preventing exploitation.

Due to a difference in culture, it is important that children are taught that they should not share a room with any of the visitors. This can be an issue in homestays when there are no separate rooms and the guest room is only separated by a curtain from the other parts of the house. It is essential that children sleep in a room (with their parents?) that can be locked.

Some communities are, however, very isolated - children might not even have an ID card or go to school. These communities are often very sensitive in regards to being told how to act by outsiders. This resistance often stems from their own religious beliefs, which limits external parties from discussing the change of certain norms. Some examples of these communally accepted norms are the age of consent and rules concerning marriage. Perspectives on these topics are not something that can be easily changed. However, education can help to raise awareness and over time those perspectives could change.

Sexual abuse is a topic that is very often a taboo in isolated communities, alongside gender issues. Therefore, training in these communities must be conducted in a **very delicate manner**, only mentioning concerns regarding these topics without demanding change.

Additionally, a certain sense of **trust must be built** before moving to more sensitive issues. Functional education regarding healthcare, sanitation and safety can be an effective way to build trust in these communities. Once this sense of trust has been established, other more

sensitive issues can be discussed. If this process is not handled in a delicate and socially aware manner, the community might shut down or reject any outside help or cooperation.

Educating tourists

Besides the communities themselves, other stakeholders, like guides and tourists, could also benefit from education and a higher awareness of these issues. People from the outside often have good intentions, but don't know how to help. ***Educating visitors before interacting with the community*** is beneficial in changing the perspective of tourists and to ***be aware of red flags***. Raising awareness could be done through a ***small campaign***, or other methods. Tourists could be made aware of these problems with a simple and clear reminder to contact a Child Safe Agent when child exploitation is suspected to take place. ***DMCs should be responsible*** for educating their guests.

Educating tourism employees

Tourism employees are an important link in the protection of children, because some of them are present during the tourism activities and could potentially ***address tourists who behave inappropriately*** towards children. DMC staff, local suppliers, drivers, guides and tourists could be educated and trained in ***recognizing the signs of child exploitation***. It should also be clear ***where these issues can be reported***. For example, via the Hotlines of Child Safe (1387), Tourist Police (1155), and Social Assistance Center (1300). On the other side, protecting tourism staff and tourists are important to prevent child exploitation which can be affected to those who visit the community as well.

DMCs supporting children

Not all actions to prevent child prostitution can be taken by DMCs, but they still can take effective measures in combating this human rights abuse. Research shows that children enter prostitution "voluntarily" due to poverty or a lack of future opportunities. Many of them claim that they would like to learn English so they can ***become tour guides*** (HR NGO 5). DMCs could possibly play a positive role in this by hiring them as guides after completing a guide training. DMCs can also ***donate money towards charities supporting children*** and adults that are rescued from sex work. DestinyRescue, Save the Children and the Foundation for the Better Lives of Children (FBLC) are a few of the countless organisations present in Thailand. These organisations are working towards providing children with the care and rehabilitation they need to reintegrate into society after exposure to sex work.

The above-mentioned solutions could possibly be undertaken in collaboration with child protection organisations, like Child Safe and FOCUS. They can help with training as well as risk assessments.

Child labour

Code of conduct

Child labour is often seen as not done, but the stakeholders in this research agree that child labour could be allowed because children working in tourism can also help them preserve their culture and learn more about local wisdom. Therefore, a code of conduct needs to be developed in order to implement child labour in a safe way without exploitation.

The conditions stated in the Code of Conduct that should be met are, amongst others, 1) work outside of school hours, 2) health is not compromised, 3) fair income, and 4) public supervision. DMCs have the responsibility to only work with villages that meet these conditions and regular check-ups should be done to ensure that these conditions are always met.

Begging

Donation to funds

Tourists should be made aware that the best way to help the community is not by donating to child beggars (this could further contribute to the funds of suppliers which utilise child labour), but instead **donate to projects or institutions which help these communities**. Schools are also a good beneficiary to receive goods and funds. DMCs could be the responsible organisation to find a good project for each community they are working with and to promote this project (and the request not to donate to beggars) to the tourists.

Children as a tourist attraction

Children have become tourist attractions in many different ways. Orphanage and school visits are most frequently mentioned and require special attention from DMCs.

Forbid orphanage visits

Orphanage visits are very attractive to tourists, but are an activity that should be forbidden under any circumstances, according to the participants of this research. Since tourists are most likely to stay in orphanages for a short period of time, this may add to the feelings of abandonment to the children. The children get attached to tourists in a short amount of time and have to re-live the feeling of abandonment when they leave again. Additionally, orphanage tourism puts children at risk of sexual exploitation and abuse. If there are still DMCs offering or facilitating orphanage visits, there is no other solution than completely **stopping these activities**.

School visits under certain circumstances

School visits are another activity where children risk being in contact with tourists. However, school visits can also be beneficial for the schools in terms of donations, and because there are opportunities for tourists to visit schools without interacting with children, this activity could still be allowed if conditions are met. The conditions discussed are 1) no presence of children, and 2) **donations are required**.

The next section will focus on HR Issue 2: *Treating ethnic minorities with respect*. Because they are not part of the majority, they face discrimination, exploitation and reduced opportunities. On top of that, they are prone to disrespectful behaviour by tourists and other tourism stakeholders. These issues will be explained below as well as potential solutions.

HR Issue 2: *Treating ethnic minorities with respect*

Conflicts in their home country have caused some ethnic minority groups to leave their homes and settle in Thailand. This process is not easy, because without a Thai passport they do not have the same rights as Thai citizens. Several barriers, however, make it difficult to obtain a Thai passport. The high costs for the process of obtaining a Thai passport can lead to financial poverty, but without a Thai passport they have less job opportunities. This makes these ethnic minorities vulnerable to many human rights violations. Migrant workers often face discrimination at work, working more hours but getting paid less.



Photo from DASTA

Insights from desk research

Regarding the ILO, the term “ethnic minority” refers to “any ethnic group that is not dominant socially, economically or politically” and not necessarily ethnic groups that are outnumbered (*Promoting Equity*, 2014).

Migrant workers can therefore form an ethnic minority. In Thailand, 2 million migrant workers are employed in different sectors, including domestic work and the service sector which are related to the tourism industry. They make up six percent of the country’s labour force and make a significant contribution to Thailand’s social and economic development. Thereby, it has to be noted that the domestic work sector is not fully protected under the Thai labour law. This results in long working hours and low payment (*Public Attitudes Towards Migrant Workers in Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand*, 2019).

Therefore, Migrants and ethnic minorities can carve out their own niches in the tourism industry by entering self employment and commodifying some of their cultural features into souvenirs to avoid exploitation (Trupp, 2017).

According to research conducted in five distinct Thai provinces, ***NGOs have been the major source of information for migrant workers***. Furthermore, the information provided for immigrants originating from Myanmar was usually provided in the Burmese language while

that for Cambodians usually was in Thai. Additional findings from this selfsame study has resulted in the following conclusions:

- Most pregnant migrant workers were allowed to work in the same position in certain periods; however, some pregnant women reportedly were fired as result of maternity issues.
- The majority of migrants received an additional obligatory physical examination, including blood and urine tests, before being employed. Most migrant workers never received the result of their physical examination; moreover, some workers were fired due to the result of their physical examination, when it revealed HIV/AIDS, for example.
- Many migrant participants in the study stated that they had experienced abuse from their Thai manager/supervisor.

In considering the action that migrants might take to prevent exploitation and discrimination, the survey discovered that 32.3 percent of the sample did not know what action should be taken when facing such situations, while 21.58 percent decided to seek help from NGOs (Chalamwong et al., 2010).

According to research on Human Rights impacts, the Royal Thai Government promotes indigenous peoples to attract tourists, but they face significant marginalisation and unequal treatment in Thai society. Private and state-owned enterprises benefit the most, while local communities receive minimal support. Artificial cultural villages are seen as disrespectful by community members, who believe their own traditions and cultures are not properly represented. Indigenous peoples' knowledge is exploited and commercialised without their permission or fair sharing of benefits (Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism, 2020). Measures that can be taken are encouraging respectful interactions between visitors and hosts to foster cross-cultural learning and understanding and working in collaboration with communities to promote their own community-based tourism programs that align with their specific requirements and values.

Research regarding the ***attitude of Thailand's population*** towards migrant workers shows that 58 percent of the population thinks that migrant workers threaten their country's culture and heritage. 60 percent of the population additionally thinks that migrant workers have poor work ethics and say they cannot trust them. This can also be seen from the fact that in Thailand, migrants cannot expect the same pay or benefits as nationals for the same job. To treat ethnic minorities with respect in the tourism industry, working conditions must be improved as well as equal treatment. Even though there are The ILO Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925 (No. 19) and the ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) who are technically guaranteeing migrant workers equal treatment, this is not implemented by the Thai government (*Public Attitudes Towards Migrant Workers in Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand*, 2019).

The next sections will provide insights into the treatments that ethnic minorities receive, described per stakeholder, followed by overall solutions. The first part will focus on the insights learned from communities and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from communities

Most of the issues that the ethnic minorities face in tourism are consequences of actions by the government, tourism providers and tourists. The issues mentioned in this section mostly focus on actions by tourism providers and tourists. Governmental actions are outside the scope of this field work and report, and are therefore not discussed.

Disrespectful behaviour from visitors

Interviews with community representatives show that most of the problems with tourists come from their ***behaviour towards ethnic minorities***. The minorities have their own culture and customs, and the behaviour of tourists is not always in line with these values. Most frequently this also results in ***noise pollution***, particularly at night. This is not only unpleasant, but it is also a sign of disrespect. One of the community officials indicated they clarified the village laws concerning overnight stays towards the visitors. However, there was still occasional yelling at night, despite the rules being explicitly communicated to every visitor. This shows that ***lack of knowledge*** is a part of the cause of disrespectful treatment.

Unfortunately, there are also some ***guides that portray a very negative image of ethnic minorities***, projecting their opinion onto tourists with the use of unnecessary and insensitive jokes. Furthermore, they spread misinformation and lies about these cultures, for example that the neck rings from Kayan are to prevent tiger bites and cannot be taken off, because they will die. This creates a false image of the community and leads to disrespectful attitudes from both guides and visitors towards their identity and way of life.

Thai attitude towards ethnic minorities

Thai people, on the other hand, often look down on ethnic minorities, making it more difficult to find guides and other tourism stakeholders who treat these groups with respect.

In an interview with representatives from the Moken, it became clear that this group faces similar issues. Some of the Moken have permanently settled on the Surin islands, a National Park relatively far from the mainland. Tourists who visit the islands often go there on arranged tours organised by people from the mainland closest to the islands. Many of these mainland people grew up looking down on the Moken and this results in little motivation to empower this ethnic minority group. Therefore, the tourists are often brought to places on the islands that are owned by Thai people. On top of that, the area of Khao Lak, which is close to the Moken islands, has a lot of tourism providers and is therefore an extremely competitive location when it comes to tourism. As a result, most tour operators are not willing to include the Moken, because that will cut their profits even more. The National Park is extremely controlling when it comes to tourism legislation and, as a result, has created an environment in which every tour operator has to sell the exact same thing to avoid high costs.

Risk of exploitation

However, when indigenous people are included in the tourism product, they risk being exploited. The people that live or work in a village that is run by businesses are vulnerable to having these ***companies taking the majority of the profits***. Such businesses do not provide enough income for the people who work in tourism and serve as the main attraction. In village 4, the business couple have not paid the villagers since COVID started, which decreased their income significantly. They only receive income from selling souvenirs. As tourism is not the

main income for ethnic minorities, they have to understand the mechanism of the tourism industry and income distribution when working with tourism entrepreneurs in order to avoid the risk of exploitation.

The next section will provide the insights that Human Rights NGOs have given about the issue of treating ethnic minorities with respect.

Insights from Human Rights NGOs

Respectful treatment by DMCs

Similar to the local communities, NGO Panellist 2 states that first ***the local communities should be better understood and respected***. Creating a better understanding of the different ethnic groups and their cultures results in a better understanding of how to respectfully treat them. It is important that DMCs are aware of the culture and history of an ethnic group before starting a collaboration. In this way, they can start the collaboration better informed. In a later stage, it is advisable that the DMCs also transfer this knowledge to their clients. After all, they are the bridge between the tourists and the host community.

NGO Panellist 2 also provides further steps for DMCs to treat ethnic minorities respectfully when collaborating together on a CBT product. The first step is to base the collaboration on a ***participatory approach***, which includes the local community being part of some aspect of the product design related to the community: from the tourism activities to the incorporation of feedback from guests if they are comfortable and available to share. The second step is to ***provide community members with practical skills training*** on receiving tourists and running the tourism project: from ground level to business level. Lastly, to uphold inclusivity, it is important that the ***DMCs do not ask for too many investments from the community members***. If they do, there is a risk that the marginalised people are left out and not given the opportunity to participate. As an example, the panellist suggests ***adapting houses into homestays*** instead of investing in new accommodation.

Equal income opportunities for community members

During this process, the most important action is that the benefits for the local communities are always taken into account. To ***create income*** through tourism, e.g. through souvenir selling, activity provision, transportation and accommodation hosting, whilst not compromising on the wishes of the community. Additionally, the creation of a ***local supply chain*** is of utmost importance to prevent economic leakage from happening. The DMCs can play a facilitating role in connecting everyone.

In some cases, businesses own the land where communities are settled and consequently the communities have less decision making power. Human Rights NGOs voice that there should be a more ***equal balance*** and that businesses should only be paid for the lease of the land but leave the organisation of tourism to the community, including the division of profits. The ***minorities should have a voice in the organisation of tourism***, and have the opportunity to decide how they want to present their culture. If they want to wear the traditional clothing only for tourists, this decision should also be respected.

The concerns regarding traditional dress and customs in Thai tourist villages represent ***“the double-edged sword of tourism.”*** The youngsters envy the attributes that tourists wear or bring into their village, and therefore traditional customs could change as well. That is important,

because sometimes tourists complain about ethnic minorities not wearing traditional clothing, so DMCs should inform clients beforehand via a **code of conduct** that not all villagers will wear it, to manage expectations.

Photographing community members

During the interviews, photography was mentioned as a point of concern by multiple Human Rights NGOs. Tourists are often tempted to take photographs of situations that they would not encounter at home, which includes the work and dress of ethnic minorities. However, when taking photographs of people or their living environment, tourists are interfering with their personal life and their privacy could be violated. Visitors take photos without permission, and these end up on social media, sometimes against the wishes of the local community. Besides that, photo opportunities with local people should also be a point of concern. In this way, they are treated as objects instead of people. It would be best to explore other ways of taking photographs, for example by first talking with them or doing activities together. Implementing some **regulations** around taking pictures could be effective in preventing the infringement of their privacy.

The next section will focus on the insights learned from DMCs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from DMCs

Policies to prevent disrespectful behaviour

Like the communities, DMCs also acknowledge that most of the problems with ethnic village visits come from disrespectful behaviour. The panel discussion has brought initial solutions to improve interactions between tourists, tourism providers and ethnic minorities. The first one is the **creation of specific policies**. DMC 2 mentions they are a global company, but that specified policies are required. Each area and its people have different issues and concerns, and therefore they all need to be approached individually. After the creation of specified policies, it is the task of the DMC to **educate** their own staff, their guides and their clients. Points that need to be addressed are safety, behaviour and dress code. **Communication** with tourists is key in this, and therefore everything should be explained clearly and easily understandable.

Evaluation of visits

Additionally, it is important to constantly **evaluate** the village visits with the communities. DMCs often ask feedback from their customers, but it is equally important to gather feedback from the communities. Their daily lives are impacted by tourists and therefore it is important that the visit remains having positive impacts only. This means that what tourists want to see and what communities want to get from tourism should be evenly **balanced**. Consequently, **visitors' expectations should be managed**. Visitors often come in and expect that ethnic minority groups are dressed traditionally and are cut off from technological comforts. In reality, an ethnic village can look similar to Thai villages at the first glance. Traditional costumes are not worn every day and cell phones and other technologies have entered village life. It is important that DMCs point this out to their clients prior to their visit to avoid false expectations and disappointment onsite.

Haggling for handicrafts

The products made by local communities are not mass-produced, but locally handmade by the artisans. There is no knowledge about the story behind these products. Tourists often do not keep this in mind and keep bargaining for the lowest price. This also shows a lack of appreciation and respect. In a few cases, this is not only done by tourists, but also by tourism suppliers. Tourism suppliers have been known to buy local products for a cheap price and resell them for a higher price on their own website. This is an issue that has been mentioned by NGOs that are part of this research. In order to make tourists more aware of the value of these products, it is recommended to **showcase the creation-process** of these products towards visitors, next to storytelling, so an additional added level of appreciation can be implemented.

The following section will present the overall solutions found during the interviews, round table and desk research.

Overall solutions

Most of the problems that are mentioned above, come from behaviour and the suggested solutions often cover multiple problems. Therefore, the section below is structured per solution.

Creating participatory approach

Learn about the culture

In order to start a participatory approach, it is important that the DMC has **knowledge about the culture** of the community that they are going to work with. Before approaching a community, information about the culture can be retrieved from **other parties** that work with this ethnic minority. Once a partnership has started, more detailed information about the culture can be given by a **community representative**. This information can be documented and **shared with the other stakeholders** organising the activity and to the potential visitors. To conclude, this can create a better relationship between all stakeholders.

Inclusion in operation and management

The second step towards creating a participatory approach is the **inclusion of ethnic minority groups in product development and marketing**, from activity to creation to incorporating feedback from guests. DMCs and communities will have good products which they can sell to the right target groups.

Skills and Empowerment Training

People that are new to tourism often have skills that are not specifically related to tourism. To improve their **tourism skills** in running the product, from ground to business level, **training** can be conducted. Other than that, a specific focus should be on **empowerment**. During the round table, representatives frequently mentioned that ethnic minorities do not always see themselves as equals. Therefore, it is important that they learn how to feel comfortable amongst other ethnic groups and speak up.

Equal income opportunities

Also, not all people within the ethnic minority have equal chances because of their assets. It is important that participating in tourism will require **minimal investments**. Additionally, the **supply chain should be organised locally**, as much as possible.

Prominent role of the local guide

Lastly, because of the Thai rule that there should always be a professional guide present, there is a delicate balance between the local and the professional guide. Often, the professional guide takes a big role even though the local guide is more knowledgeable about the area and local customs. Local guides should be involved in a collaborative process to coordinate who does what during the tour and how they can better support communities. It is essential during community visits that the **professional tour guides take a facilitating role** (like translating, assisting if casualties arise) and to let the **local tour guide explain about their culture**, rituals and way of life. Smooth communication between professional and local guides is also important to create more efficient work collaboration and impressive experiences to visitors.

Village visit evaluations

In order to make the experience memorable for both hosts and guests, evaluations should be held. Often, the tourists are asked to evaluate their experiences, but it is equally important to **ask the local community about their experiences**. In doing so, the DMCs can check with the community if they still feel treated respectfully.

Code of conduct

Content

Some of the ethnic minorities, NGOs and DMCs demand a code of conduct for tourists visiting the villages, which is a very hands-on solution. Visitors should be introduced to the local culture before their visit to prevent disrespectful behaviour. A code of conduct should include, amongst others, the topics of 1) **behaviour**, 2) **clothing**, 3) **photography**, 4) **privacy**, 5) **bargaining** and 6) **presentation of culture**. These and similar issues are often easy to explain to visitors and can be included in the information sent out to customers in advance.

In addressing the issue of handicrafts, it is important that bargaining on prices of local handicrafts is considered unacceptable. A potential way of addressing this is to work with fixed prices for handicrafts and by showcasing the creation process. DMCs and guides should inform their guests about this to prevent uncomfortable situations, and compensate the artisans with the appropriate amount of money their products are worth.

Nature Friends International, a NGO, made guidelines on taking pictures during travels which could be an example for tour operators and DMCs. Similarly, there might be examples of other guidelines.

Implementation

Implementing a code of conduct also for DMCs could contribute to more respectful engagements, encompassing every stakeholder involved. Staff needs to understand what is essential to implement in the code of conduct, while tour guides need to understand the do's and don'ts during a given tour. Guides must follow the codes of conduct or they risk losing their jobs. Local guides also need to have the same understanding of a code of conduct as

well in order to implement with professional guides and tourists. Because of this, it is useful to include **training for all stakeholders** on how to behave according to the code of conduct.

It is also important to note that each area, for example Surin Islands or Huay Pu Keng, has **different issues and concerns**, each **requiring different policies**. **Simultaneous training** of suppliers, local guides and communities can improve their collaboration and lead to mutual understanding and respect, for example by giving local communities a chance to tell their story. It could also prepare community members for various situations through training in adaptation; knowing how best to respond when engaging in social interaction with external parties, such as tourists, DMCs and local suppliers.

Focussing on a different target market

Some ethnic communities face problems with the attraction of tourists for several reasons. One of them is the cutting of prices. It's an example of the problems the Moken people are facing in their modern day life; they are left out of the market but are also exploited for their culture. There is no desire to implement a more unique experience involving the locals, as this would further drive up the prices with the additional costs involved. If the national parks would change their policies regarding tourists and entrance fees, there would be more interest in reaching out to local communities to create a more memorable journey. Including these experiences with local communities would be a way to justify the higher entrance fees and continue to attract tourism business in the parks.

Changing the boundaries and limitations set by national parks would contribute to diversifying activities. However, there is currently no interest in such an endeavour **Reshaping the target group** could be beneficial in creating new opportunities for people like the Moken by presenting the idea of creating special journeys which are offered at a **premium price, but with a more unique experience**.

Sometimes, **tourists' expectations should be managed** to prevent possible inappropriate behaviour as it is essential to provide them with a clear and concise description of what to expect. Being as transparent as possible will contribute to preventing suspicion or encouragement to act in any unwanted manner. Tourists must understand the impact they can have on the lifestyle of the locals.

Andaman Discoveries, for example, offers a four-day tour where guests can visit the Moken village on an immersive, transformational journey. The level of satisfaction can be relatively higher because expectations of guests can be better realised. This is due to proper preparation in the shape of information sessions presented by the tour guides of Andaman Discoveries, followed by a non-luxurious, but realistic once-in-a-lifetime journey through the culture of the Moken. This tour programme has been discussed in an interview with a member of the Moken community and can be found on the website of Andaman discoveries.

Selectively finding tourists prepared to invest in such unique experiences would give local communities a much more respectful relationship with them, and in turn, a better position on a social and financial level.

The following section will discuss **HR Issue 3: Working to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation related to tourism in local communities**. Sexual abuse can be a single event

or happen repeatedly because people end up in prostitution, either so-called voluntarily or through human trafficking. Community members risk sexual abuse by coming into direct contact with tourists. The following section will provide more insights into sexual abuse and exploitation in villages, and give possible solutions that tourism providers can implement.

HR Issue 3: *Working to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation related to tourism in local communities*

Despite Thailand's natural and cultural beauty, the country is also known for being a sex tourism destination which could impact the behaviour of certain tourists. Sexual abuse and exploitation still happen in the country, and also in villages. What makes solving this problem difficult is that it is a very sensitive topic and often comes with taboos. Insights from desk research as well as several stakeholders will be discussed below to find ways to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation from happening in local communities.



Insights from desk research

According to research by the Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism, in the tourism industry mainly women working in spas and housekeeping are at specific risk of sexual harassment in the workplace. To avoid this, **policies** regarding protection of women can be implemented, i.e. to work in pairs only and staff can be trained (Baumgartner and Leisinger, 2020).

Next to this, transactional sex has generally been condemned to the extent to which it involves sex with a minor; involves lack of consent, particularly in relationships characterised by power differentials; or worsens the pre-existing status of the female. Also relevant is the extent to which a man's intentions are considered inappropriate; the adolescent girl or young woman is considered vulnerable; and considered responsible for 'her situation'. **Interventions** must also be designed in a way to recognise that girls in transactional sex relationships may not consider

themselves as exploited, thus requiring engagement with them based on their own concerns, aspirations, and expectations (Kyegombe et al., 2020).

Research findings clearly show that **eliminating child labour** in industry provides greater bargaining power to negotiate appropriate wages and working conditions for adults. Removing children from the labour force created additional jobs for adults and increased the demand for adult workers. The study found that adults' wages rose significantly after children were released from work and returned to school. This is very important for the tourism industry, because wages are currently very low and working conditions for adults are not attractive. Improving the bargaining power of adults by eliminating child labour is essential in an industry that has always had a reputation for not engaging with local development (Hagedoorn, 2013).

The next sections will provide insights into the risks that children in communities face, described per stakeholder, followed by overall solutions. The first part will focus on the insights learned from communities.

Insights from communities

Fortunately, in the communities we spoke to, there is no sexual threat. As mentioned in HR Issue 1, there is no inappropriate touching by tourists or any other danger.

The next section will focus on the insights learned from Human Rights NGOs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from Human Rights NGOs

So-called voluntary prostitution

Although prostitution is illegal in Thailand, in practice, sexual services are openly offered. These services involving children are currently transitioning to an online platform, making it a problem which is continually evolving. These situations are **a direct result of poverty, low level of education and a lack of employment in rural areas**. Amongst others, ethnic minorities often do not have access to these basic rights and therefore, have reduced future chances. People of these groups sometimes have no other choice than to go into prostitution "voluntarily".

"Your opportunities in life are very limited. How can you call that voluntary prostitution? They have been oppressed. Their rights are being abused in such a way that they have no choice but to go into sex work." - FOCUS

Human trafficking

Others end up in prostitution through human trafficking. ***The highest risk comes from within the village, as most traffickers can now be found there.*** Thus, there is a high possibility one ends up talking with a trafficker and gets deceived. The same is true for children. Traffickers can now easily enter villages pretending they are there for tourism purposes. From their village, these people will be trafficked to other places. Prostitution is not necessarily offered in these villages themselves.

“Bringing in tourists and children losing their fear of outsiders is, of course, a double edged sword. They get to talk to foreign men. Men who joke with them. The paedophile commonly goes on tours like this. They go into everything about the English language, teaching all kinds of jobs in orphanages. They are very cunning paedophiles in order to get access. I think community-based tourists should be aware that paedophiles might actually use you as an inroad into a community when they're there to exchange Facebook contacts, etcetera.” - Human Rights NGO 5

Consequences of the Thai reputation of being a sex destination

Thailand is considered a prime destination for sex tourists, which makes its inhabitants more vulnerable towards sexual abuse and exploitation. This is really an issue for housekeeping staff in hotels, as they risk being alone with visitors when they are doing their job. People having or working in a homestay, suffer the same risk. They come in closer, one-on-one contact with visitors and therefore have an increased risk of experiencing sexual abuse and exploitation. One of the interviewees mentions that ***communities feel that tourists look down on women due to the reputation of being a sex tourism destination.*** Some tour guides enforce this issue by explaining to guests that women in massage shops can give special services and that they like to have sex. Sometimes they even help them find prostitutes. According to one of the NGOs interviewed, this situation happened in an ethnic minority village in which the inhabitants did not speak Thai and did not know the Thai justice system. Instead of reporting the situation, the problem was solved internally and the village received compensation. This demonstrates the importance of making ethnic minorities, and all people without access to government services, aware of their ***rights***. Additionally, it is important that people have the right to speak up and be heard, without being fired or facing other negative consequences. Currently, women that do report rape do not get the attention they deserve and prosecution is not undertaken, which leaves the culprit unpunished.

Since our research focuses on human rights in Thai village tourism, we need to stress the issue of violence towards women from people under the influence of drugs. The drugs are received, for example, from visiting guides.

The next section will focus on the insights learned from DMCs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from DMCs

Prevention of sexual abuse

The issue of sexual exploitation has already been briefly mentioned by the DMCs in the 'The Research on DMCs Needs for Tourism in Thai Communities and How to Add Value to Thai Village Experiences and CBT for European Markets' (TOURLINK Communities Research Team, 2023). A solution towards prevention of sexual exploitation is the ***inclusion of this topic in the company's code of conduct***. These guidelines should represent both DMC staff and tourists. As a follow-up, during the round table it was mentioned by DMC 1 that the ***staff should be trained*** about the impact of sexual exploitation and why this is a problem, as well as how to prevent sexual exploitation, how to recognise it when it does happen and how to act upon it.

Increased risks for people with disabilities

From our conversations with other stakeholders, we learned that people with disabilities (for example blind/deaf, but also other physical and mental disabilities) and children face a higher risk of sexual harassment. Some hotels have ***policies for staff*** in place (from our interview with hotel staff & managers).

The following section will present the overall solutions found during the interviews, round table and desk research.

Overall solutions

There are different solutions and ways to prevent sexual abuse, which are being explained in detail.

Guidelines and policies

As a first step, DMCs could undertake measures to help the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation in village tourism. Creating and implementing ***guidelines and policies*** would be one way to address the problem. For example, Child Safe (part of Friends International) has ***homestay regulation guidelines*** in place, tailored to, and made for Thai communities. Contracts should be required in order to enforce these policies. The next step would be to have NGOs or DMCs responsible for ***checking the compliance with the guidelines and policies***.

Secondly, a ***code of conduct*** for villagers, DMCs and tourists is essential to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation related to tourism in local communities. This should include, for example, that exchanging contacts can be dangerous. Also that the privacy of villagers should be respected and that making pictures may pose threats, should be included.

Staff training and awareness

As a follow-up, ***training*** should be given to DMC staff and tour guides. This training should have multiple purposes: 1) ***understanding the guidelines***, 2) ***impacts of sexual exploitation***, 3) ***prevent sexual exploitation***, 4) ***recognise sexual exploitation***, and 5) ***act upon sexual exploitation happening on the spot***. It is of utmost importance that these tourism providers understand the impacts of sexual exploitation, listen to victims and undertake the right actions.

Awareness & rights training

In addition to training for DMC staff, **collaborations with NGOs** could be established to raise awareness about the issues of sexual abuse and exploitation amongst locals. Since there is a stigma on reporting gender inequity and sexual abuse, specific focus should be paid to empowering the community members to speak up about these issues. It is important to address these issues in the right way. While there are avenues for reporting gender inequity and sexual abuse, how can women feel comfortable/safe to use them and address the problems (from interview with hotels).

Sexual exploitation is a culturally sensitive topic and one cannot simply use it as a point of conversation. It takes time to **build the needed trust and respect, and commence with training / awareness-raising of a less controversial topic is highly recommended** by one of the human rights experts. It is also suggested to address the issue at a **community level** instead of an individual level, because sometimes communities rather keep their problems inside, scared to share them with the outside world, as it could cause more problems than solutions for their community.

Complex problems like these need to be tackled at their core. Many sex workers see it as their only way out and get angry when they are pulled out of the industry. Often they are desperate and see nothing to go back to. Tackling poverty should be the first step.

The following section will discuss **HR Issue 4: Supporting equality of opportunity in local communities offering tourism services**. There are several types of inequality that arise in the tourism sector, as found by communities, human rights NGOs and DMCs. Equality between genders, guides, tourism stakeholders, all villagers and different generations are all highlighted as focus areas. The section will conclude with the discussion of potential solutions to these inequality problems.

HR Issue 4: Supporting equality of opportunity in local communities offering tourism services

Equality of opportunity is an important subject in creating inclusive growth. Tourism can either widen this opportunity gap or help to bridge these same inequality issues. The following section will provide insights from different stakeholders regarding the existing inequalities of opportunities between different groups and how they can best be minimised.



Photo from DASTA

Insights from desk research

Even though “Thailand has legally advanced women’s rights and gender equality through its ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1985...” (*Thailand*, n.d.), there is still an unequal treatment between male and female workers in the tourism industry.

One solution for gender inequality is the **empowerment of women**, which is demanded by the UNs’ sustainable development goal number five. It requires gender equality and empowerment of women and girls (*THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development*, n.d.).

Psychological empowerment occurs when **a woman’s pride and self esteem are enhanced** by tourists who know the exclusive value of her community’s culture and natural resources. Hence, this type of empowerment has a positive impact on the local community in increasing and maintaining a group’s self-esteem. The type of products being sold also seems to play a role in raising female self-esteem. Psychological disempowerment arises when the development of products makes women feel inferior, or they have no control of the direction of development (Baumgartner and Leisinger, 2020).

However, “The provisions on gender equality in the 2017 Constitution and the Gender Equality Act (2015) provide important foundations for Thailand to achieve further progress” (“Thailand: Gender Budgeting Action Plan,” n.d.).

At a local level, **training** is given to village heads, civil society actors and local administrative actors on gender responsive budgeting, gender mainstreaming and participation. These trainings are based on a workshop syllabus which teaches about Gender Responsive Participatory Budgeting (GRPB). By becoming aware of the benefit of GRPB, communities can be developed in a more sustainable way (“Thailand: Gender Budgeting Action Plan,” n.d.).

A rotation system can be created for homestays, meaning all tourism providers take turns. With this system all community members can benefit and get an equal change (Richards, 2018).

The next sections will provide insights into the equality issues that community members face, described per stakeholder, followed by overall solutions. The first part will focus on the insights learned from communities and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from communities

Equality for all villagers

Contrary to what is often mentioned in literature, the village representatives of village 1 and 2 did not report gender inequality. **Responsibilities within CBT are not divided by gender, they are divided based on their skills and expertise for each CBT member.** So, everyone can participate in CBT activities equally. Therefore, they **earn money equally** from what they have done in CBT activities as well.

“CBT is a tool to help the community have participation. Everyone can get and earn money... that means income to every household.” (Village 2) So besides giving everybody the possibility to participate, CBT also focuses on providing equal income. For men, women, people with disabilities, elders and children. According to the village representative, everybody gets an equal wage that is higher than the minimum. In that way, **CBT in itself is already a way to solve the problems with income inequality.** However, village representative 3 also states that even though CBT and tourism do help with creating more participation, they are not there yet since some villagers don't want to participate, and this also needs to be respected..

The next section will focus on the insights learned from Human Rights NGOs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from Human Rights NGOs

Inequality between men and women

A phenomenon that is often established and Human Rights NGO 2 also stresses that women are allowed to participate, but are most often only seen in the lower ranked positions. When it comes to decision-making positions, fewer women participate. The more formal a position is, the less women are involved. This is very apparent, because work in the field is done side by side between men and women. This demonstrates that there is still **a lack of equality when it comes to gender.** During the round table, it was stressed by NGO Panellist 2 that **collaboration** is key to involve men and women equally. Informal community meetings are a great facilitator for this, because they are low key and small scale. Important is that the groups of people that are usually left behind are assisted to join these meetings and connected to a peer to help them join the tourism field. This makes it easier to stand up for women and other groups that are usually less included. During the interviews, Human Rights NGO 6 stressed the importance of the role of the DMCs.

“Actually, I think it's not a big topic for tour operators, unfortunately.... What we actually found out in this assessment as well is that the local agencies, like the DMCs, have a big influence because they are the people on the ground, and they are contracting all suppliers on the

ground. So having a **sustainable destination management agency** is crucial because the way they operate is very important also. But of course, it has to go further.”

- Human Rights NGO 6

Human Rights NGO 3 provides us with some indicators that are important for gender inequality, which are **participation in the household, decision making power and violence**. Also, they recommend **Longwe’s framework** to determine the level of women’s empowerment. DMCs could work with these indicators to determine the level of gender equality in the communities they work with.

Equality between guides

Another equality issue highlighted during the round table was that of the lack of equality between guides. Professional guides often ask for a commission, which the local guides are not happy about. According to NGO Panellist 2 this results in fighting between both guides.

Equal opportunities for the younger generation

Another issue currently present in communities and brought up by NGO Panellist 2 is the difference in aspirations. Younger generations want to run their businesses in the community like handicrafts workshops, food and beverage services, and so on. Since the younger generation have creative and technological skills, it is a great opportunity for them to work and support the community. Therefore, **community members need to encourage and support the younger generation to participate in tourism services in the community and give them equal chances to start**. Because many wish to leave the community and work in the city, the future of local village tourism becomes uncertain. Increasing pride in their community and income opportunities, leads to more incentive for them to stay and pass the baton of their culture to the next generation.



Equal opportunities for all villagers

Equality between villagers was also discussed during the round table. NGO Panellist 2 mentions that often only a few people receive income from tourism, and there is a risk that they get greedy and do not want to share their benefits with others. This could result in the **exclusion of other villagers** that want to enter the tourism sector.

Equality between the local community and other tourism stakeholders

Exploitation can arise when villagers need help in promoting their tourism product. Even though the online world makes it easier for communities to directly get in touch with potential visitors, many community visits are still arranged via partners like tour operators or DMCs. It can create huge opportunities if they can help the community reach additional high value tourists. This cooperation in itself is not necessarily a problem, but on the other hand, they can also be exploited by irresponsible partners. The same is true when outsiders use community resources to start their tourism product. Human Rights NGO 1 stresses that the **creation of a CBT project** can prevent this grabbing from happening and simultaneously promote the local way of life. Therefore, responsible supply chain partnerships are necessary to build equality between the local community and other tourism stakeholders.

The next section will focus on the insights learned from DMCs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from DMCs

Equality between the local community and other tourism stakeholders

Equality of opportunity exists in various forms. The Research on DMCs Needs for Tourism in Thai communities and How to Add Value to Thai Village Experiences and CBT for European Markets has shown that European focussed DMCs mostly work on equality between communities and other tourism stakeholders. The measures already taken to prevent this type of inequality include **policies** regarding discrimination against or exploitation of any individuals as well as the **collaboration** with the community as an equal partner. **Jobs are created** for people within local communities to ensure that job opportunities are not taken away from them by outsiders.

Equal opportunities within the community

During the round table, the importance of equal opportunities within the community was also emphasised by DMC Panellist 2. To ensure that everybody has the opportunity to work in senior and technical positions, she proposes to work with a **promotion system**. In that way, porters can become local guides, professional guides and any other preferred positions. This creates more equal chances than appointing someone for a certain position.

Equality between guides

Similar to the NGOs, Local Supplier 1 also mentions that there can be some tensions between local guides and professional guides, because of their shared responsibility to host guests in the communities of the local guides. In their opinion, a way to prevent this, is to **support local guides in getting their professional licence**. For example, by **raising funds** to pay for the licence. The local guides have knowledge about the communities and their way of living that the professional guides do not have and it would be important to make use of that and give them the full responsibility.

These and other solutions will be presented in the following section where the overall solutions found during the interviews, round table and desk research are described.

Overall solutions

In this research, inequality of opportunity between 1) men and women, 2) different generations, 3) all community members, 4) local and professional guides, and 5) the community and other tourism stakeholders are discussed. These situations can be divided into two groups, namely 1) equality within the community, and 2) equality for the community within the tourism sector. Potential solutions will be discussed for both groups.

Equality within the community

Equality policies

Before DMCs or other tourism stakeholders are going to work with a village, **equality policies** should be created to have a **guideline** that can be kept in mind when involving a community. A rotation system could be created so all community members have an equal change of benefiting. Below are individual solutions that can create great impact when being implemented together. Such solutions could also be described in these equality policies.

Peer system

Creating equal opportunity for all is the ideal outcome, and DMCs could facilitate this when starting to work with a community. Equal opportunities could be encouraged by bringing the community together and forming connections with one another with the use of an **informal community meeting**. Such meetings are often smaller and more low key, which makes it less of a barrier to come. Though, appointing **community members as peers** would be useful. These peers can help invite all community members and help the marginalised groups (women, people with disabilities and the younger generation, amongst others) to join the tourism field.

Community as equal partner

Once the DMCs have all the interested people on board, the focus should be on treating them equally. The community as a whole as well as all individuals. **The community will be an equal partner in creating the tourism product and is therefore involved in all decisions.**

Promotion system

Besides being involved in decision-making, it is also important that the jobs are given to people from the community and that everybody gets a chance to grow. A **promotion system** can reward the people that are dedicated to their work and fulfilling their jobs successfully. Rather than just appointing people, this gives everybody a chance to get a higher position. If needed, **training** can be provided to help community members obtain the necessary skills for such positions. As mentioned earlier, **empowerment of ethnic minorities** can also help these communities assert themselves to gain more equal opportunities.

Equal opportunities for the community within the tourism sector

CBT as a solution against middlemen

Several problems also arise when the community starts working with other professionals in the sector. The first problem arises when selling the product. Sometimes, middlemen are involved in promoting the tourism activity. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it is when

they are taking up really high commissions. ***Empowering communities through CBT gives them the skills to either take over the tasks of the middlemen or help them to speak up.***

Guide conflicts

This is also needed when it comes to the collaboration with professional guides. These guides often take commissions which results in conflicts with the local guides and also their collaboration is not always organised in an equal way. ***DMC policies*** can emphasise the equality between guides and provide a task division, where professional guides have a facilitating role and the local guides take the lead role. Another solution would be to ***invest in local guides to become professional guides***. In that way, they do not have to share the spotlights and can fully represent the community. A certain amount of money from each booking could be dedicated to ***a fund*** achieving such measurements.

The supply chain must be reworked to address unsatisfactory market conditions for local guides. As commissions are beneficial for professional guides when taking tourists to souvenir shops, local guides cannot get any benefit from this. The best way to approach this is to expand the market by introducing local communities. It would be better if DMCs and tour operators set a rule of no-go commission shops for tour guides and support local souvenir shops and local guides when visiting the community.

Overseas parties

Lastly, economic equality is limited by overseas partners and their financial mentality; instead of aiming for low fees and prices, they should ***invest in these communities*** so gradual improvement can take place, which will over time generate better and stable income while contributing to the communities.

The following section will discuss ***HR Issue 5: Reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities***. Environmental resources are of utmost importance for the local community and long term thinking is required to help protect them. Education, resource management and environmentally friendly behaviour from all tourism stakeholders can help to reduce these environmental impacts in communities. More insights are provided in the section below.

HR Issue 5: Reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities

“All human beings depend on the environment in which we live. A safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment is integral to the full enjoyment of a wide range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and sanitation” (OHCHR, n.d.).

Tourism often makes use of the natural environment and by drawing people to a destination, the risks of doing harm to nature increase. This section will discuss which environmental impacts are being faced in local communities and how we can reduce them, starting by insights from desk research.



Photo from DASTA

Insights from desk research

Local communities linked to the tourism sector and who benefit from it economically, tend to perceive positive impacts and to develop favourable attitudes towards the development of the sector. When tourism benefits outweigh its costs, these communities will have a positive and favourable attitude towards tourism development. In turn, when residents perceive negative impacts, or perceive that costs are greater than benefits, they tend to develop negative and unfavourable attitudes. It is essential to involve communities in the formulation of tourism development strategies. For the tourism industry to survive, members of the community must be favourably predisposed to receive tourists and be involved in the tourism planning process.

Maximising the positive impacts of tourism and minimising the negative ones involves **implementing development strategies** that allow tourism to play the role of engine for sustainable development. One of the fundamental components of any tourist development strategy for destinations is the community. Working with people, and not just for people, should be the motto of any tourism development strategy (De Carvalho et al., 2020).

According to research on Human Rights impacts in Thailand and Myanmar, community members and villagers have raised concerns about a rise in waste and pollution in their areas. While the actual tourism sites remain clean, waste is being transported to dumpsites located near local communities, posing potential health and environmental risks (Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism, 2020). In order to reduce the environmental impact of tourism in communities, there are several approaches which can be customised individually to the communities. One approach is **waste and water waste management**. The growing waste in communities is not only polluting the environment but also creating negative images in the destination. Therefore, waste and water waste management are crucial for local communities. Additionally, **resource efficiency** should be promoted as part of prevention and sustainable tourism development as e.g. water is a crucial resource for tourism supply and service.

Since most communities are dependent on an undestroyed nature, these aspects are most important (Wejwithan, 2020).

Another common environmental impact of tourism is **land grabbing** (Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism, 2020; Tourism, Land Grabs and Displacement, 2019). For example, in the Surin Islands Marine National Park in Thailand the Moken became victims of land grabbing by the government after the Tsunami. “By commodifying the cultural practices and beliefs of the Moken, tourism development essentially turned the settlement into a human zoo, appropriating the profitable parts of their culture and heavily restricting their customary livelihood practices” (Tourism, Land Grabs and Displacement, 2019).

A solution for this can be the **Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security (VGGT)** with respect to all forms of tenure: public, private, communal, indigenous, customary, and informal (Tourism, Land Grabs and Displacement, 2019). It is also important to establish meaningful engagement with the community to gain insights into their culture, living conditions, and capacities (Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism, 2020).

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) launched the **7 Greens Concept** aimed at all tourism stakeholders to take into account concrete environmental protection and greenhouse gas emission reduction while undertaking their activities. The 7 Greens Concept are: Green Heart (Do not only think or speak, but act), Green Activity (Learn and experience about environment and resource conservation), Green Community (Balance between tourism-generated benefits and uniqueness of communities), Green Logistics (Modes of travel focused on energy saving and using renewable energy as well as reducing greenhouse gases), Green Attraction (Tourist attraction managed according to the policy framework and operation of sustainable tourism), Green Service (Select nature-based materials and control treated waste back to nature) and Green Plus (Giving back to society by assuming greater responsibility for the environment through their choices of activities).

The next sections will provide insights into the environmental impacts of tourism, described per stakeholder, followed by overall solutions. The first part will focus on the insights learned from communities and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from communities

Noise and waste pollution

The environment in which one lives is a great part of someone's life. Therefore, threatening one's natural environment can breach their human rights. Two of the village representatives recognised some negative environmental impacts caused by tourism, mostly regarding **noise and waste pollution** by tourists. Village Representative 1 mentions that their village is already trying to tackle these and other issues by making use of a visitor do's and don'ts. Also, by implementing the village rules, tourist visits can be done environmentally friendly. An example hereof is that there is no plastic usage in the village. To get the village to this point, a lot of **awareness raising** is done:

“Yes, it's a public policy. To keep the community clean. They create awareness and make community members feel like they love their community. And every year at the end of January

they have an annual event for the community. Like a family event, something like a party once a year. Like they have a part of giving a reward to someone who conserves the environment. They have to keep up with the goals.” (Village Representative 1)

Because of this, the community is able to create a prevention of negative environmental impacts by tourism as they also create awareness amongst tourists. Similar to this, village number 2 also focuses on ***being an environmentally friendly community***. The community has three books with village rules and regulations, and the first one is all about environmental resources management.

Concluding, the main focus of the villages in the reduction of environmental impacts of tourism is on 1) creating a sustainable, environmentally friendly community that then 2) uses those assets to organise their tourism product in a similar, sustainable way and 3) passes those values on to tourists.

Land grabbing

Besides village representatives from the mainland, a representative from the indigenous minority group the Moken has been interviewed. He explained that the Surin islands are the unclaimed territory of the Moken, but since land rights were established there, they have lost their access to the places where they used to have their settlements and are pushed to the outskirts of the, now, national park. Tourism resorts arose on their previously owned territory and their boat travel diminished the travelling route of the Moken. Basically, ***their land was grabbed***.

The next section will focus on the insights learned from Human Rights NGOs and describes some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from Human Rights NGOs

Even though the community representatives hardly spoke about the environmental aspect of human rights, the Human Rights NGOs think differently about this. One of them even stated during the interviews: *“Human rights issues that happen in the community have to do with community resources.” (Human Rights NGO 1)* Tourism, especially in big groups, can damage the local environment and thus the community resources. But also, stakeholders from outside of the community come to create a tourism infrastructure using the resources of the community and thus being guilty of land grabbing. Therefore, it is important that communities are always ***aware of their rights*** before tourism is developed.

Land grabbing

Some tourism companies are guilty of ***land grabbing***, especially in the south of Thailand. Resorts, ports and even ‘CBT’ projects arise on the land that is owned by communities. Ethnic minority groups are especially hit by this, because they have less rights than Thai people, though it happens to both groups. This impacts their cultural values, but also impacts their job opportunities and income. Several organisations are now ***educating the communities*** on their land rights and ***providing legal assistance*** when needed. DMCs themselves cannot specifically prevent land grabbing from happening, but they can ensure they are not supporting any tourism infrastructure that is established after the grabbing of land.

Example by Khun Jittin ~ TEATA (anonymize in final version):

The case that I would like to share with you regarding a negative impact on local livelihoods and access to public areas is the unlimited growth of accommodation around Srinakarin reservoir in Tha Kradaan sub-district, Srisawat district, Kanchanaburi province. Local villagers

are mostly Thai. Some relatively big riverfront or floating accommodation investment mostly by outsiders blocks the access of local people to the reservoir. Apart from being the source of freshwater fishes, the reservoir also functions as a picnic area for local villagers, but now they cannot get access to some spots because of the blockage. In addition, some parts of the surrounding area have also been used for cattle grazing. This is clearly an undesirable consequence of tourism development within local communities with no proper plan and zoning management.

Resource management

As mentioned earlier, tourism can bring both positive and negative impacts. It can help protect the environment, but also degrade it because of the increased number of visitors. The community has the task to **protect and take care of their resources**. Some examples thereof are the need for a good waste management system (Human Rights NGO 1), environmentally friendly way of making handicrafts (Human Rights NGO 3) and prevent tourists from being the priority for water usage (Human Rights Round Table Group Activity). On the other hand, tourists can also help with a village clean-up or planting of trees to reduce the carbon footprint of tourism and contribute to reforestation (Human Rights NGO 2).

Due diligence of the DMCs and other stakeholders developing tourism

Not only the community has the task to protect their resources. Tourism developers also have a responsibility of **due diligence** and need to understand the sensitivities in the areas before bringing visitors. To do so, three moments have to be taken into account: 1) the development stage, 2) during the tourism activity, and 3) after the tourism activity. It is important that beforehand the destinations are chosen that **focus on environmental sustainability** or have a very high potential. Secondly, the **behaviour of all tourism stakeholders** during the activity should be looked at. Lastly, the **environmental impacts** (both positive and negative) of the tourism activity have to be evaluated. This should not only be measured in the communities, but also in the **surrounding areas**. Environmental impacts often range further than just the village and sometimes also the resources of other communities are impacted, think of water distribution. In the end, the DMCs should not only aim at minimising negative environmental impacts, but go beyond that and aim at **leaving a positive impact**. NGO Panellist 2 proposes to have a **checklist for DMCs** which helps them tick all the boxes.

Educating tourists

Outside of the scope of this research are human rights violations that are caused by others than the tourism industry. Even though tourism does not actively contribute to those violations, tourists can help in minimising those. By **raising awareness** amongst tourists, they can spread the message. *“They have the power and voice to tell other people about the human rights of the community.”* (Human Rights NGO 1) Combining this with an instruction on **how to behave environmentally friendly** when you are on vacation, this could make a big impact. Part of this education would involve explaining to tourists why it is important that they pay extra money for, amongst others, nature conservation and sustainability. The tourists should be made **proud of their contribution to nature conservation**. This was emphasised by both the DMCs and NGOs during the panel discussion at the human rights round table.

The next section will focus on the insights learned from DMCs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from DMCs

Choosing the villages for a visit

One of the biggest responsibilities for the DMCs is to “*choose the right village*” (**DMC Panellist 3**). In this case, it refers to villages where environmental protection measures are taken and nature is being respected, by both villagers and tourists. The DMCs are more than willing to do this, but the main challenge for them is to identify which villages are ‘right’. They request help from other institutes, like DASTA, to guide them to the right villages. Thus, **expert knowledge** is required to make the beneficial decisions.

Environmental do’s and don’ts

This request for help arises because DMCs do not always know what is happening in reality. Something that can help is to have a **checklist with do’s and don’ts** that can help guide them in the right direction. The community also needs to be aware of these do’s and don’ts, so they know what they can work towards.

Education is key

Which leads us towards the last insight given by the DMCs. **Education** is very important to reduce the negative environmental impacts of tourism in the villages. Tourists have to be taught environmentally friendly behaviour to minimise their impacts. Tour guides have to be taught environmentally friendly behaviour, setting the example and preventing tourists from harming the environment. After all, they are the ones who are present on the spot and have to ensure that all the environmental do’s and don’ts that are set beforehand are actually carried out, also when tourists require last minute changes. Lastly, the communities need to learn about the organisation of tourism in an environmentally friendly way. To them, one of the learning points should be about **long term thinking** instead of having the focus on today. Tourism can bring many positive effects now, but in the future might prove to have made harmful impacts today.

Overall, it is important for the DMCs to not support the wrong supply chain. They will focus on working with suppliers that are known to work on child protection. The following section will present the overall solutions found during the interviews, round table and desk research.

Overall solutions

In order to properly address the issues regarding negative environmental impact reduction of tourism, it is also essential to **specify which parties are affected by these issues**. Alongside communities directly experiencing the consequences of tourism, there are also other stakeholders which are indirectly impacted in a negative way. For example, tourism may also be implemented with the aid of environmental material procurement, or any other form of “resource-grabbing”, which could affect various local communities indirectly involved and who are reliant on the natural environment. These groups might not even be part of the tourism world, and yet are still experiencing a negative impact caused by tourism. Therefore, the impact on these parties should be taken into account when applying the following solutions.

DMC responsibilities

Proper knowledge of each individual’s own rights must become a prerequisite before tourism can be mindfully developed in any community. This **responsibility lies with the DMCs** initiating the development of tourism in the area. DMCs will need to confirm the existence of issues concerning human rights or any other sensitivities pertaining to the community before

tourists can visit. By means of a ***diligently-formulated checklist***, these issues can be properly addressed prior to tourism taking place. Sensitivities in the surrounding area can be acted upon in a proper manner by way of ***raising awareness*** among tourists.

Utilising a ***sophisticated and informed checklist*** could contribute to distinguishing communities suitable for potential tourist-based attractions, from communities that are not ready/unsuitable for tourism (due to its negative impacts). A process must be implemented in order for DMCs to have a justified, fair and reliable relationship with properly screened communities. This should coincide with an obligatory universal human rights policy. ***Open communication and transparency*** should also be clear about where the money is going, what measures are taking place, and where environmental protection is still falling short.

Even though DMCs recognise that they are responsible for collaborating with villages that operate in an environmentally friendly way, they feel a need for expert knowledge to decide which villages do so. Creating an ***environmental checklist*** would be useful, but also, as discussed during the round table, a ***single certification*** and ***incentives system*** that could be used by communities, would help the DMCs to recognise the environmentally friendly villages.

Targeted Education for Communities

The decisions made by DMCs on tourism development in remote communities are supported by organisations like DASTA to determine whether human rights in the area are being respected or neglected. Despite this attempt at creating a “fail-safe”, DMCs often have no real conception of what is happening in the actual area. This might coincide with the concept of greenwashing, but more often than not it is due to their lack of presence in the community. Awareness, compliance, and implementation of the rules and demands presented on the ***aforementioned checklist*** is crucial not only for tourists and tour guides, but also for the communities themselves.

This, however, is currently a reoccurring constriction among the affected communities because of the necessitated demand for ***short-term solutions***, rather than long-term opportunities due to underlying internal and external factors. The village knows best what the capacities of their natural environment are, yet they often compromise this environment in exchange for better pay. A better understanding of sustainability must be created in order for community members to change their perception and behaviour. Members of the community who are strongly in favour of a tourism-based economy may not see the damage which could take place when tourism occurs without limits. ***Effective training*** must be provided to educate the local population on how to set an example for tourists and why this is important to create a balance between locals and tourists. A ***local education standard*** for environmental protection should set the standards. This training could be used as a specific criteria for communities to be certified by the designated authorities (e.g. TAT). These criteria should be easy to understand and accessible, so that communities are not unfairly judged within the process.

Youth

In contrast to many community members, the younger generations do show an interest in sustainability. However, due to the lack of interest and commitment in the wider community, many young people move away from small communities to study and learn about sustainability and the impacts that tourism on nature can have. But the amount of youth members who bring this knowledge back to their village is rather low. By ***investing in local scholarships for young people***, the chances of a youth drain occurring will be much lower.

Educating Tourists

Educating tourists is essential for both selling environmentally friendly programs and environmentally friendly behaviour during the visit. Environmentally friendly programs often come at a higher price and ***tourists should be properly educated*** on the reasoning behind the premium tour pricing. This reasoning could be relayed through ***advertising*** of the tours themselves while selling the product, or it could be introduced by the tour guides before embarking on the journey through ***awareness-raising***. Educating customers on this matter will contribute to a better understanding as to why environmental preservation is essential for these tourist attractions to be successful and manageable for local communities. Additionally, this could be taken even further by making tourists feel proud of their contribution to nature conservation. Once they feel proud, they can help spread the message and raise awareness for negative environmental impacts outside of the hands of the tourism stakeholders.

Priority on resources is also a large issue. The demand for supplies such as clean drinking water in local areas is just as high for tourists as it is for locals. This should not be the case; ***locals should get priority over clean drinking water*** due to the fact that visitors can bring their own bottled water, whilst for the locals it is their main source of nourishment.

The latter can be part of a ***visitor's do's and don'ts*** that tourists receive prior to their visit as well as rules on noise in the village. Such a list can help them behave sustainably, and minimise their negative impact and optimise their positive impact on the environment. Some of the villages interviewed already use such a list and were positive about the outcomes.

Land and Resource Grabbing

Land and resource grabbing is an issue that is not easily overcome by tourism stakeholders. Stakeholders that are aware of these issues are often not the ones executing certain actions. However, they can completely ban tourism activities and infrastructure that are created by grabbing resources from local communities. Important is that they thoroughly ***research a potential tourism program before including it in their offering***. Additionally, these stakeholders can support or start tourism programs that are run solely by locals using their own resources. NGOs can support communities in their fight against land grabbing by ***educating*** them on their land rights and ***providing legal assistance***. The Indigenous Women's Network of Thailand (IWNT) has done this before and could provide assistance for this again. For example, with assistance from the government.

Resource Management

One thing is to use resources; another is to keep them intact. Communities and NGOs demand for ***resource management systems***, like waste management systems, in villages. DMCs and communities can collaborate with environmental NGOs in setting up such systems in villages. Tourists can also assist by participating in village clean-ups or tree planting.

The following section will discuss ***HR Issue 6: Supporting fair and safe working conditions for local community members offering tourism services***. The main focus of all groups is on creating a decent pay for the local community, but also safe labour and opportunity of equality are briefly touched upon. The section concludes with a number of overall solutions on these topics, partly based on best case practises from CBT projects.

HR Issue 6: *Supporting fair and safe working conditions for local community members offering tourism services*

Fair and safe working conditions are not always a given when these are not officially documented. In the Western world, workers' rights are often documented, but this is not the case in the Global South. Also tourism in those areas knows a lot of grey areas when it comes to employment and tour operators benefit a lot from the eagerness of people to work (Wilson & Dashper, 2022). In this section, we will explore which working conditions are being compromised and how DMCs can support fair and safe working conditions for community members offering tourism services.



Photo from DASTA

Insights from desk research

In order to fulfil UNs sustainable development goal number eight: “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all” (*THE 17 GOALS | Sustainable Development*, n.d.), especially **decisions of tour operators** play a role while making sure they maximise their positive environmental, economic and social impacts in destinations and minimise their negative ones (Hagedoorn, 2013). In the past, “Many international tour operators active in the Global South have benefited greatly from the “eagerness” of local workers, which has precipitated low pay, limited worker protections, poor working conditions, and a lack of opportunities for workers to voice their opinions and concerns through formal channels” (Wilson & Dashper, 2022). According to research by the

Roundtable Human Rights in Tourism, for example, tour guides and tour operators are demanding commissions from the local communities. If these commissions cannot be provided, tour guides and operators will avoid bringing customers to the villages. Therefore, these commission payments result in a barrier for economic inclusion (Baumgartner and Leisinger, 2020).

In order to change this behaviour and transition into a more sustainable direction, many travel companies and tour operators have now voluntarily put **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** and **Responsible Tourism policies** in place (Baumgartner and Leisinger, 2020). This sustainable approach takes fair and safe working conditions into account, which can also be reached by **implementing community-based tourism (CBT)**.

The success of CBT in local villages depends on certain aspects. Success factors are the willingness of villages to form associations, the proper implementation of a system for fair income distribution, proper CBT-related training, flexibility in income opportunities (non-CBT-related forms of income) to grant income security, a comprehensive system for sustainable waste disposal and the willingness of CBTs to hand over management to the community after approximately 15 years (Karacaoğlu and Birdir, 2017).

The next sections will provide insights into which working conditions are compromised and how they can be improved, described per stakeholder, followed by overall solutions. The first part will focus on the insights learned from communities and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from communities

When it comes to working conditions in tourism, most village representatives did not have any complaints. An explanation could be that nearly all villages that are part of this research offer CBT activities. This form of tourism is expected to provide fair and safe working conditions for the community. Therefore, the insights from communities will focus on how CBT can positively impact working conditions.

Decent pay

Decent pay is an important factor in every village. As mentioned before, the villagers that work in tourism in village 4 do not receive income from the business couple that run the village since COVID. They only receive income from selling souvenirs. Village Representative 5 states that all tourism workers get the same income, no matter their age and gender. Which means that also the children working in tourism get the same income. Village Representative 2 says that the daily labour fee for the tourism employees is double the minimum standard.

Community fund

An additional benefit of CBT projects is that they often work with a **community fund**. A certain percentage of the tourism income goes towards this fund which can be used for projects for the entire community, also the people who do not work in tourism can benefit from this. Village

representative 1 has listed a few projects for which the community fund has been used: health care development, welfare for elders, money assistance for funerals, and a community bank. Village Representative 2 also adds education and care of newborns to this list.

CBT management

Having a voice is not always the case. ***CBT tries to ensure that the workers are represented in the CBT management.*** In village 5, everybody has the opportunity to participate in CBT management. They organise monthly meetings that all villagers can attend. They talk about all matters concerning the village, including CBT. Furthermore, everyone who wants to work in tourism is very welcome to do so. As in many other CBT villages, there is a rotation system in place, to give all households that want to participate in tourism (e.g. homestay, meals, activities) equally get the chance to do so. Also Village Representative 1 mentions working with a CBT management group that is chosen from the CBT workers.

Village representatives we spoke to do not identify gender inequality in their communities. They assert that responsibilities within CBT are not divided by gender. ***CBT roles are divided based on their skills and expertise for each CBT member, allowing everyone to participate in CBT activities equally.*** Therefore, they earn money equally from what they have done in CBT activities. *“CBT is a tool to help the community have participation. Everyone can get and earn money... That means income to every household.” (Village 2)*

The next section will focus on the insights learned from Human Rights NGOs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from Human Rights NGOs

Fair trade should include the provision of ***fair prices*** and ***fair wages*** for the community members working in tourism. In general, workers are not able to receive fair compensation and could therefore benefit from assistance in this. There are several reasons why fair prices are not always easily accessible for local communities, which are detailed further below.

Uneven distribution between stakeholders

Due to privatisation and full ownership over activities, ethnic minority groups tend to experience ***discrimination*** from overarching entities like national parks. Communities are being left out of the tourism market due to tour guides being directly commissioned instead of engaging in conversation with locals seeking involvement in the market. Another example given by an NGO is that families owning a homestay receive very little payment. They do not know why this is the case or who to ask for help. A possibility is that, since the community does not communicate directly with the tourist but through a professional guide, the guide receives the full amount of payment, but only gives a small amount to the local families.

Additionally, other ***tourism entrepreneurs*** who are interested in the community resources are also reducing the power of local communities. Sometimes, these entrepreneurs take control of the community's resources, gaining most of the profits and keeping the decision-making power. In addition, new tourism accommodation is built and the financial support from tourism is not going to families owning a homestay, but to outsiders owning accommodation in a community that they are not part of. However, communities strive for economic inclusion,

which is not being actively pursued or even sought after by their profiteers, further preventing tourism activities from being developed in these communities. This lack of development is especially concerning for some villages situated in the north who have become dependent on the revenue generated from tourism.

Another stakeholder that is influencing the benefits that tourism workers in Thai villages receive, are the **overseas agents**, mostly European. In order to be competitive, they push DMCs to create tours as cheap as possible, and tourism workers are often the first to feel this as they are receiving the smallest shares of the profits, which sometimes is hardly any. “*Flip it: if you want to visit Thailand, invest in it. That way we can improve sustainability within our operations.*” (Roundtable Participant 16) **Investment** can happen in the form of education or financial assistance. Often, there is a reason why a tour is cheaper or a village is marginalised. Equality in an economical sense can only be established when the customers and tourism stakeholders are willing to pay for it. It is recommended for tourists that when they find a cheaper tour to ask questions and find out why a tour is cheaper.

Informal work

Human Rights NGO 6 acknowledges that ***many local informal workers in tourism do not have the privileges of having access to any form of social security***. This gives rise to uncertainty for the future of these workers, as they have no future retirement plan to work towards, nor do they have a financial back-up plan in case of injury or any other inability to work for a specific period of time. This group only has access to basic healthcare when showing proof of being in possession of a payment card to pay for possible fees.

Lastly, safe labour and safe working conditions are marked as important by Human Rights NGO 3, but have not been further discussed.

The next section will focus on the insights learned from DMCs and describe some of the practical solutions provided by them.

Insights from DMCs

Decent pay

The Research on DMCs Needs for Tourism in Thai communities and How to Add Value to Thai Village Experiences and CBT for European Markets previously undertaken, generally asked DMCs about their successes in human rights and what their challenges are. Regarding fair and safe working conditions, **wage** was the only topic mentioned. The DMCs mentioned that a fair and competitive remuneration was given to people actively involved in a project. Hence, this is a measure that they are already undertaking.

Equality of opportunity

Equality of opportunity also turned out to be a very important point for the DMCs. By giving equal opportunities, the working conditions become more fair. More about the DMCs view on equality of opportunity can be found in the chapter on *HR Issue 4: Supporting equality of opportunity in local communities offering tourism services* on page 38.

The following section will present the overall solutions found during the interviews, round table and desk research.

Overall solutions

Training and awareness raising

Economic opportunities can be provided through **capacity building training, empowerment training and skills training** on product design and development. In this way, community members can learn more about the market system and pricing as well as develop skills to ensure that they are able to access work. Empowerment training can help community members to speak up and give themselves a voice in the decision-making process.

However, during the round table it was brought up that not only community members need training, but that tourists and overseas agents also need to gain more insights, specifically in the costs of fair tourism. **Awareness raising** on the fact that sustainable tourism, including fair wages and safe working conditions, comes at a higher price. If you ask for sustainability within tourism, you should be willing to help cover the costs to make this happen, otherwise fair working conditions will be out of reach.

CBT as a solution for fair working conditions

CBT creates fair income and employment opportunities, which can help solve problems with, amongst others, income inequality and exploitation through the way it is organised. When setting up Thai village tours, **DMCs can** take this into account and deliberately choose to visit CBT projects only. Additionally, DMCs should always pay a fair price. As an advanced step, DMCs should work together with villages of their interest to develop CBT. This way, they can offer a product that is unique, as well as provide assistance to villages interested in taking tourism into their own hands and divide tourism benefits evenly. By being directly in touch with the local community, the middlemen can also be cut out, so that the community can receive a higher share of the benefits. Besides the salary, part of the tourism profits is also dedicated to a tourism fund, supporting causes that are important for the community, like education and health care. By sharing part of the profits with the entire community, every member is benefiting from tourism.

Informal work

Lastly, a lot of the work being done in tourism is informal, which means that these workers do not have access to social security. **Completely formalising the tourism sector is a big task, but a start could be made by DMCs and the government.** Expert NGOs can provide assistance with this formalisation.

Conclusions & Recommendations

In sum, it is essential to consider that some positive changes in Thai village tourism have already been made in the last few years. However, many issues still have room for improvements. Creating more awareness about human rights violations, spreading more information about sustainable tourism, and establishing respectful encounters with the local people living in villages would help the industry as a whole.

(Human Rights NGO 3)

Apart from implementing community-based tourism, there are a lot of solutions that can contribute to the improvement of human rights. The recommended solutions from the interviews, desk research and round table can be found below. Naturally, the dates for actions are still tentative.

A. Creating a code of conduct and expansion of the company code of conduct

What

A code of conduct is a company policy that outlines its principles and standards, as well as the ethical intentions that employees and partners are expected to follow while working with the company (GAN Integrity, 2020). For DMCs without a code of conduct, we recommend to create one whereas DMCs with a code of conduct should expand the code of conduct to include the six human rights issues as defined by this research: 1) Protecting children in local communities, 2) Treating ethnic minorities with respect, 3) Working to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation related to tourism in local communities, 4) Supporting equality of opportunity in local communities offering tourism services, 5) Reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities and 6) Supporting fair and safe working conditions for local community members offering tourism services. The following topics were specifically suggested during the interviews and round table and should therefore also be taken into account.

Topics Code of Conduct		
Protecting children	Treating ethnic minorities with respect	Protection from sexual abuse and exploitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour towards children • Child labour • Child abuse • Privacy • Photography • No begging • No orphanage visits • Limited school visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photography • Fixed prices for handicrafts • Limited investments to participate • Support local supply chain • Local guides as the main guide • Equal opportunities for ethnic minorities • Respectful behaviour towards ethnic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homestay regulation • No exchange of contacts

	minorities	
Equality of opportunity	Minimise environmental impacts	Support fair and safe working conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equality between local and professional guides • Equality between community members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect maximum carrying capacity • Environmental impacts • Prohibited use of land grabbed for tourism infrastructure • Waste management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal contracts

Who

The creation of a code of conduct is a solution that can be undertaken by the DMCs themselves. However, the DMCs are not human rights experts and therefore it would be recommended to develop the code of conduct together in consultation with human rights NGOs in the abovementioned fields. This could be done, either by asking the human rights NGOs to develop a model code of conduct, or by organising a workshop day in which DMCs and human rights experts come together to develop a foundation for a code of conduct in collaboration. In both options, the code of conduct forms a start from which the DMCs can tailor the policy to their own organisation.

Role of Tourlink

The Tourlink team can play a facilitating role in this process, e.g. invitation of human rights NGOs & DMCs, organisation and moderation of the workshop day, as well as taking the lead in finalising the code of conduct and spreading it.

When

The creation of a code of conduct is the first step in the process towards improved human rights within Thai village tourism. The preparations for this step can commence in June 2023, if this fits the schedule of DMCs and NGOs.

B. Stakeholder training at the destinations

What

Based on the topics in the code of conduct, stakeholder training should be provided so that every stakeholder fully understands what each human rights issue entails, and in what ways they can contribute to preventing breaches of human rights. Stakeholders to possibly include in the training are, but not limited to, community members, local and professional guides, hotels, travel agents, DMCs and their overseas agents. The training contents should be focused on the prevention of human rights breaches, recognition of these breaches, and how to effectively respond to them. Furthermore, shared training for all stakeholders can facilitate better mutual understanding and improve collaboration.

The points of the code of conduct should form the main input for the training. The points listed below are derived from the interviews and round table, and should be taken into account besides the points mentioned above.

Training topics		
Protecting children	Treating ethnic minorities with respect	Protection from sexual abuse and exploitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child protection • Risk recognition • Do's and don'ts • Reporting • Privacy & photography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectful behaviour • Communication • Privacy & photography • Cross-cultural understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual abuse • Impacts sexual abuse • Prevention sexual abuse • Recognizing sexual abuse • Acting upon sexual abuse
Equality of opportunity	Minimise environmental impacts	Support fair and safe working conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with communities • Role of local guides • Recognising inequalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resource use • Nature conservation • Waste management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Fair income

Who

There are several institutes and organisations that would be suitable to give the training. Training focused on communities should be given by experts in that field, like DASTA, CBT-I and/or TRTA. During the round table, Child Safe representatives already mentioned that they give training to tourism stakeholders as well, so this organisation could also take a lead role.

Role of Tourlink

The main role of Tourlink in this process would be to organise the different trainings and to bring all stakeholders together.

When

Last year, tourism stakeholders preferred to have training in the tourist low season, which lasts from May until September. This would be the suggested time for human rights training.

C. Conveying the message to the tourists

What

Once the training is completed, the message needs to be conveyed to the tourists. This is essential as they are the ones coming into direct contact with these communities. Before a village visit, every tourist needs to receive a set of guidelines on how to behave, this includes but is not limited to photography, dress code, customs, fixed prices for handicrafts, respectful behaviour towards ethnic minorities and privacy. Together with this set of guidelines, a brief explanation of the village to be visited should be included. In doing so, the expectations of clients can be managed. For example, it should be mentioned that traditional clothing is not always worn and that tourists are a guest in the daily life of the villagers.

Visitor Do's and Don'ts		
Protecting children	Treating ethnic minorities with respect	Protection from sexual abuse and exploitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child protection • No orphanage visits • Limited school visits • Reporting • Privacy & photography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines on respectful behaviour • Dress code • Privacy & Photography • Bargaining • Culture of the host community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No sexual abuse • Acting upon sexual abuse
Equality of opportunity	Minimise environmental impacts	Support fair and safe working conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating in workshops given by the villagers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resource use • Nature protection • Environmental do's and don'ts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No haggling for handicrafts

Who

At this point, each DMC should have their own code of conduct and sufficient knowledge on human rights in Thai village tourism to be able to create their own set of guidelines for their clients. The full responsibility for this activity is with the DMCs. However, since each community has its own values it is important to take them into account by making decisions together with them.

Role of Tourlink

Tourlink does not need to play a specific role in this activity, but it could encourage DMCs to develop such a set of guidelines.

When

This activity follows after the training and therefore the month after the training is given would be best to develop the guidelines, with October 2023 being the last option.

D. Community training

What

Raising awareness in local communities is important and can be accomplished with community training organised by CBT organisations in collaboration with the villagers (for example the village head and CBT team). Giving opportunities for participation to all community members is the key success to this issue. Women, children, elders, and people with disabilities should also get the opportunity to participate in tourism services based on their expertise.

Furthermore, risk recognition should be part of the training, e.g. understanding potential risks (red flags), do's and don'ts, and how children can protect themselves. Child protection organisations can help with training as well as with risk assessments.

However, training could be sensitive and should therefore be approached in a delicate way. Topics regarding abuse are often taboo and should only be introduced after trust is built with the community. It is suggested that the training starts with other, practical topics first. Additionally, it is important that meetings are informal and that the marginalised groups are also invited and present. Appointing a peer from the village could help these people reach the training and, consequently, inclusion.

Training topics		
Protecting children	Treating ethnic minorities with respect	Protection from sexual abuse and exploitation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child protection • Risk recognition • Do's and don'ts • Reporting • Privacy & photography 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism skills • Story-telling • Capacity-building • Cultural preservation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual abuse • Impact sexual abuse • Prevention sexual abuse • Recognise sexual abuse • Acting upon sexual abuse
Equality of opportunity	Minimise environmental impacts	Support fair and safe working conditions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5C Model (Peter Richards & Potjana Suansri) • Empowerment • Community management • Role of local guide and licensed tour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural resource use • Nature conservation • Waste management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Fair income (difference between Thai vs indigenous communities) • No haggling for handicrafts: fixed prices

guide		
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Who

NGOs can support training for the local communities. For example, ChildSafe or FOCUS can give training on child protection. DASTA, TRTA, and CBT-i can give training on CBT and community village management. DMCs can also give training and share experiences on creating community tour programs and effective communication with DMCs.

Role of Tourlink

The Tourlink team can play roles in both arranging minimum and advanced standards training, and inviting human rights experts to give these trainings to local communities.

When

Ideally, the training should be developed in the villages from June - October 2023, after developing the minimum and advanced standards as well as the code of conduct. As some topics are sensitive and need time to understand, the training should concern specific topics at each training session. It should be delivered with the goal of getting the local community to understand better and then put the information into practice.

E. Ethnic minority empowerment training

What

Raising empowerment in ethnic minorities is necessary to create more job opportunities and income from tourism. Furthermore, it will give them a stronger foundation to work with other stakeholders, like guides, local suppliers and DMCs. There are several trainings that should be provided, including cultural preservation, added-value on local products and handicrafts, tourist behaviours and expectations, community management, tour program arrangements and more.

Empowerment Training Topics
Cultural Preservation
Added value on local products and handicrafts
Tourist behaviours and expectations
Community management
Tour program arrangements
Collaboration national and local guides
Relation between Indigenous people and Thai people

Who

Human rights NGOs can support training to ethnic minorities to encourage them to respect and preserve their own culture sustainably. DMCs can support them on tourism product development and tourism marketing knowledge. Furthermore, DASTA and Fair Tourism can assist with the development of the training programmes as well as with the execution of the training.

Role of Tourlink

The Tourlink team can develop and execute the training program together with Human Rights NGOs and DMCs. Furthermore, Tourlink can play a facilitating role, such as inviting human rights experts & DMCs to give training to ethnic minorities.

When

This activity can take place from June to October 2023 after developing the minimum and advanced standards, as well as the guidelines in the code of conduct.

F. Reducing the environmental impacts of tourism in communities**What**

It is essential to reduce the environmental impacts of tourism. However, not all tourism stakeholders are experts in nature conservation. Therefore, a collaboration can be sought with environmental NGOs who are skilled in protecting the natural resources of communities. The TAT has launched a 7 Greens Concept (see page 42), which can be one the one hand a guideline, on the other hand they are committed to Eco nature conservation projects in tourism, which can be useful for corporations. Such nature projection projects could for example be financed by raising funds in the bookings, CSR activities from the DMCs or by donations from tourists.

DMCs could also start small by organising tourism activities that help conserve nature, like tree planting and village clean-ups.

Who

DMCs should take responsibility by confirming the existence of the aforementioned issues, as they are the stakeholder which enable this behaviour. These DMCs must implement a process in order to have a justified, fair and reliable relationship with properly screened villages/communities so that actual progress will be made. DASTA and Fair Tourism can support the DMCs regarding these endeavours. Furthermore, TAT can assist with the 7 Greens Concept (Green Heart, Green Logistics, Green Service, Green Activity, Green Community, Green Attraction and Green Plus) in order to create an understanding of how this concept can be done sustainably in the tourism supply chain (see Issue 5).

Role of Tourlink

Tourlink could act as an intermediary to make sure DMCs are following protocol by confirming that all criteria on the checklist have been met and that relations between parties proceed swiftly.

When

Once a confirmed and approved checklist has been formulated, steps should be taken to approach suitable destinations. Depending on the progress of the checklist, this solution could potentially be applied mid-2023 around June.

The environmental activities can take place from May until July 2023, depending on the progress in developing the code of conduct and the standards.

G. Create a strong network among stakeholders

What

Training all stakeholders about human rights issues creates a strong network in the battle to solve these issues. After training, stakeholders can be linked together in a network to stay up to date about human rights issues and potential solutions. Additionally, by linking Human Rights NGOs to these networks, a point of assistance is always within reach for the tourism stakeholders. Human Rights NGOs could be available for help and assistance when DMCs and other stakeholders are developing new human rights solutions.

Who

Human rights NGOs can support training to all stakeholders for better understanding on human rights issues. Government agencies like MOTS, Department of Tourism, or DASTA can support a stakeholder meeting or working group in terms of setting up a strong network for all stakeholders.

Role of Tourlink

The Tourlink team can arrange the training program by inviting experts and arrange a networking meeting for all stakeholders under the Tourlink project.

When

This activity can take place in October 2023 onwards after developing the minimum and advanced standards, as well as the guidelines in the code of conduct.

H. Equal collaborations between DMCs and communities

What

When DMCs are working together with communities to create a tourism programme, it is important that both parties collaborate as equals. However, before starting a collaboration, it is important that the DMC learns about the host culture to ensure respectful behaviour and a

better understanding on which decisions are made. After that, every step in the process must be followed together: from creating the tourism activity to improving it after evaluations. In those evaluations, it is important that not only tourists but also the community is heard. It should be ensured that the tourism activities are executed in line with their wishes and that human rights are not breached. Needless to say, the on site management of the tourism activity is in the hands of the community. The table below shows which steps are important in the collaboration.

Partnerships
Learn about the host culture
Collaboration in creating tourism activities
Shaping the target group
Implementing tourism activities together
Village visit evaluations
Collectively improving the tourism activity

Who

DMC can play a significant role to develop a tourism programme together with the community based on their target needs and community sources.

Role of Tourlink

The Tourlink team can provide community information to DMC and train how to work efficiently between DMC and communities.

When

This activity can take place in August 2023 onwards after training about standards.

I. Guidelines on the responsible governance of land tenure

What

To protect the land rights of indigenous communities, it is important to have guidelines or even legislation on it. The FAO (2022) has written voluntary guidelines on the responsible governance of land tenure which can be of great inspiration for similar rights in tourism. These guidelines respect all land rights holders, protect them from threats, promote land rights, provide access to juridical help and prevent conflicts over land. The guidelines are written based on certain principles that are not only valid in this situation but even when working on reducing other human rights issues as well.

Principles of implementation
Human dignity
Non-discrimination
Equity and justice

Gender equality
Holistic and sustainable approach
Consultation and participation
Rule of law
Transparency
Accountability
Continuous improvement

It is advised to carefully read through the guidelines document by the FAO (<https://www.fao.org/3/i2801e/i2801e.pdf>) to fully understand which aspects of tenure rights and duties should be included, how the administration of tenure works and how to promote, implement, monitor and evaluate such guidelines.

Who

The Department of Lands, under the Ministry of Interior, should be responsible for promoting guidelines on the responsible governance of land tenure to the public through documents and social media.

Role of Tourlink

The Tourlink team can publicise the guidelines on the responsible governance of land tenure to all stakeholders and network to create better understanding on land tenure.

When

This activity can take place in January 2024 onwards.

J. Role of the government

Prepare a white list/recommendations to MOTS and Ministry of interior affairs regarding HR and other topics that DASTA can give to them and hope they will change policies etc? Keeping in mind that change takes time and baby steps.

What

According to the 5th National Human Rights Plan (2023-2027) by the Rights and Liberties Department under the Ministry of Justice, there is no specific plan for human rights in tourism. Therefore, policy recommendations for human rights in tourism are needed to develop for adding into the next national human rights plan in 2028. First step is to arrange the workshop with all related tourism stakeholders to gather the challenges and solutions regarding human rights in the tourism industry. The next step is to prepare policy recommendations to the Ministry of Tourism and Sports and Ministry of Justice. After the policy recommendations are approved and added to the national human rights plan, the related governmental organisations will implement the plan based on their roles and responsibilities in terms of tourism.

Who

The Ministry of Tourism and Sports should be responsible for making policy recommendations and implementing plans in practice, supported by the Department of Tourism, Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and DASTA.

Role of Tourlink

Tourlink can provide the results from the HR roundtable last year and the research of Human Rights Issues and Solutions in Thai Village Tourism as basic solutions/information to the Ministry of Tourism and Sports in order to create policy recommendations.

When

It should be started in 2024 onwards to collect the information from workshops, make policy recommendations and implement into the national human rights plan.

K. Implementation Policy for Migrant Workers**What**

As migrant workers have issues in unequal treatment, abuse and well-being. Policy making is necessary for protecting and providing a better quality of life for them. Government, private sectors and human rights NGOs should work together to develop it. For the tourism industry, DMC and tour operators need to understand the law and policy for hiring migrant workers and treating them with respect.

Who

The Ministry of Labor, Human Rights NGOs and Private sectors are needed to collaborate in terms of creating an implementation policy for migrant workers. After the policy is done, it should be implemented in every province in Thailand. Bottom-up and top-down approaches are both significant mechanisms to integrate with all stakeholders and implement the policy successfully.

Role of Tourlink

The Tourlink team can give useful information from this report to government and related organisations to develop the policy and quality of life for migrant workers as well as promote the policy to all partners under the Tourlink project to create better understanding and actions for migrant workers.

When

This activity can take place in 2024 onwards after developing the implementation policy for migrant workers.

L. Other possible solutions

Other possible solutions are improving the living standards, making overseas parties pay and implementing CBT.

Regarding the Human Rights NGO number three, Tourism is a gateway to raise awareness of the beauty, strength, uniqueness of the culture, and uniqueness of the people. It can also provide opportunities to generate income and access to resources. Community based tourism is a powerful tool that gives back power to the people, allowing them to express their feelings and protect their community from exploitation from the outside.

(Human Rights NGO 3)

Other solutions to put into practice:

- Improving living standards
- Ask (ethnic) communities about village visits and collaboration and work together as partners to make decisions.
- Always give communities priority access to natural resources (which are blocked in some areas by tourism businesses, like hotels)

Compliance

The next step is to design or delegate an organisation to be responsible for checking the compliance with the guidelines and policies. A certification system, or inclusion in the Travelife system could help with compliance since this requires regular audits. In the case of regulating new national park policies, this responsibility should lie with the appropriate local governments. Changing the way individual tourism companies compete on the market heavily depends on the actions performed by national parks. Choosing more unique experiences is up to the tourism companies themselves. Naturally, Tourlink can facilitate this process.

Reflection upon the solutions

A frequently mentioned solution is to raise awareness amongst tourists about the human rights issues. However, some of the NGOs also worry that this is too much to handle for tourists. Tourists prefer to go on a carefree vacation and do not want to know or have to think about all of the negative impacts of their holiday. The focus here should be on how to most effectively communicate this message. Explaining the situation in a light-hearted manner or via storytelling could ease tensions and retain interest without the risk of alienating tourists. It is critical to manage expectations, so all stakeholders are happy and a win-win situation can be created.

Research Limitations

Despite doing our utmost best to carry out the research as well as possible, there are some limitations to this research. The first is that the data gathered in the villages is limited. A possible cause hereof is that most of the villages participating in this research are villages that already have made a transition towards CBT, which generally minimises some of the human rights issues by the way it is organised. Another limitation is COVID-19 situation which affects the perspective of interviewees or information during the pandemic which would be different from the normal situation.

Future Research

The report discusses how ethnic minorities should be treated with respect not only by NGOs and DMCs but also by tourists. However, the following quote by DMC X shows that it is also important vice versa.

*“I brought a group and first hello from the villager which **is the leader of the village. Oh, why you are so fat to the client? One of the clients I said yes. They just don't know the culture.** They just teach them like they do to Thai people, to the kids, right ? And I don't know how to teach them. It's quite embarrassing moment. Yeah, it's shocked and the client was upset.”*

Further research should closely examine the interaction between tourists and locals as well as possible situations where ethnic minorities do not treat tourists with respect. Therefore, more research needs to be done regarding the importance of cross-cultural learnings in tourism because only a respectful approach can lead to successful tourism.



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Appendixes

List of participants

Human Rights NGOs Interviewed	
Name Human Rights NGOs	Corresponding number
IWNT	1
RECOFTC	2
WEAVE	3
Friends International	4

FOCUS	5
Human Rights in Tourism	6

Local Suppliers Interviewed	
Name Local Suppliers	Corresponding Number
Green Trails	1

Villages Interviewed	
Name village	Corresponding number
Baan Rai Kong King	1
Mae Kampong	2
Baan San Lom Joy	3
Huay Sua Thao	4
Huay Pu Keng	5
Moken representative	6
Burmese representative	7

DMC Panellists	
Name DMC	Corresponding number
E-Asia	1
PEAK-Intrepid	2
Destination Asia	3

NGO Panellists	
Name NGO	Corresponding Number
Friends International	1
TRTA	2
RECOFTC	3

Guides	
Name Guide	Corresponding Number
Karen Guide	1
Khun Ann & Khun Chet	2

Hotels	
Name Participants	Corresponding Number
Khun Namkhang, Khun Phensom, Khun Udom, Khun Peeracha, Khun Khasra	1

Round Table Participants	
Name Participant	Corresponding Number
Group 1	
Ms. Natthakarn Nongnuang (DASTA)	1
Ms. Kim de Leeuw (Fair Tourism)	2
Mr. Peter Richards (ECEAT)	3
- Ms. Pradhtana Suwanpiam (ChildSafe)	4
- Mr. Ben Svasti (FOCUS)	5
- Mr. Udom Srimahachota (THA)	6
- Mr. Hayo Massop (Destination Asia Thailand)	8
- Ms. Grace Minnock (Intrepid Travel)	9
Group 2	

- Ms. Charlotte Louwman-Vogels (Fair Tourism)	10
- Mr. Panot Pakongsup (TRTA)	11
- Ms. Suvaree Uamkhao (Easia Travel)	12
- Ms. Nattaya Sektheera (TRTA / Andaman Discoveries)	13
- Mr. Sommanat Manop (Panorama Destination Thailand)	14
- Mr. Ronnakorn Triraganon (REFOCTC)	15
- Ms. Ingeborg Fallet Kristensen (Krabi Spezialisten Co., Ltd.)	16
Group 3	
- Ms. Jaranya Daengnoy (CBT-I)	17
- Ms. Napason Wetchapram (PATA)	18
- Mr. Narupon Pleanchuen (Asian Trails Ltd)	19
- Mr. Sam Goodey (Discovery Travel)	20
- Mr. Wipawee Yawangsen (Go-vacation Thailand)	21
- Ms. Chiwan Suwannapak (PEAK DMC / Intrepid Travel)	22
- Ms. Venus Pitinanon (EXO Travel)	23
Others	
- Ms. Fernanda Rodak (PATA)	24
- Mr. Veerapat Chamnanpai (DASTA)	25
- Mr. Phitirat Wongsutinwattana (DASTA)	26

Tools for supporting sustainable natural resource management (SNRM) in communities

No.	Name of tool	Organisation	Link
1	Policy Analysis and Forest Governance 101	RECOFTC	https://www.recoftc.org/learning/e-learning-catalogue/policy-analysis-and-forest-governance-101
2	Community Forestry 101	RECOFTC	https://www.recoftc.org/learning/e-learning-catalogue/community-forestry-101
3	Social and Environmental Soundness	RECOFTC	https://www.recoftc.org/learning/e-learning-catalogue/social-and-environmental-soundness
4	Basic Climate Change	RECOFTC	https://www.recoftc.org/learning/e-learning-catalogue/basic-climate-change
5	Carbon Measurement and Monitoring	RECOFTC	https://www.recoftc.org/learning/e-learning-catalogue/carbon-measurement-and-monitoring
6	Low Emission Land Use Planning	RECOFTC	https://www.recoftc.org/learning/e-learning-catalogue/low-emission-land-use-planning
7	Criteria for Thailand's Community-Based Tourism Development	DASTA	https://www.dasta.or.th/uploads/file/202108/1629368685_b2ddd72914e81812b5ee.pdf
8	Data Trash application	DEQP	https://datatrash.deqp.go.th/intro
9	Thai Carbon Footprint Calculator	TGO	http://www.tgo.or.th/2020/index.php/th/post/thai-carbon-footprint-calculator-627