Changes in the Eco-rating Standard: child labour, abuse and human rights

The shrill of children’s laughter echoes in many homes, bringing a hope of dreams to be fulfilled the promise of a new generation of future leaders in different fields in life. Children have an inherent right to be just children; to play, to learn, to grow and to be provided for. However, there has been a gnawing issue on exploitation of children in employment better known as child labour. History records that this malpractice was most rampant as human civilizations strived for industrialization. The malpractice was fuelled by payment of low wages and children could not unionize. Sadly some cases of child labour and sexual exploitation still arise today not only in Kenya but the rest of the world.
In line with the international certification requirements, Ecotourism Kenya revised the Eco-rating Standard to include mandatory indicators on clear evidence of no child labour or child abuse practice and respect of basic human rights. The standard stipulates complete adherence to legal requirements on children and human rights.

So is your facility aligned to this?

To satisfy the requirements for this standard, a tourism facility should comply with the National legislation as well as international law on children and human rights. There should also be a policy that clearly advises against any form of child labour, abuse or exploitation and upholds human rights. To access Kenyan legislation on children rights and child protection [click here](#). At the international level the [The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) is said to have set the precedence and foundation for legally binding treaties and customary international law on human rights which Kenya is a signatory.

Knowledge as well as adherence to the protection of children and human rights therefore should be core in the management and running of tourism facilities. To further these efforts, at Eco tourism Kenya we have developed a sample policy that can be adopted or provide guidance for the formulation of individual facilities’ policies.
CHILD PROTECTION AND HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

<Facility> strives to uphold any and all human rights and the protection of children in its operations.

Under this policy child protection will play a key role in support of our plan to uphold human rights while providing our customers with the highest quality products and services.

Our efforts to uphold human rights will also support our commitment to our employees, and the communities in which we are a part.

<Facility>‘s objectives under this policy are the following:

- Ensure there is no violation of children or human rights in all business operations
- Demonstrate commitment to our community and leadership in our industry in the protection of children and rights of employees

To achieve these objectives <Facility> has committed to:

- Compliance with all National and international human rights laws, regulations and Codes of Practice in existing operations, upgrades and new developments
- Operating practices that seek to uphold the dignity of humans and the rights of children
- Improve employee awareness through training and Communication of this policy
- Ensuring an open communication and reporting channel where employees can air their grievances or report any cases of Child abuse and sexual exploitation.

<Facility> will ensure zero tolerance all forms and manner of violation of children and human rights.

This policy shall apply to all of <Facility>’s chains, business units, employees, and contractors in service to our business.

Signature

Name
Position
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