



Damnok Toek Cambodia
to assist Vulnerable Children and their Families

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

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Child Protection Policy

WHY A CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

- Every child has the right to be protected from any form of abuse, violence, injury, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation. Damnok Toek Cambodia (DTC) works to create a safe environment for children who benefit from our various projects.
- Children and young people need protection and safeguarding. First of all, they need protection from the effects of poverty, disadvantage, exclusion and violence. Besides these economic, social, and political problems, individual children might also be at risk from other forms of abuse by adults or other children. In this policy DTC is concerned specifically with the protection of children who are in contact with DTC staff members or representatives.
- This policy sets out DTC's common values, principles, and beliefs and describes the steps that will be taken in meeting our commitment to protect children.
- This policy is approved and endorsed by the Board of Directors of DTC. It applies to all staff, local and foreigner, volunteers and visitors in Damnok Toek projects.
- It is essential that all staff, volunteers, partners, international organizations, beneficiaries, donors and the general public are aware of its central messages and any duties/responsibilities it places on them.
- This policy is also available in Khmer language
- This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or when necessary.

This Child Protection Policy has been developed by the executive committee of DTC and was approved by the Board of Directors.

WHO WE ARE

Goutte d'eau Switzerland started to work in Cambodia in January 1997 under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Vocational Training and Youth (MOSVY). It assisted in building up a center for vulnerable children in Neak Loeung, Prey Veng Province. This Center has been localized and is running independently as a local NGO registered with the Ministry of Interior since 2001.

In January 1999, following a request by MOSVY, Goutte d'eau implemented a programme in Poipet, the main border town between Cambodia and Thailand, aimed at rehabilitating children using substances and reintegrating former trafficking victims. In 2003, this project was also registered as a local Cambodian NGO at the Ministry of Interior.

In August 2003, Damnok Toek (Goutte d'eau) Neak Loeung opened a shelter in Phnom Penh for up to 30 physically and/or intellectually handicapped children, and to adolescents from the provinces who would like to continue their studies or to find a job in Phnom Penh. The majority of these children were referred from Damnok Toek centers in Poipet and Neak Loeung as well as from other organizations. Since its establishment, Damnok Toek Handicap Phnom Penh has been part of Damnok Toek (Goutte d'eau) Neak Loeung.

In 01 January 2012, Damnok Toek Poipet and Damnok Toek Neak Loeung have merged to one local NGO, Damnok Toek Cambodia (DTC).

Damnok Toek Cambodia was set up in order to assist vulnerable children and their families. The main goals in doing this are the following:

Prevention

of child-abuse, substance abuse and child trafficking (internal and cross-border trafficking)

Rehabilitation

of under-aged substance abusers and traumatized children

Integration

of neglected children and street-children into Khmer society through informal education (Non-Formal Education and Vocational Training) and formal education (Public School)

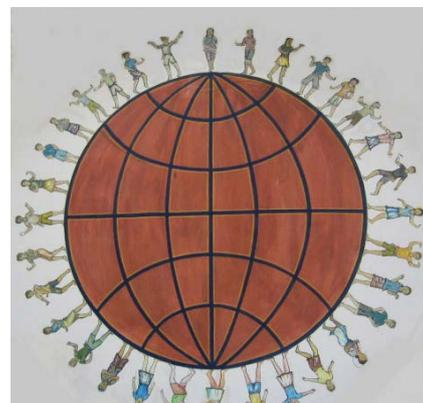
Reintegration

of trafficked and runaway children into their culture, their villages and, if possible, their families of origin

OUR VISION AND MISSION

Our vision dreams of Cambodian vulnerable children (including but not limited to trafficking victims, street working/street living children, disabled children and children victims of any kind of exploitation or abuses) having the capacities and opportunities to an equal realization of their rights and access to basic needs as stated by the convention on the rights of the child.

Our mission aims at working with the most vulnerable and marginalized children in Cambodia. With the support of communities, government and civil society representatives, DTC identifies and implements responses to enhance the access to a better future for the children most in need.



To ensure this, DTC is strongly committed to:

- Strengthen the collaboration between Cambodian communities, government and civil society representatives
- Implement its programmes with the support of communities, government and civil society representatives, adapted to the most in need children.
- Advocate for the respect of basic needs and children's rights, especially for the most vulnerable children

Our values We are a non-religious, non-political, non-profit and non-discriminatory organization. However, local religious, cultural and historical traditions are respected and integrated into our every day work with the children. We do not exclude influences from other cultures if there is a gain for the project.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

- DTC is committed to the welfare and rights of children throughout Cambodia.
- DTC provides holistic support to children in difficult circumstances so they can build on their future. Our target group is children under 18 years old. DTC encourages information sharing and networking, is involved in joined advocacy initiatives and actively cooperates with agencies that work in the same field.
- DTC is committed to uphold the laws on child rights and welfare (like domestic violence, disability). These include the *UN convention on the Rights of the Child* which was adopted by the Royal Cambodian government in 1992, the *convention on the Minimum Age of Working Children No 138* in 1999, the *declaration on the World Summit on Children* in Stockholm in 1996 and the follow up *World Congress* in Japan in 2001 which led to the 5 year plan by Ministry of Social Affairs, Veteran and Youth Rehabilitation of Cambodia *Against Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of children from 2000-2004* and the national *Minimum Standards on Alternative Care for Children*.
- DTC is committed to encourage its entire staff to treat children with respect and dignity. Child caretakers should be good role models, spend time with each child, take them seriously, listen to them, encourage them when they behave well and provide them with good explanations. Caretakers should keep their promises and should provide discipline only through appropriate verbal means.

DAMNOK TOEK CAMBODIA PROHIBITS ANY FORM OF CHILD ABUSE

- All children have equal rights to be protected from abuse irrespective of race, social background, age, gender, skin colour, disability, religion or beliefs
- Child abuse is never acceptable. Neither is, knowing of a child being abused without taking appropriate action.
- DTC identifies the following types of child abuse:

Physical abuse Any physical punishment and abuse to children like beating (including with a stick or other implement), poisoning, shaking, pushing and anything that would deliberately harm the physical well-being of children.

Mental or emotional abuse Any actions (gestures, words and behavior) that deliberately affects a child's mental/emotional well-being for example by making them afraid, anxious, annoyed or discouraged.

Neglect Any actions that are aimed to deliberately harm children in their four essential rights (right to live, right to learn, right to participate and the right to speak).

Sexual abuse Any action with sexual intent towards children such as touching children's genitals, coercing the child to have sex, or forcing children to watch or take part in pornography.

Spiritual abuse Any actions by a spiritual leader, or someone with spiritual power or authority (weather organization, institution or family), misusing their power or authority with the intention of controlling, coercing, manipulating or dominating a child. Spiritual abuse results in spiritual harm to a child.

CODE OF PRACTICE AND BEHAVIOUR

- All staff, volunteers, visitors, donors, guests or other stakeholders of DTC are strongly expected to treat all children and other staff members with respect and dignity.
- Staff should promote a culture of openness where issues and concerns can be raised and discussed.
- Each individual must sign a statement to say that they have read the Child Protection Policy, will respect it and understand that action will be taken in case of inappropriate behavior.
- There is a designated person who is responsible for dealing with Child Protection issues in the organization as a whole. Besides that, each location specifically also has a Child Protection Officer (CPO) responsible for dealing with Child Protection issues. These persons should be known to all children and staff.
- Information on the Child Protection Policy shall be introduced before and on acceptance of employment of DT staff
- New staff will receive training on child protection before being put in a position of trust; staff will be offered refresher trainings annually, conducted by the Child Protection Officer.
- Child protection will be a point of discussion in the evaluation of new staff at the end of their probation period
- Child protection will be a point of discussion in the yearly staff evaluation
- If protocols are broken the person involved will be disciplined and may lose his/her job.
- Staff should be aware of any sign of abuse of children (in physical appearance, behavior, material possessions and communication of children) and report any suspicion to the CPO.
- Staff and others can only provide discipline through appropriate verbal means and must never use physical means.
- Staff and others are not allowed to use language, make suggestions or offer any type of advice which is offensive, inappropriate or abusive.
- In order to establish appropriate physical boundaries, one must never touch a child in a way that is against the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A general guideline is not to touch areas that would normally be covered by shorts and t-shirt. This also includes kissing, massaging or tickling in an inappropriate way.
 - There are exceptions regarding the DT center for children with disabilities in Phnom Penh. As many children have special needs, the staff has to assist these children in taking care of their basic hygiene (shower, toilet etc). The caretakers will do this with the respect of the disability, privacy and dignity of the child.

- Staff and others must never do things for children of a personal nature that they can do for themselves.
- Staff and others must never develop sexual relationships with children.
- Staff and others are not allowed to be alone with a child in the project area or outside it. If one is alone with a child, he/she should always be visible to others. If it involves a private meeting, they have to meet in a public place or in an office with opened windows, and inform a project coordinator or other member of the management team when and where the meeting will take place.
- Any staff, volunteers, visitors and other guests are not permitted to take a child who is not their offspring to their place of residence
- For children staying at the centres, staff are not allowed to take children out of the centre without approval of the respective line manager
- For children staying at the centres, relatives are allowed to visit their child at the centre, but are not allowed to stay overnight or take the child outside the centre
- Adults are always responsible of their behavior and cannot blame the child even if the child provokes or acts in a seductive way.
- Staff and others must never act in ways to shame, degrade or humiliate children or use any other form of emotional abuse
- Staff should never create dependency and discrimination of a child through preferable treatment by giving gifts or money.
- Staff should organize awareness raising workshops with children to define acceptable and unacceptable behavior with adults.
- Communities and children with whom DTC works will be informed of the Child Protection Policy and will be assured that support will not be discontinued if they report suspicious behavior.
- Case management files and child records are strictly confidential (see staff policy) and are kept in a safe place. Access to these files can only be granted by the ED and the respective coordinators.
- Case studies are only provided after allowance of the respective coordinator. Case studies should always be kept anonymous.
- All visitors should sign the additional conditions for visiting DTC projects. These can be found in Annex 2
- All journalists should sign the additional DTC guidelines for journalists. These can be found in Annex 3.
- All international volunteers will have to comply to the additional policy found in Annex 4.
- All visitors, journalists and volunteers should be aware of DTC's photography and filming restrictions.
 - Photos should never be taken without the permission from staff and children's consent.
 - Under the trafficking law, newspapers and other mass media are prohibited from any publishing or broadcasting, which can lead to public knowledge of identities of victims in the offences specified in this law.
 - Full names of the children should never be mentioned in any publication or broadcasting.

- It is strictly forbidden to take pictures of naked or half-naked children.
- Copies of the original photos and videos should be shared with DTC

RECRUITMENT AND SCREENING

DTC expects all staff to protect children from abuse and will be screened before beginning work. Screening is equally important for volunteers/interns, board members and advisors (local and foreign). Anyone applying for a position with DTC must submit an application form or resume, including a work or personal history.

On applying for a position, a form must be signed agreeing to the Child Protection Policy and stating that he/she has not had any previous convictions for child abuse or violent behaviour, or if he/she has ever been dismissed from a job for abuse.

References shall be checked preferably by telephone to give previous employers an opportunity to express concerns verbally. If deemed necessary, DTC can ask for an official Certificate of Good Conduct (either by Ministry of Justice or the local authorities). After references have been verified, a personal interview will be conducted to confirm the candidate's suitability.

If found out after recruitment that the employee has provided false information and indeed has previously been convicted for child abuse or violent behavior or dismissed from previous jobs for abuse, this will lead to immediate dismissal.

COMMUNICATION ON CHILD PROTECTION AND ABUSE

External

- DTC is committed to inform children, decision makers, and the public, also through the media, that child abuse and keeping silent in case of witnessing child abuse, is wrong and unacceptable.
- Staff should never make comments on child protection matters to the media without consulting the Executive Director and Executive Committee before.
- This Child Protection Policy aims to enable a safe and positive environment for children and is foundational in the education, research and advocacy initiatives that the DTC will be involved in.
- DTC is committed to educate and inform its stakeholders about the importance implementing prevention measures regarding child protection. In doing so, children are protected from abuse that could be realized by staff, volunteers, visitors and others involved in DTC.

Internal

- DTC provides opportunities in its internal meetings to discuss and learn about child abuse and neglect with its entire staff. DTC is committed to raise and discuss these issues also in meetings with others partners and networks.
- New DTC staff will receive training on child protection before being put in a position of trust; staff will be offered refresher trainings annually, conducted by the Child Protection Officer.
- All staff and volunteers will receive a copy of the Child Protection Policy when they start their contract with DTC.
- DTC is committed to discuss children's rights and child abuse in the communities in which it works, including with the children themselves.
- Within DTC's various projects, children will learn what their rights are and who they can talk to in case of abuse.

- Every project in DTC shall have means for the children involved to anonymously express their claims and concerns regarding abuse.

RESPONSE TO ALLEGATION OF CHILD ABUSE

- Procedures are set out by DTC to ensure that all staff knows what to do if an allegation of child abuse is made, either by the child, parents, staff members or visitors or others involved. This includes training on the Child Protection Policy and having information charts visible to all staff. These procedures are communicated to staff upon signing their contract and during yearly refresher trainings on child protection.
- There is a designated person who is responsible for dealing with Child Protection issues at each location, the Child Protection Officer (CPO). These persons should be known to all children and staff.
- DTC encourages all staff to adhere to Cambodian law including the labor code.
- All DTC staff is encouraged to be open in discussing the potential of abuse in the organization and take seriously any concern raised.
- Any staff who is aware of or has knowledge of another member of staff being involved in child abuse, is obliged to report to the Child Protection Officer. If found out that he/she has failed to report, appropriate measures will be taken.
- When an allegation of child abuse has been made against a staff member/visitor, DTC will investigate it and take appropriate action immediately to deal with the situation.
- Positive steps will be taken to ensure the protection and needed care of the child who is subject of the concern
- Both the victim and alleged perpetrator will be treated with respect from the start of the process to the end.
- Children's stories must be heard and taken seriously unless proved otherwise.
- The organization has a reporting procedure where the CPO informs the Executive Director, Executive Committee and the respective coordinator and others only if necessary in the procedure. Reporting is fully confidential.
- All facts related to the investigation should be reported and this should be carefully and confidentially filed. See Annex 1 for the reporting format that needs to be filled out.
- The alleged perpetrator is not allowed to communicate with the child or the child's relatives during the investigation
- The alleged perpetrator is dismissed of his/her job during the period of the investigation
- If a foreigner is involved, the relevant Embassy/Consulate will be informed.
- Someone in the organization will be designated to deal with the media and the police. The management teams in each location will decide who this person is. Where possible, consideration will be made beforehand about how they will be informed/involved.
- All persons involved will be informed about the results of the investigation and any action that needs to be taken as a result

- Once an accusation is found true, the relevant authorities will be informed
- If found out that the accusation is not true, DTC will offer appropriate support to the respective person in dealing with the accusation and its consequences
- DTC encourages relationships/collaboration with other organizations for accountability and support in cases of child abuse if needed.
- When contacted by organizations that are inexperienced and asking for help from other Child Rights organizations, DTC will answer to their needs up to its capacity

Agreement and Consent for release of information

I have read and understood the terms of this policy and I am willing to abide by its direction. I declare that I have no criminal history with offences relating to children in Cambodia or abroad and I am allowing DTC to perform any background/reference check to verify this.

I understand that if a complaint is brought regarding the abuse of children of any kind while engaged in DTC activities, it will be thoroughly investigated in cooperation with the appropriate authorities and I will take the appropriate consequences.

I understand that if I am guilty of any offences of physical, emotional, sexual and spiritual abuse or neglect, I will lose my job without any rights.

I understand that if I do not report any suspicions of abuse involving staff, volunteers, interns, visitors and partners I may suffer appropriate consequences such as the loss of my job without any rights.

Staff/Volunteer/Coordinator
Signature

Child Protection Officer/Project Coordinator
Signature

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Name.....

Name.....

Date.....

Date.....

REPORTING FORMAT, CONCERNING CASE OF CHILD ABUSE

REPORTER

Name:

Function:

Working place:

Your relationship to the child:

ABOUT THE CHILD

Child's name:

Child's sex:

- Female Male

Child's age:

Child's guardians:

THE PROBLEM IDENTIFIED

How did you know about the incident?

- Direct observation*
- Suspicion*
- Confession of child*
- Confession of other person(s).*

Date and time of the incident:

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Details:

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Location of the alleged incident:

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Who was involved in the alleged incident?

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Name of alleged perpetrator:

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Staff (including volunteer, Technical Advisors)
if staff, what job title:

Outside person
If an outside person, what relation with the child:

Nature of the allegation:

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Visible injuries, emotional state, etc.:

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ACTION TAKEN

PERSON(S) INFORMED

Within Damnok Toek

Name:

..... Position.....

Name:

..... Position.....

With Authorities

If yes, give details:

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Others

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Name of the reporter

Name of the person informed within Damnok Toek

Signature

Signature

Date:...../.....

Date:...../.....

ANNEX 2 VISITING DAMNOK TOEK PROJECTS

We do not consider children to be a tourist attraction and we feel it is our responsibility to protect and maximize the safety and well-being of the children attending any of our projects.

Damnok Toek Cambodia has a Child Protection Policy that any visitor is obliged to read, approve and sign before the visit can take place (it can be found on our website).

Visits have the following conditions:

- Visitors wishing to visit projects must first contact a responsible person (Director, Coordinator or Technical Advisor). If approved, the person responsible will inform the staff about the visit.
- Visitors are allowed to visit projects only after approval by a responsible person.
- Motivation of the visit must be clarified with the responsible person.
- All visitors will have to be registered at the reception
- Taking pictures is not permitted except under certain conditions, which can be found in the Child Protection Policy.
- Visitors will be accompanied by staff at all times and will follow the Child Protection Policy.
- Giving anything directly to the children is not allowed, as DTC wants to treat all children in its projects equally.
- If visitors want to give money, DTC invites them to opt for a donation to our account.
- Given the fact that DTC has a budget to ensure children's needs, any donation should be first discussed with DTC team to identify what the needs are.
- As staff are responsible to accompany visitors, visits can not exceed 2 hours for Poipet and Neak Loeung projects and 1 hour for Phnom Penh project.
- Visitors must respect Cambodian customs and dress appropriately in the Cambodian context, meaning that visitors should wear trousers or skirts covering their legs at least up to the knees and shirts covering the upper body and at least the shoulders.
- Visitors from organizations that DTC has relationships with or is seeking to establish relationships with have priority.

Damnok Toek will take legal measures (e.g. report to relevant authorities) against visitors when concerns of child abuse arise

Visitor
Signature

.....

Name.....

Date.....

DT Representative
Signature

.....

Name.....

Date.....



Damnok Toek is a Cambodian organization working with vulnerable children and their families, by implementing rehabilitation, reintegration and prevention activities.

Around 800 children benefit on a daily basis from our different projects located in Poipet, Phnom Penh and Neak Loeung. Our work is possible thanks to the support of international donors. DTC works under formal agreements with the relevant Cambodian ministries.

DTC works with very complex target groups of vulnerable and underprivileged children including but not limited to trafficking victims, street working/street living children, disabled children and victims of exploitation or abuse. The DTC team is highly committed to support these children in developing their capacities and optimise their opportunities in realizing their rights and accessing their basic needs.

For outsiders it can be difficult to understand the complex context that we are working in. As we focus on the protection of children and respect the minimum standards, we are particularly rigorous on external visitors. To prevent visitors and journalists having a negative affect on our work, we have developed the following guidelines and rules:

Damnok Toek Cambodia requests anyone visiting to apply the following rules:

1. DTC has a Child Protection Policy you will have to read, approve and sign.
You will have to read our most recent annual activity reports, in order to get a better understanding of our work.
2. You will always be with one of our staff.
3. Before any interview conducted with children, the topic and questions must be discussed and approved with the director and or coordinators.
4. Any questions you would like to ask the children, must first be discussed with the corresponding staff, in order to avoid interfering in the children's well-being and rehabilitation process.
5. The Executive Director will be responsible to seek the following information:
 - *Who is your employer?*
 - *What is the subject of your reportage?*
 - *Where will it be published?*
 - *How long do you plan to stay?*
 - *How many people will your team be composed of?*
 - *Why have you selected Damnok Toek for this reportage?*
 - *Any other question(s) not stated here, but deemed relevant in the particular situation.*
6. You must respect the dignity, privacy and intimacy of the children.
Males cannot enter shelters where females live.
Females can not enter shelters where males live.
7. All visitors should be aware of DTC's photography and filming restrictions.
 - Photos should never be taken without permission from staff and children's consent.
 - Photos or films can never be taken without the presence of a staff member

- Under the trafficking law, newspapers and other mass media are prohibited from any publishing or broadcasting, which can lead to public knowledge of identities of victims in the offences specified in this law.
- Full names of the children should never be mentioned in any publication or broadcasting.
- It is strictly forbidden to take pictures of naked or half-naked children.

Further requests:

- Any article or material produced using DTC projects as a subject, must reflect the organization's vision and mission, also in translations.
- Before publishing any article/documentary etc, we expect you to show us the final version and DTC has the right to request changes
- DTC address will be shown clearly in final article/documentary etc.
- A sample version will be sent to our office when published.
- Copies of the original photos and videos should be shared with DTC

Any lack of respect concerning those measures could lead to legal proceedings

Damnok Toek will take legal measures (e.g. report to relevant authorities) against journalists when concerns of child abuse arise

Name of the journalist Name of the media represented	Damnok Toek Representative
Date...../..... Signature	Date...../..... Signature

ANNEX 4 Volunteering at Damnok Toek Cambodia

Damnok Toek is a Cambodian organization working with vulnerable children and their families, by implementing rehabilitation, reintegration and prevention activities.

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DTC works with very complex target groups of vulnerable and underprivileged children including but not limited to trafficking victims, street working/street living children, disabled children and victims of exploitation or abuse. The DTC team is highly committed to support these children in developing their capacities and optimise their opportunities in realizing their rights and accessing their basic needs.

DTC pays particular attention to any person that will be in touch with the beneficiaries, including visitors, journalists, local and international staff. **DTC therefore has a Child Protection Policy that every individual involved in DTC in any way should read, sign and comply to.**

The high number of volunteer applications that DTC receives has led us to implement an additional policy that any volunteering candidate is expected to follow. Any person wishing to volunteer with DTC is expected to

1. work based on the organisation's needs;
2. work on building the capacity of the local staff in order to increase the organisation's sustainability.

Therefore:

3. DTC will not work with volunteers on functions that can be done by local staff (like teaching);
4. Direct interaction with the children, without involvement of local staff, is not allowed.

Besides the conditions above, the following conditions apply to any person wishing to volunteer at DTC

- Long term availability, at least 3 months (except for medical doctors)
- Minimum age of 23
- Studies must have been completed in the required field
- Have proven skills in the required field
- Experience working overseas, preferably in developing countries
- Provide DTC with an official proof/certificate of good conduct
- Be in good health
- Make sure to have all necessary vaccinations
- Organise their own accommodation (staying at the centers is not allowed)

Any person interested in volunteering at DTC should send a motivation letter, CV, references and an official proof/certificate of good conduct to Damnok Toek Cambodia, to the attention of the Executive Director's office: info@gouttedeau.org