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“TOURISM- CUM- CHARITY” – A new direction for the development of sustainable tourism in Hue-Vietnam

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Abstract

“Volun-tourism” or “Charitable tourism” is a new trend of global tourism in recent years. It combines volunteer projects for environment and community with local tourism, and it’s now receiving generous and enthusiastic support from individuals and organizations. So the question is: how can we best develop “tourism - charity combinations” as unique, attractive products that importantly become bridges connecting all compassionate hearts in our ancient capital - Hue, Vietnam? “Volun- tourism” , aka charitable tourism, in Hue is in a fragmented and underdeveloped state, lacking in quality controls and support by the local authorities. This tourism product is still unsatisfactory; and the collaboration between the parties involved in providing tourists to charitable homes in Hue, in terms of organisation, economic as well as technological support, is still weak and unsynchronised. Until this moment, there has been little cooperation between investors and tour operators to develop “volun-tourism” so as to lengthen tourists’ stays in Hue. The network of charitable homes has yet to be firmly established, lacks a long term development plan as well as supporting policies from the local authorities in order to cultivate this type of tourism. We need to establish strong collaboration efforts between the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the charitable homes, and the tour operators to best utilise and commercialise this unique and compassionate tourism product, thereby establishing a sustainable community-based development plan for Hue.

Keywords: Tourism, Charitable tourism, Hue-Vietnam