

Role of the Child Protection Authority in Tamil Eelam

1. Aim: Full implementation of the Child Protection Law

- ensure compulsory education for every child under the age of 16.
- ensure safety of children in family.
- ensure children in need are cared for outside the family.
- ensure protective environment for children in institutions.
- ensure young offenders are treated appropriately.
- ensure children under 17 are not recruited into armed forces.
- ensure children under 18 do not take part in direct hostilities.
- adoption procedures.

2. As an advisory body on improving the Child Protection Law

CPA contributed to the drafting of the Tamil Eelam Child Protection Law. It will continue to monitor and propose improvements to the law and to the procedures adopted to implement it.

3. Care of children outside family

Care and/or protection is needed when a child (0–13 years) or young person (14–18 years) is believed to be ‘at risk’ because they are experiencing (or likely to experience) such things as:

- physical or sexual abuse
- exploited as child labour
- emotional or physical neglect
- not able to receive the compulsory education as stipulated in the law
- behaviour which is beyond their, or their caregivers’, control
- lack of stable or adequate care.

The welfare and interests of the child or young person is the first and paramount consideration in deciding if the child should be cared for outside the family.

3.1. If a child is taken into care

Taking a child or young person away from home, away from their parents or their usual caregivers, is done as a last resort.

Family members have the right to decide whether or not they agree that a child/young person is in need of care and protection. If the family members don't agree, the matter is referred to CPA and if disagreement exists even after the involvement of CPA then as a final resort the matter will be taken up in the courts.

3.2 Ensuring safety of children in institutions

Two distinct types of institutions are recognized. They are,

- those that care for children 24 hours and
- those in which children spent long hours

4. Networking child welfare groups

By networking with bodies that deal with children at risk CPA will aim to achieve the following:

- bring together concerned groups to maximize desired outcome
- increase awareness of child related work done by other bodies
- collate and analyze data from these bodies to understand the context of children at risk and share the information.
- take up issues and cases of concern with all relevant bodies

Some of the bodies to be coordinated are:

- Tamileelam police and courts;
- Health services;
- CWDR and TRO children services;
- Annali Illam children services;
- UNICEF, ICRC, Save the Children Fund and UNHCR;

5. Composition of CPA

CPA evolved from the Child Protection Unit which was formed soon after the ceasefire agreement signed in 2002 mainly to address the underage recruitment. CPA has been increasingly handling other child protection issues. It has played a role in the development of the Child Protection Law of Tamil Eelam. CPA is currently made up of civil society members and LTTE members with experience in working on child issues. The LTTE members provide the necessary liaison with LTTE. The CPA current member list is,

1. Dr N Malathy (Child Protection Authority)
2. Rev Fr Reginald (Head of Annai Illam)
3. Ms Gowri Hubert Anthony (Manager Tamil Eelam Bank)
4. Mr ? Ganesalingam
5. Mr ? Sudar (Tamil Eelam Judicial Division)
6. Mr Puleedevan (LTTE Peace Secretariat)
7. Mr R Ilanthiraiyan (LTTE Spokesperson)
8. Mr ? Thiagaraja (LTTE Liaison for international agencies)
9. Ms P Thamilvili (Deputy Head of LTTE Women's wing)

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