



Nancy Swartwood, CPA's Communications Manager and Editor of the Newsletter

"The promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of the child also implies the performance of duties on the part of everyone."

-African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

We profile a CPA member organisation in each issue of this newsletter. We invite members to submit information so we can let all of the CPA know about your hard work.



Integrating a Global Children's Movement with the Specific Situation in The Gambia

Since the early days of CPA's work in The Gambia, a primary objective has been to blend the international conventions and principles regarding child protection with the traditional cultural aspects of life in African nations. Though knowledge and discussion about children's rights exists throughout the world, members of the CPA continue to meet the challenge of raising awareness of these ideals throughout The Gambia.

Heads of African States first officially recognized the challenges in promoting and protecting the rights of the African child back in 1979. Since that time, there have been constant efforts to integrate the global children's rights movements and the unique aspects of African culture. One milestone in this integration was the adoption of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. This document guarantees basic rights to all children, but does so while focusing on elements of traditional African culture. All the members of CPA should be familiar

with the African Charter, so we've highlighted it in this issue's Focus On... section.

You will notice in our Membership Profile that Youth for a Better World has had much success as an international organisation. They are also one of the few such organizations that have successfully adapted a children's rights agenda within the cultural context of West Africa. After developing programmes in Sierra Leone and Guinea-Conakry, YBWI is now focusing its efforts on The Gambia. CPA is linking with YBWI to ensure that we continue to meet our objective of enabling and encouraging youth participation.

Research plays an important role in helping us to highlight issues and to direct resources and attention in providing solutions. Commercial sexual exploitation of children is a worldwide problem. In Research Corner we focus on two reports that will be launched in January. And you

will notice in the Case Study (written by a teacher) that we are receiving actual reports from people at the local level. As we develop a better understanding of how specific issues affect children in The Gambia, we can strengthen our efforts to promote and protect their basic human rights.

Finally, with the first-ever representation of The Gambia at ECPAT's General Assembly, as well as the commendation of the CPA as ECPAT in The Gambia, we are being recognized worldwide for our role in promoting children's rights and child protection. We, as members of the Child Protection Alliance, realize the role that the support of international agencies and organisation has played in our development, but we must take this a step further. Only by carefully examining the situation in this country and working intensely with the young people we are striving to protect can we hope to promote the rights of all children in The Gambia.

Membership Profile

Youth for a Better World International

One of the newest members of the Child Protection Alliance, Youth for a Better World International, is an NGO working to empower children worldwide. They focus their effort toward peace, socioeconomic development, social justice and the social progress of young people. The executive director, Peter J. Sellu, is originally from Sierra Leone and began working as a member of YBWI in his native country. He has also worked in Liberia and Guinea-Conakry with children and young people.

Founded in March of 2002, Youth for a Better World is new to The Gambia, but it is an organisation that has experience in working with child protection issues that affect children throughout the West African region. They are currently focused on developing services for refugee children, as well as those affected by child sex tourism.

In addition, they have opened an Information children. It is located on Atlantic Road, behind the Romana Hotel in

Bakau. They encourage young people to come and participate in reading or research. YBWI also welcomes any donations of reading and information materials for the Center.

In the next few months, YBWI will be organizing a Youth Group to be involved in peer education activities, as well as sensitizations on HIV/AIDS and malaria. Anyone interested in getting involved with this growing organisation may contact them via email at info_ybwi@yahoo.com.