

The Team at CPA

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Jalamang Camara (first photo to the near right) is the National Coordinator of CPA. He is originally from Niamina Kudang, but was brought up in Bakau New Town. Jala earned a university degree in law, and has served as a youth leader in many organizations, including The Gambia Student Union, UNESCO Clubs, Lend a Hand Society, and NAYCO. He came to work at CPA to continue his work advocating for the best interests of children, and enjoys the spirit of high energy, commitment and hard work.

Micheal Montgomery (see photo on page 5) is the Technical Adviser to CPA. Before coming to The Gambia as an APSO volunteer, he worked as an anthropologist and a social worker in his native Ireland. After two years working at the Department of Social Welfare, Micheal facilitated the task group that would eventually form CPA. He has found working with the CPA team an inspiration - we have had to create so much out of so little. Even after he departs The Gambia in December, Micheal hopes to continue his connection with CPA.

Ria Borst (middle photo on the far right) is a VSO Volunteer from Holland. She will be taking on the role of Technical Adviser as Micheal prepares to leave The

Gambia. Ria has had an enormous amount of experience working with youth, including 10 years working with disabled children, 6 years as a community social worker, and a position as Coordinator of a Youth Care Centre. She enjoys being at CPA because it is a very young and fast-growing organisation with very enthusiastic people who are working more than 100% to create an environment in the Gambia where the rights of the child are protected.

Nancy Swartwood (see photo on page 2) is CPA's Communications Manager. She is a Peace Corps Volunteer, and spent one year in The Gambia's Sandu region as a health worker before joining the CPA Team. An American with a background in child psychology, she worked with child abuse cases at Children's Hospital in Washington DC. She enjoys the fast pace of working with CPA, and that there never seems to be a limit to the goals we set and the projects we develop.

Penda Sidibeh (top photo on the far right) also works as CPA Youth Coordinator. Raised in the Kombo area, Penda has worked with five different youth groups. She served as Assistant Secretary of the National Patriotic Student Association (NAPSA) for one year. Penda continues her work



with young people by facilitating the meetings of CPA's VOICE youth group. She hopes her work at CPA will help to make all children aware of their rights, and she believes that child protection can be attained if everyone can start with himself or herself.

Baboucarr Mbye Saidu (third photo down) is both a Youth Coordinator and Office Assistant at CPA. Originally from Serekunda, he has worked in many capacities since completing his schooling, including work as a student activist, a Red Cross First Aid Instructor, and Editor-in-Chief of the GSSS Press Committee. Baboucarr has wanted to work in human rights activism since his early school days, and hopes to see justice done at all times in human relations.



Our Board of Directors

Yamai Secka-Jack

Throughout her professional career, Yamai Secka-Jack has dedicated her work to the cause of women and children in The Gambia, the most vulnerable members of society.

Born in Bakau where she also attended primary school, Yamai graduated from Gambia High School in Bakau. From there, she attended Lewis and Clark College in Oregon. She earned bachelor's degrees in communications and sociology, and a master's degree in education.

Upon her return to The Gambia, Yamai worked for Radio Gambia for 15 years. At first, she said, Child abuse was not talked about and not seen as a prob-

lem.

In 1991, she became the Associate Peace Corps Director for both the Education and Health Programs. Due to program expansion & increasing numbers of volunteers, she now devotes her time solely to the Education Program.

From the first meeting of the Task Group that eventually led to the setup of the CPA, Yamai has been a strong supporter, firmly believing that we can do something to prevent the abuse of children. She serves on the Board of Directors, and has been instrumental in the collaboration between CPA and PC Volunteers. Yamai is proud to be a part of the

CPA team. There is a very good national plan of action in place, and I would like to see those plans implemented, she says. She also looks forward to increasing the involvement of children in all CPA activities.

Additionally, Yamai supports a gender-balanced approach to child protection. It's not just an issue affecting girls, she said, pointing out the boys in The Gambia are vulnerable to abuse and need protection. She also believes that a major strength of CPA is its collaboration with other organizations, and hopes to see more cooperation at the local, regional and international levels.

