The Life Chances of Young People in Voluntary Children's Homes in Sri Lanka

A critical review of policy and governance with references to case studies

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2016

Submitted for the award of Doctor of Philosophy

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SUMMARY

This study makes a contribution in terms of public policy and administration by addressing the rights of children deprived of parental care or who are at risk in Sri Lanka. The thesis focuses on the governance of children's homes and aims to enhance the life chances of institutionalized children in these homes. The complex needs of children in many homes in Sri Lanka have not been properly addressed and a major gap exists between policy and practice. This study serves the urgent need to provide strategies to eliminate these shortcomings. It evaluates the care in terms of the UN policy guidelines to identify the extent to which the Sri Lankan government has addressed service delivery in terms of the UN Child Rights Convention.

Many countries put great faith in family based strategies such as foster care. The UN Guidelines emphasise that "where institutional care facilities remain, alternatives should be developed in the context of an overall de-institutionalisation strategy" (United Nations 2010). Despite being a signatory to this convention, the situation in Sri Lanka is that institutional care is almost the sole solution (Roccella 2007).

This thesis discusses a range of interview narratives and questionnaire responses from those involved in the system, suggesting strategies to prevent childhood institutionalisation, to protect their human rights and to promote their reintegration possibilities. These discussions help the Sri Lankan government when making policies for institutions and when guiding them towards good governance practices in order to cater for children's needs and to protect their rights.

The major challenge of this study has been to resolve the paradox of the need for institutional care and the deinstitutionalization of children. The thesis develops an argument that children's voice's should be included in social policy decisions before they enter care, during institutionalization and in order to ensure that decisions are matched to their concerns when they are reintegrated into the community. Building their capacities should be a priority at all governance levels, namely, when taking decisions for them to step into, or out from, care settings with high walls and locked gates. The research emphasises the need to prevent children's institutionalization in the first place. It discusses strategies to protect the human rights of these children whilst they are in institutional care. Finally it stresses that institutionalised children's rights should be promoted by means of reintegration into the community and maintaining connections with family wherever possible and appropriate.

This research discusses a user-centric policy design and governance practice to prevent childhood institutionalization and promote reintegration by looking at the social, economic and environmental factors that lead prolonged institutionalization. However, the thesis does identify the inevitable need for care institutions to temporarily accommodate children in case of an emergency. It suggests a theory informed practical framework based on good governance practices to address

the human rights issues that children encounter in care institutions. This study has also introduced a reintegration evaluation system and a model to contribute to effective and efficient reintegration of institutionalised children. It makes the case for promoting the resilience of families so that children can remain or return to families where appropriate - through providing pathways and opportunities to address their vulnerabilities.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Eshantha Ariyadasa Date: 26. 2. 2016

Candidate

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my appreciation and gratitude to my principal supervisor, Associate Professor Janet McIntyre-Mills for the support and guidance provided throughout my doctoral journey. I am so grateful to her for guiding me on the correct track and always balancing just the right amount of encouragement with constructive critique. I am aware that on many occasions despite her busy schedules she never cancelled our appointments or phone conversations. For this, I am truly thankful.

I am also very thankful to my co-supervisor, Dr. Helen McLaren within the Social Work Department at Flinders University, who assisted me immensely by utilizing time to read my drafts and providing feedback.

My gratitude goes out to Dr. Leoni Solomons, Professor GTF de Silva and Dr. Hemamali Palihakkara for their support and wise advice during my candidature. I am particularly grateful for their valuable local contacts for a successful research outcome and for their advice in terms of publishing journal and newspaper articles.

I would not have been able to undertake this research without the generous support of the Australian government. My thanks are due to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for offering me the Endeavour Postgraduate Award. I am grateful to Ruth Patching and Beth Mutton from Scope Global, my scholarship case managers, for providing excellent support to fulfill the scholarship requirements.

My special thanks go to the research participants of my study, the National Commissioner of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services and all the Provincial Commissioners, Child Rights Promotion Officers, Probation Officers, the managers of NGOs and the matrons and the wardens of children's homes for supporting my doctoral program. Without their contribution, this research project would not have been possible. Thank you for spending your valuable time with me via interviews and answering questionnaires. It is with sincerity that I thank the NGOs for the opportunity given to observe their work in the field. I applaud the NGO on the ways in which its programs have improved the life chances of children and I hope that we can all learn the lessons that working together has provided for us.

My special gratitude is conveyed to Mr. T.B. Wickramasinghe, the then commissioner of the North Western Province for supporting me in every capacity for a worthwhile survey. I also acknowledge the support given by Mr. Kamal Amarasinghe, the Director of Department of Social Services - NWP for granting me permission to conduct the survey.

I express my heartfelt thanks to the research assistants, Aravinda, Sithijaya and Ashan for the immense support extended during the questionnaire survey.

My special thanks goes to Dr. Greg Collings for providing me editing support with journal articles, conference papers and the thesis. I also wish to thank Mr. Bruce Tanton (Fletcher), Dr. Chandani Panditharatne, Dr. Barry Long, James Brooks, Vic Pessoni, for helping me improve my research writing skills and for providing feedback on the conference papers and journal articles derived from this work.

I am so very grateful to my host parents in Australia, Elizabeth and Jim Alvey, and Christine and Barry Long. They made my PhD journey a very compassionate one, filling the gaps of the family and parents. Their generosity was caring, mentoring and loving.

I especially thank Mr. Kithsiri Tennakoon and the staff of Sputnik International Education Centre for carrying all the responsibilities and implementing the duties entrusted to them while I am undergoing my PhD.

On a personal note, I am grateful to my wife Lochana for providing continuous support including sacrificing two years of her professional life to join me in Australia. She helped me in every aspect to achieve my goals and has always displayed such pride in my achievements. My beloved thanks to my two daughters Nethara and Minsandi. I consider it a privilege to be your father. The time that I spent with you during the research assisted me to get rid of the excess stress and fuelled me in the continuation of the studies. My thanks also go to my parents for caring and guiding me through the early stages of my life, which steered my present achievements and my wife's parents Padmini, and RAD Ranaweera and who with greatest desire anticipated boundless success of my life. Each one has encouraged me along the road to achieving my goals.

The period I spent alone before my family joined me and after my family returned home was the most difficult. I wish to thank my friends in Adelaide especially Rie, Shiho, Kim, Marcus, John, Roshani, Buddhi, Ajith, Nishantha, Chandani, Menaka, Uda, Sanjaya, Asitha, Sanjeewa, Kumari, Suranja, Manjula, Indrajith, Nimasha, Chathura, Harsha, Amitha, Indika, Dinusha, Sampath, Nadeesha, Ravi, Asanka, Tomohito and their family members for the kind support extended to me to keep my spirits up. Similarly, I thank my colleagues at the School of Social and Policy Studies especially Gofran, Marcus, Mia, Saad, Mervin, Lawrence, Bimal and Riswanda, for sharing the journey and helping me feel good.

Finally, many thanks to everyone who showed interest in my research, provided practical assistance and for those who encouraged me along the road to submission!

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS & STATEMENT OF CO-AUTHORSHIP

- Ariyadasa, E 2013, 'Life chances of children and young people in institutional care in Sri Lanka: A critical review of policy and governance with reference to case studies', in *59th World Conference of the International Society for the Systems Sciences 2013*, Hai phong, Vietnam.
- Ariyadasa, E & McIntyre-Mills, J 2014a, 'Quality of life of Sri Lankan children: participatory action research to address the governance issues of voluntary children's homes', *Systemic Practice and Action Research,* vol. 9339, pp. 1-26. Doi: 10.1007/s 11213-014-9339-7
- Ariyadasa, E & McIntyre-Mills, J 2014b, 'a systemic governance approach to an effective reintegration process for the institutionalized children in Sri Lanka: application of critical systems heuristics', *Systemic Practice and Action Research*, vol. 9338, pp. 1-23. Doi: 10.1007/s 11213-014-9338-8
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- Ariyadasa, E 2015d, Participatory Education Research: An exploration of ways to enhance children's rights through ensuring respect for all cultures and religions. *Participatory Educational Research (PER)* (Special Issue 2015-I), 34-50. Doi: 10.17275/per.15.spi.1.4

Ariyadasa, E. conceptualised and designed the study, conducted data collection, analysed the data, and drafted the initial manuscript; McIntyre-Mills, J. conceptualised the study, and critically reviewed and edited the manuscript; and both authors approved the final manuscript as submitted.

ABBREVIATIONS AND COMMON TERMS

ABC – Assumed Birth Certificate

CA - Capability Approach

CDC – Child Development Centres

CDWA - Child Development and Women's Affairs

CKD - Chronic Kidney Disease

CP – Central Province

CRPO - Child Rights Promotion Officer

CS - Children's Secretariat

CYPO – Children and Young Persons Ordinance

DPCCS - Department of Probation and Child Care Services

DS - Divisional Secretariat

EP – Eastern Province

FBR – Family Background Report

General Standards - General Standards for the Promotion of Quality of Services in Voluntary Children's Homes

Grading Criteria - Grading Criteria for the Standardisation of Voluntary Children's Homes

IDLO - International Development Law Organization

ILO - International Labour Organisation

IOM - International Organization for Migration

KM – Knowledge Management

KPI – Key Performance Indicators

LTTE - Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam

NCP – North Central Province

NCPA - National Child Protection Authority

NGOs - Non-Governmental Organisations

NP – Northern Province

NPOs - Non-for Profit Organizations

NWP – North Western Province

PCMs Placement Committee Meetings

PO – Probation Officer

PTSD - Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

SGH - Sputnik Girls' Home

SGP – Sabaragamuwa Province

SLAS - Sri Lanka Administrative Service

SLBFE - Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment

SP – Southern Province

UDHR - Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UN Guidelines – United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children

UNCRC - UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

UNICEF – United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

UP – Uwa Province

VCH(s) – Voluntary Children's Home(s)

WP – Western Province

CHAPTER 1 BACKGROUND AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This chapter provides an introduction to the governance challenges associated with providing the best possible care to children in institutional care in Sri Lanka. It describes the status of institutional care provided by Voluntary Children's Homes (VCHs) within the structure of the society and government of Sri Lanka.

The many factors influencing institutional care for orphaned, abandoned and destitute children in children's homes make systemic intervention necessary. It must address the complex social, cultural, economic, political and environmental needs of institutionalized children. Different perceptions and perspectives on institutional care provided by VCHs highlight the significance of optimizing the benefits while addressing the human rights issues within institutional care environments. This emphasizes the urgent need for research on institutional care environments. Analysis of the governance practices of VCHs in light of the United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (UN Guidelines) demonstrate the significant gap between policy and practice. This emphasizes the urgent need for the implementation of better policies and good governance practices for VCHs.

1.1 Rationale for the research

For a variety of reasons, children have been denied their rights, deprived of their natural birth environments and sent to alternative institutions. As is the case elsewhere in Sri Lanka, a child's family dynamics rely on a supportive, protective and caring environment but the situation has often been less than optimal. Many children are receiving institutional care for social, cultural and economic reasons, as well as ongoing issues such as the aftermath of the civil war, the 2004 tsunami and the adverse effects of environmental disturbances. The reliance on voluntary homes to meet the needs as a result of civil war, natural disasters, economic insecurity, domestic violence, changes to family configurations and the large number of women leaving to work overseas has led to an increase in the vulnerability of children.

The UN Guidelines[1] (United Nations 2010, p. 3) state that where the child's own family is unable to provide adequate care for the child, or abandons or relinquishes the child, the state is responsible for protecting the rights of that child and ensuring appropriate alternative care. In the Sri Lankan context, the alternative care for such children has always been institutional care. Thus, the institutional care system is established as a reliable form of alternative care in the recent culture of Sri Lanka. Roccella (2007, p. 10) makes this clear, stating "Institutional care is at present the most common – or, rather, the almost sole – solution for children deprived of parental care in Sri Lanka". The major reason why institutional care has been so common is the lack of other family based permanent alternative care opportunities.

[1] UN Guidelines paragraph 5.

This research identifies the governance challenges of VCHs in the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, with a focus on children's rights and their needs. It aims to enhance the life chances of children and young people who have been institutionalized in these children's homes. It addresses the major task for policy makers and service providers to ensure that institutionalized children are supported by a systemic program that addresses their complex social needs (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014b).

> "The need for institutional children's care must be investigated, as does the ability of these organizations to provide a quality upbringing and life preparation for children" (Ariyadasa 2013, p. 1).

Children and young people who have been institutionalized in VCHs have been denied their life chances because their rights and needs have not been properly addressed. Furthermore, there is a major gap between the policy environments and the governance practices of these homes. Thus, there is an urgent requirement to conduct research in terms of children's rights and their needs with respect to the policy environments and the governance practices of these VCHs.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 Position of VCHs in Sri Lanka

The 'Probation System' in Sri Lanka commenced on 12th March 1945, under the Department of Prisons. By 1960, the Probation system had been extended throughout the Island by appointing Probation Officers (POs) to all Judicial Districts in the country. Since the Probation System was functioning under the Department of Prisons, it was known as the Department of Prisons and Probation. After the Children and Young Persons Ordinance (CYPO) No 48 of 1952 was enacted and enforced in Sri Lanka, a separate department, titled the Department of Probation and Child Care Services (DPCCS) was established on the 1st October 1956 (Cooray 1986). In the present context, the DPCCS belongs to the Ministry for Child Development and Women's Affairs (CDWA). This ministry also has a National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) and a Children's Secretariat (CS).

With the establishment of the Provincial Council system in Sri Lanka, some administrative powers were vested within the Provincial Councils. Hence, some of the functions of the National DPCCS have been assigned to the Provincial Commissioners of the DPCCS situated in 9 provinces. The mission of the DPCCS is to establish the rights of children by providing protection for orphaned, abandoned, destitute children and others in conflict with the law ensuring the maximum participation of children in keeping with national policies and international standards for children (DPCCS 2014). Those children who are orphaned due to the death of both parents, those abandoned by parents and those destitute and suffering deprivation of basic needs, are targeted for institutional care. Institutional care for these children is provided by a network of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) that manage children's homes. The provincial DPCCSs have

registered these homes, which are called as Voluntary Children's Homes (VCHs). With a view to providing protection and care for orphaned, abandoned, destitute and abused children, provincial DPCCSs are supposed to offer due advice and assistance to these VCHs. Financial assistance is paid on a monthly basis by the relevant DPCCS for each child in a registered VCH. To get this payment, the child should be below 18 years of age. There are 253 such Homes throughout Sri Lanka, registered under the Provincial DPCCSs (DPCCS 2010b). These children are entitled to receive formal education at government schools near to their VCHs.

Figure 1.1 demonstrates the conceptualized legal and social framework of VCHs in Sri Lanka. VCHs should be registered with the DPCCS of the relevant province (Government of Sri Lanka 1941). Furthermore, a VCH should belong to an international or local NGO or charity welfare organization to be recognized as a registered VCH. A Probation Officer (PO) becomes the legal coordinator between the provincial DPCCS and the VCH belongs. However, every VCH is linked to the Divisional Secretariat (DS) of the relevant district through the NGO or the charity organization to which the VCH is belonged. As every NGO should be registered with the relevant DS, the coordination between VCH and the DS is advocated by a Child Rights Promotion Officer (CRPO).

A VCH is funded by the relevant NGO. The provincial councils also support the VCHs that are registered under their DPCCS. In addition, registered VCHs are permitted to raise funds through their NGOs from local/foreign individuals, companies and other NGOs or Not for Profit Organizations (NPOs).

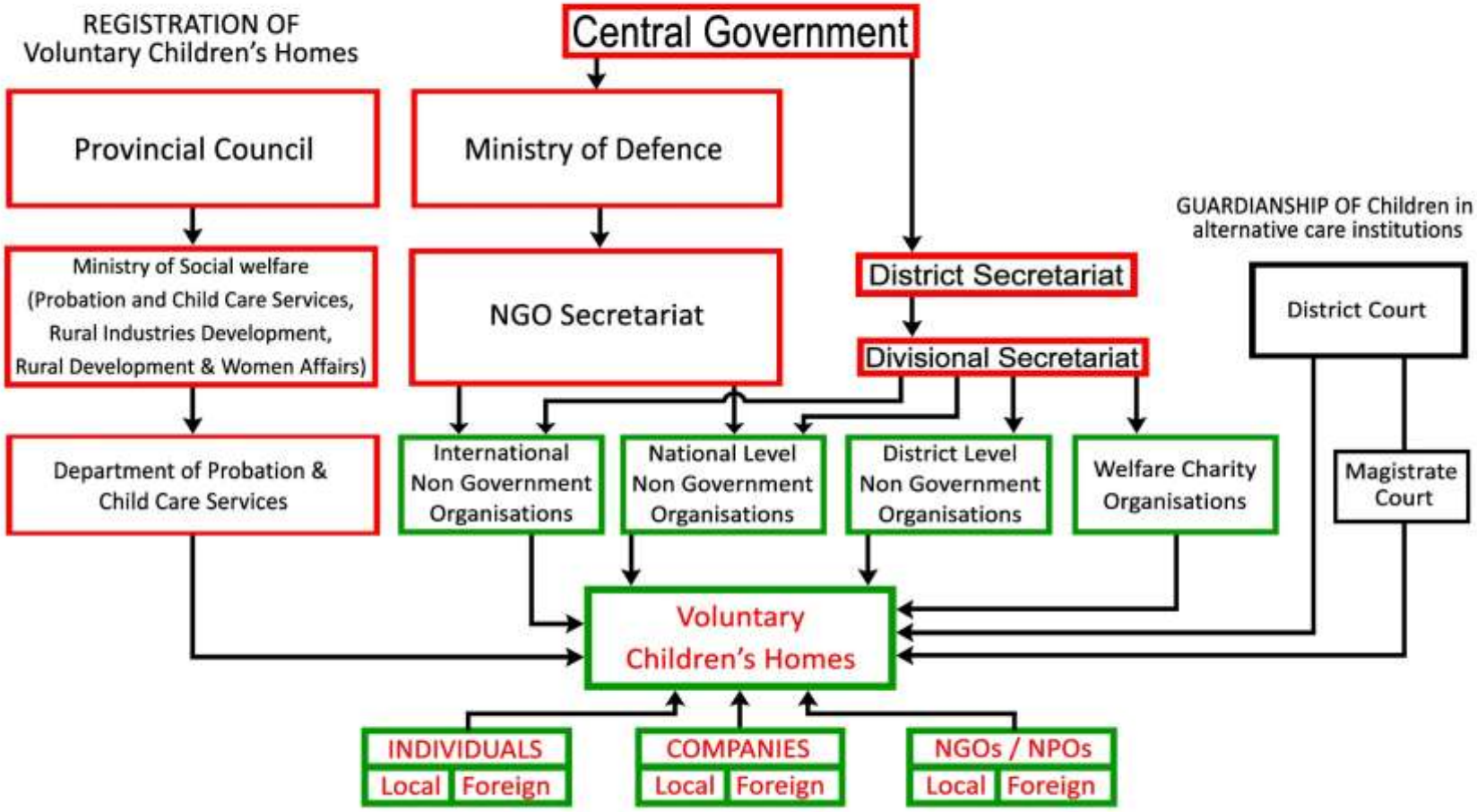


Figure 1.1 Conceptualized legal and social framework of VCHs in Sri Lanka.

According to relevant government bodies, the number of children who have been protected due to their existence is significant. The National Child Protection Authority (NCPA) states that it has intervened and safeguarded many thousands of children thereby defending their rights. DPCCS states that it has provided shelter, food, health and security to orphans, abandoned and destitute through a network of voluntary children's homes, detention and receiving homes and vocational training centres (DPCCS 2010b).

1.2.2 Factors behind institutional care for orphaned, abandoned and destitute children

No nation can claim that they have no children deprived of parental care. It is widely accepted that, irrespective of their nationality, gender or age, children have not only been deprived of parental care, but have also been denied their basic human rights due to contemporary challenges such as climate change, civil wars and terrorism, as well as social, cultural, economic and political issues (Ariyadasa 2013). The facts are stark: Globally, between 500 million and 1.5 billion children suffer violence each year (Pineheiro 2006); 215 million children are involved in harmful work (ILO 2010); and it is estimated that there are approximately eight million children in institutional care (Keshavarzian 2013; Pineheiro 2006).

Although no studies have been conducted on the reasons for admission to institutions with special focus on children in contact with the law, the literature on institutional care of children in children's homes provides a fair understanding of the causal factors of institutionalization. Children affected by acts of terrorism, caught in domestic violence, victims of natural or manmade disasters, juvenile offenders, children that stray or beg on streets or that engage in labour should be considered as children in need of care and protection (Figure 1.2). Furthermore, the following factors also reflect the reasons that children initially entered the institutional care system.

- Economic difficulties propel parents to believe that institutionalization is the best option (Jayasooriyya 2008).
- Probation officers perceive residential institutions as the best welfare and protection option for children (Roccella 2007).
- Shame associated with abuse, especially the sexual abuse of a girl, is also a leading cause (Jayasooriyya 2008).
- Existence of institutions creates the demand. 'For example, there may be a tendency to describe children's problems in ways that make them fit into institutionalization as an appropriate response, rather than to look at alternatives' (Tolfree 2003).

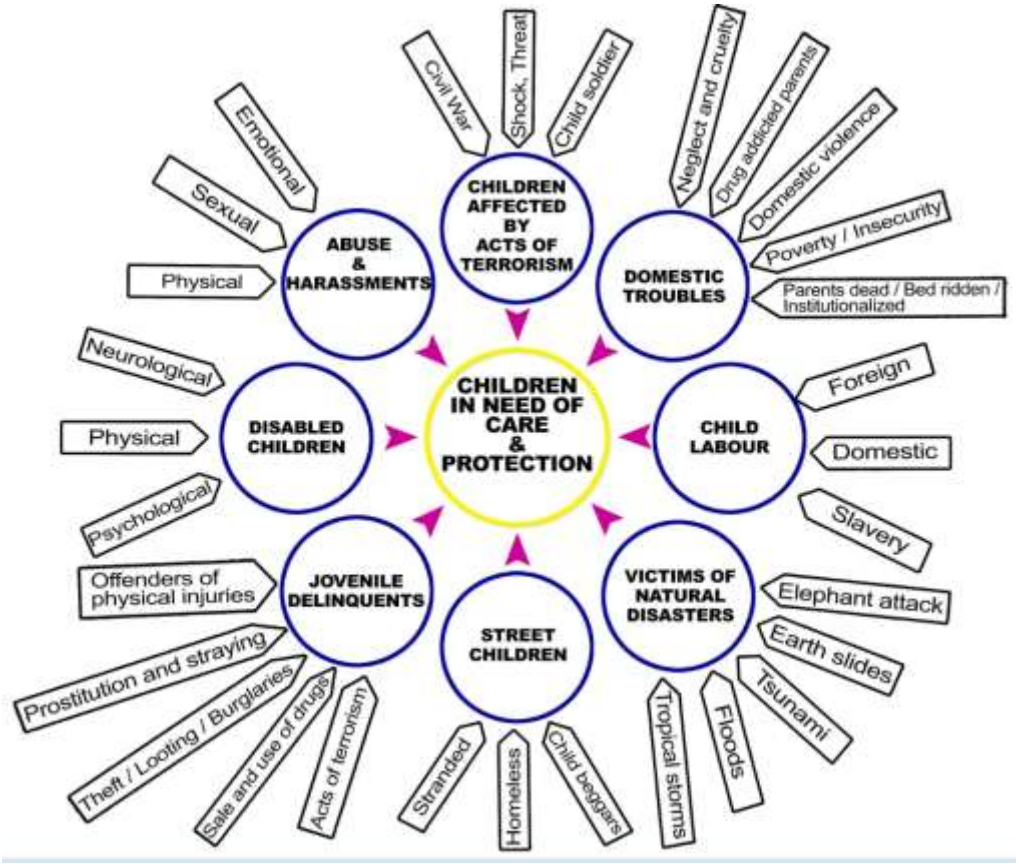


Figure 1.2 Conceptualized design indicating casual factors for children's institutionalization.

1.2.3 Implementation of better policies and good governance practices: a priori and a posteriori approach to governance of VCHs

This study builds a foundation of a better policy system for good governance of children's homes. In this thesis I address the contemporary issues through a critical review of the policy environment and the governance practices of these institutions with reference to specific case studies. An analysis of the existing policies and guidelines for institutional care derived from varying sources are the key to the creation of better policies and guidelines. To do this I involved an a priori approach to governance by analysing the knowledge based personal and societal experience derived from the existing General Standards for the Promotion of Quality of Services in Voluntary Children's Homes (General Standards) and the Grading Criteria for the Standardisation of Voluntary Children's Homes (Grading Criteria). Furthermore, I have used an a posteriori approach to governance by scrutinising the fact based knowledge derived from the UN Guidelines. The findings are validated by personal and societal experiences of policy makers and service providers leading to an a priori and a posteriori approach to governance, because there are enthusiastic policy makers and devoted service providers who have already contributed to the good governance of children's homes. Scrutiny of the experiences and ideologies of these professionals helps identify good practices in the field. Furthermore, prevailing 'good practice' will be evaluated in terms of social theories and existing policies and guidelines. Ultimately, this should result in

maximisation of the children's quality of life and the likelihood of their successful reintegration into broader society.

1.3 Statement of the problem

"Children's rights and the needs of the institutionalized children in VCHs are not properly addressed by the institutions responsible for institutional care of children in Sri Lanka". This statement of the problem was derived from my personal experiences as a service provider[2] and practitioner[3] of a VCH (Figure 1.3). Later on, when analysing the governance practices of children's homes against the UN Guidelines, I found that there is an immense gap between policy and practice. Furthermore, the limited literature on the policy and the governance aspects of VCHs also provides evidence that there is an urgent need to provide strategies to overcome the human rights issues in institutional care environments.

Figure 1.3 The voluntary children's home founded by the author

1.3.1 Evidence from my personal experience as a practitioner to a girls' children's home

While I was managing the girls' children's home, in 2010, the DPCCS held a competition among VCHs and standardised them by providing points based on the Grading Criteria for the standardisation of children's homes (Grading Criteria). These criteria were based on the General Standards imposed by DPCCS in terms of the governance aspects of VCHs. Eleven VCHs have been ranked 'C'. Two have been ranked 'D' where they have scored below 25 points out of 100. Furthermore, the minimum score was 8 out of 100 points (Table 1.1). The overall results of the competition demonstrated a huge inconsistency among children's homes when addressing children's rights and their needs in terms of their policy implications and the governance practices. This is evidence of extremely poor standards and demonstrates the system has to be reassessed

[2] Service provider: I established a children's home named "Sputnik Girls' Home" (SGH) for girls and have been serving as the service provider since 2006 (Figure 1.3).
[3] Practitioner: I was the manager of SGH from year 2007 to 2012 and it won the Best Children's Home award in the North Western Province in 2010.

and/or revised (This is broadly discussed in auto-ethnography in Chapter 3). Thus from personal experience as a service provider and practitioner of the highest ranked VCH in the province, I have found that children's rights and the needs of the institutionalized children in VCHs are not properly addressed by many of the institutions responsible for care.

Table 1.1 Points & Grades achieved by 34 children's homes in the North Western Province VCHs competition – 2010.[4]

Place	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Points (%)	88	85	81	81	76	75	75	74	72	71	70	69	66	64	63	63	62
Grade	A	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Table 1.1 continued																	
Place	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34
Points (%)	61	59	59	56	50	47	41	41	39	38	35	33	30	29	28	25	8
Grade	B	B	B	B	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	D

1.3.2 Evidence framed by the UN Guidelines for the alternative care of children.

Sri Lanka is a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the UNCRC. Thus, Sri Lanka is authorized to implement the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (UN Guidelines) which sets out desirable directions for policy and practice with the intention of enhancing the implementation of the UNCRC and of relevant provisions of other international instruments regarding the protection and well-being of children.

UN Guidelines paragraph 7 indicates that:

> "In applying the present Guidelines, determination of the best interests of the child shall be designed to identify courses of action for children deprived of parental care, or at risk of being so, that are best suited to satisfying their needs and rights, taking into account the full and personal development of their rights in their family, social and cultural environment and their status as subjects of rights, both at the time of the determination and in the longer term. The determination process should take account of, inter alia, the right of the child to be heard and to have his/her views taken into account in accordance with his/her age and maturity" (United Nations 2010, p. 3).

However, the literature demonstrates that the institutionalized children have not been included in the decision making process (DPCCS 1991).

UN Guidelines paragraph 14 indicates that:

> "Removal of a child from the care of the family should be seen as a measure of last resort and should, whenever possible, be temporary and for the shortest possible duration. Removal decisions should be regularly reviewed and the child's return to parental care, once the original causes of removal have been resolved or have disappeared" (United Nations 2010, p. 4).

General Standards (DPCCS 1991) indicate that when keeping children institutionalized for more than three years, prior approval should be received from the commissioner of the DPCCS. However, around 40% of children has been in institutional care for longer periods than the three

[4] [Grading Criteria: D (0-25 %), C (26-55 %), B (56-75 %), A (76-100 %)].

year limit of the DPCCS policy and institutional care is almost the common or rather the sole solution for children deprived of parental care (Roccella 2007).

UN Guidelines paragraph 15 indicates that:

> "Financial and material poverty, or conditions directly and uniquely imputable to such poverty, should never be the only justification for the removal of a child from parental care, for receiving a child into alternative care, or for preventing his/her reintegration, but should be seen as a signal for the need to provide appropriate support to the family" (United Nations 2010, p. 4).

However, my literature review demonstrates that over 50% of the total population of children in institutional care have been institutionalized due to poverty or the adverse effects of poverty. Of these, over 60% of children are from families of parents who have migrated for work overseas as domestic labourers (Basnayaka et al. 2012; Save the Children 2005).

UN Guidelines paragraph 23 indicates that:

> "While recognizing that residential care facilities and family-based care complement each other in meeting the needs of children, where large residential care facilities (institutions) remain, alternatives should be developed in the context of an overall deinstitutionalization strategy, with precise goals and objectives, which will allow for their progressive elimination" (United Nations 2010, p. 5).

However, (Roccella 2007, p. 10) asserts that the probation officers perceive residential institutions as the best welfare and protection option for children; the result of this understandable position is that little is done to facilitate the reunification of children with their families, socialization with the community and or adoption to a suitable family.

UN Guidelines paragraph 51 indicates that "Regular and appropriate contact between the child and his/her family specifically for the purpose of reintegration should be developed, supported and monitored by the competent body" and UN Guidelines paragraph 81 indicates that:

> "When a child is placed in alternative care, contact with his/her family, as well as with other persons close to him or her, such as friends, neighbours and previous carers, should be encouraged and facilitated, in keeping with the child's protection and best interests. The child should have access to information on the situation of his/her family members in the absence of contact with them" (United Nations 2010, p. 13).

However, (Jayathilake & Amarasuriya 2005) assert that although the caregivers are supposed to be responsible for strengthening the relationship between children and their families, often the contrary is the reality. For the caregivers feel that the child should be distanced from the family in order to prevent the child from going astray and for the child's protection/safety . Furthermore, there are more than 19,000 children living in over 400 children's homes separated from their families; in 30% of homes, placement committees meet either irregularly or not at all (Roccella 2007) and children's voices confirm that for many children, placement in institutional care has a serious negative impact on development, well-being and basic rights (Save the Children 2005).

UN Guidelines paragraph 83 through to 89 indicate that children should receive adequate amounts of wholesome and nutritious food; carers should promote the health of the children and ensure that medical care, counselling and support; children should have access to formal, non-formal and vocational education; carers should ensure that opportunities for play and leisure activities are created for every child; children's safety, health, nutritional, developmental and other needs should be catered for in all care settings; children should be allowed to satisfy the needs of their religious and spiritual life; and all adults responsible for children should respect and promote the right to privacy (United Nations 2010). However, the literature demonstrates that the quality of care in many establishments is poor; inadequate food, poor sanitation, limited health care, poor sleeping arrangements and the emotional needs of the children are severely neglected; 2 out of 5 homes do not have a proper library; more than 2,000 children in homes do not attend school regularly and more than 9,000 children are not regularly visited by a doctor (Roccella 2007; Save the Children 2005).

1.4 Objectives

In seeking to address human rights issues of institutionalized children in voluntary children's homes, the research pursues the following objectives:

- To ascertain the extent to which the Sri Lankan government has taken into account the resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children.
- To explore unique guidelines proposed by Sri Lankan statutory bodies against the background of international instruments.
- To discover whether the current 'General Standards' are designed for wide dissemination among all sectors directly or indirectly concerned with issues relating to alternative care, and seek in particular to:
    - support efforts to keep children in, or return them to, the care of their family or, failing this, to find another appropriate placement solution, including adoption and foster care,
    - ensure that while such permanent solutions are being sought, or in cases where they are not possible or are not in the best interests of the child, the most suitable forms of alternative care are identified and provided, under conditions that promote the child's full and harmonious development,
    - assist and encourage the government to better implement their responsibilities and obligations in these respects, bearing in mind the prevailing economic, social and cultural conditions in Sri Lanka,
    - guide policies, decisions and activities of all concerned with social protection and child welfare in both the public and the private sectors, including civil society.

- To explore the appropriateness of the Grading Criteria for the Standardization of Children's Homes (Grading Criteria) as a measure for standardizing VCHs.

1.5 Research Questions

This research focuses on questions ranging from pre-institutionalization to reintegration of children who are deprived of parental care or who are at risk. The broad research questions are:

- How do we prevent children becoming institutionalized and sustain their lives in their natural birth environments?
- When institutionalization is necessary, how do we protect the human rights of children in care?
    - How can we improve quality of life and enhance life chances of children in institutional care?
- How do we facilitate the reintegration of children into a family care environment?
    - How do we promote reintegration
    - How do we advocate for the well-being of the re-unified and socialized children from institutional care?

In order to answer these questions, the research uses primary and secondary data, which includes field research, the analysis of existing policy documents, ethnographic writings and records from the personal documents of institutionalized children.

1.6 Research Focus

This research focuses on Voluntary Children's Homes. The rationale for this is that the overwhelming majority of institutional accommodation for children is provided by VCHs. Of the 368 VCHs, only 24 are managed by the public sector (Table 1.2). The other 341 (93 % of the total) are VCHs and are managed by NGOs. In terms of population, VCHs accommodate 83 %, i.e. 13,214 children, whilst public sector houses only 2,059 children (Table 1.2). The large number of children accommodated in VCHs and the sheer number of VCHs justifies the research focus on VCHs. However, there are several other reasons that have informed the research focus around VCHs. They are:

- My personal interest being involved as a founder of a VCH that received an award for best practice.
- The news that many VCHs are malfunctioning in various ways such as: cases of mistreatment and malnourishment, emotional and physical abuse, sexual assaults, misuse of finances and illegal adoption (Ariyadasa 2013).

- The fact that despite the UN Guideline which states “Alternatives should be developed in the context of an overall deinstitutionalization strategy” there is a gradual increase in the number of VCHs over the past 15 years and a sudden increase in the number of VCHs from 2009 to 2012 (Table 1.3). Attention was drawn to the Northern and the Eastern Provinces (where the number of VCHs rose by 20) that are major war affected areas, and the Western Province (where the number of VCHs rose by 36) where the capital city is situated (Table 1.3).
- Vast differences exist across the tangible and intangible care facilities provided by different agencies manifested at the grading of VCHs conducted by DPCCS in 2010 (Table 1.1).
- The minimal intervention by the public sector in terms of governance practices of VCHs.
- No research has been undertaken involving policy makers and service providers with respect to policy guidelines and governance practices in terms of the human rights issues of institutionalized children in VCHs.

Table 1.2 The number of children institutionalised in the different sorts of homes in Sri Lanka in 2010 (Data from DPCCS 2010, p.1).

Type of home	No. of homes	No. of children
Remand homes	7	1,156
Certified school	5	253
Receiving homes	8	434
Detention home	1	84
Approved school	1	10
National training and counseling centres	2	112
Total	24	2,059
Voluntary children’s homes (VCHs)	341	13,214
Voluntary remand homes	3	601
Full total	368	15,874

Sri Lanka is a member state of the United Nations, which ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989) and is supposed to provide modes of alternative care facilities for children who have been deprived of parental care or who are at risk of being so. These alternative care opportunities can be categorised as temporary care and active contribution to the child’s family reintegration or, if this is not possible, to secure his/her stable care in an alternative family setting, including through adoption or kafala[5] of Islamic law, where appropriate[6] (United Nations 2010). Neither UNCRC nor UN Guidelines recommend large institutional care facilities for children who are at risk. However, in Sri Lanka, institutional care is the major service provider for such children (Roccella 2007). Local treaties such as Orphanage Ordinance, public facilitators such as provincial DPCCSs and emancipation of many varieties of institutional care facilities manifest such reality.

[5] (United Nations 2010).
[6] UN Guidelines paragraph 123 (United Nations 2010).

Table 1.3 Voluntary Children's Homes 1996 – 2012.[7]

Province	Year and no. of children's homes															
	96	97	98	99	00	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	12
Western	71	71	75	75	76	71	69	73	73	74	122	122	86	84	94	120
Southern	18	17	17	17	17	17	17	19	21	21	33	33	27	27	29	37
Central	18	18	19	19	19	21	22	23	24	24	41	41	23	22	23	36
North Western	12	16	16	16	17	22	25	27	27	27	45	45	34	34	34	40
Sabaragamuwa	10	10	12	12	12	12	14	14	14	14	29	29	18	16	15	17
Uva	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	5	5	17	17	10	10	11	15
North Central	9	9	9	9	10	11	11	11	11	11	17	17	14	14	11	11
Northern	23	23	27	27	31	33	38	53	58	57	184	184	136	120	48	60
Eastern	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	76	80
TOTAL	166	168	179	179	186	191	201	225	233	233	488	488	348	327	341	416

[7] The number of children's homes of both Northern and Eastern provinces are included in the Northern Province row from 1996-2009.

1.7 Research significance

The focus on the VCHs of Sri Lanka is reflective of the fact that they perform a vital service (although not necessarily optimally) and that they comprise the majority of orphanages. Any improvement that the research could bring to this system would therefore benefit a great many children and young people. Of the 368 registered institutions for alternative care of children, 341 are VCHs. The Sri Lankan government is of the belief that the NGOs that govern VCHs provide a critical service for institutionalized children. This was evident from the letter to the Child Rights Promotion Officers (CRPOs) by the Secretary of the Ministry of Child Development and Women's Affairs where it states; "These volunteer organizations or NGOs provide an immense service for these institutionalized children and should be registered under the provincial councils." (Figure 1.4).

The Secretary is aware of the varying abuses encountered by the institutionalized children, but justifies the worthy service rendered by these NGOs that govern VCHs. He states "However, news that some institutionalized children have been subjected to abuse and other security and well-being issues have been reported from time to time, the provincial councils with government support should implement a detailed supervision process to avoid this situation" (Figure 1.4). He is of the opinion that lack of supervision by government officials has led to abusive environments in children's homes but that those situations can be minimised and eliminated through strong supervision strategies. He suggests the following:

- Officials need to make frequent visits to these institutions and implement strategies to gather information.
- On the basis of such information, it is required to develop a national data base to make short, medium and long term strategies to enhance the quality of life of institutionalized children.
- Through such efforts, implement effective policies to improve the life chances of institutionalized children.

In the present context, the government perceives that the advantages of the existence of children's homes outweigh the disadvantages. Furthermore, elimination of institutional care facilities is not practicable due to the large number of children being institutionalized in these homes. The social, cultural, political, economic and environmental factors encompassed by these institutions complicate this further (see Figure 1.4). Hence, enactment of policies and strategies to improve the life chances of children who have been institutionalized in these homes is much more realistic and appropriate.

This clearly indicates that the government of Sri Lanka has identified the critical importance of changes in the policy environments and governance practices of children homes. Thus, this research is timely and significant.

TRANSLATION: A letter from the secretary of the Ministry of Child Development & Women Affairs to all the Child Rights Promotion Officers.

MINISTRY OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND WOMEN AFFAIRS

P.O. Box: 1589
Colombo
Website: www.childwomenmin.gov.lk

My No: CDWA/4/4/1-iv

2012.08.02

To all the Child Rights Promotion Officers,

Execution of the special budget proposals made by His Excellency the President

Introduction of a strong supervision process to confirm the protection and well-being of the institutionalized children

There are nearly 15,000 children in institutional care who, for various reasons, have been abandoned or are destitute. Most of these institutions are managed by volunteer or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) except for few children's homes / certified schools that are run by the public sector. These volunteer organizations or NGOs provide an immense service for these institutionalized children and should be registered under the provincial councils.

However, news that some institutionalized children has been subjected to abuse and other security and well-being issues have been reported from time to time. The provincial councils with government support should implement a detailed supervision process to avoid this situation. His Excellency the President emphasised in his budget proposals 2012 to take necessary precautions to ensure the protection and the well-being of these children.

In addition to the existing children's homes management, training, infrastructure and development activities, steps should be taken to protect the rights of institutionalized children by providing a quality service. These organizations should be run as places that provide high quality service with a pleasant environment and caring governance strategies that enhance children's lives within the institution.

There should be projects that provide the best quality educational with cultural facilities. Furthermore, it is management's duty to create a social and emotionally balanced environment to guide children without being a punitive regime. No child should be isolated or victimised. In achieving these objectives via a successful supervision and monitoring process, you, as the Child Rights Promotion Officer should be equipped with knowledge and experience, and maintain professional responses at all times.

To strengthen the existing children's homes supervision strategies, the CRPOs should visit every two months and supervise all children's homes in their respective divisional secretaries. Once implemented, I kindly request that you to send me reports relevant to every home with a copy sent to the provincial commissioner of the department of probation and child care services.

The information in your reports will be used to develop a national data base. This data will enable us to take short, medium and long term actions to enhance the future life chances of these institutionalized children. Through such efforts, we can implement effective policies and strategies.

Every two months you should send the information in accordance with the template attached herewith. It is emphasised that the information should not be given to any individual, firm or organization without the prior permission.

We appreciate the continuous service that you provide us to brighten the future of these institutionalized children whilst protecting their security and well-being.

Signed

Eric Illayaparachchi

Secretary

Copies:

1. Secretary, Finance Ministry – With relevance to the implementation of the special budget proposals.
2. All the chief secretaries of the provincial councils – for the approval of supervision process.
3. All district secretaries
4. All divisional secretaries
5. Provincial commissioner of department of probation and child care services
6. The chairperson, National Child Protection Authority

Figure 1.4 Letter to the CRPOs from the Secretary of the Ministry of Child Development and Women's Affairs. This letter outlines the signigficance of VCHs to the orphaned, abandoned and destitute of Sri Lanka.

1.8 Organization of the thesis

This thesis comprises eight chapters.

Chapter 1 has provided the rationale, background, the objectives, key questions and the statement of the problem. Finally it demonstrated the focus and the significance of the research.

It provided the general background to the research by detailing the administrative structure for the protection of children in general and institutionalized children in particular. It provided an overview of the institutional care of the children and the significance of the implementation of better policies and good governance practices in children's homes.

Chapter 2 is a review of the existing literature on the major concepts of the research, such as life chances, institutional care as an alternative, policy guidelines, governance practices, capabilities approach and critical thinking. The literature review provides a lens to interpret the findings of this study. It details the arguments and perspectives contained in the literature to identify the objectives and findings of the study in the context of appropriate philosophies.

Chapter 3 explains how the research was conducted: The approach; the methods; the difficulties encountered during the research; the sources of data; and a description of the characteristics of the sample, as well as the auto ethnography of the researcher.

Chapters 4 analyses data and discusses emerging themes. The findings from the data are reviewed in the context of the issues raised in previous chapters and in light of existing theories.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 discuss findings. The findings in these three chapters address the three major research questions of this study: How do we prevent institutionalisation of children, how do we protect children within VCHs; and how do we promote reintegration of children into families and society in general? These three chapters highlight policy recommendations.

Chapter 8 synthesises the previous chapters in the format of a description of institutional strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND KEY CONCEPTS

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to review the literature concerning the institutional care of children with respect to policy and governance perspectives in terms of children's rights. While it focuses on the Sri Lankan institutional care environment, the broader situation of institutional care environments globally is also considered.

The reasons for the institutionalisation of Sri Lankan children are discussed first. This is followed by an outline of institutional care with reference to demographic patterns, religious, cultural and historical perspectives, and their impact on policy and governance of children's homes.

The major gap between policy environments and the governance practices of children's homes is discussed as a historical issue of institutional care. This discussion leads to the need to advocate for children's rights and the quality of life of these children. Next, the necessity for implementing both a priori and a posteriori approaches to governance of children's homes is broadly discussed.

The question of wellbeing of children is timely and relevant because of the loss of human rights that has been intrinsic to governance of children's homes since colonisation and the aftermath of the Sri Lankan civil war. This chapter describes the background and what affects human rights has had so far on institutionalisation of children. It also highlights the paradoxes in approaches towards the advocacy for children's rights in institutional care environments. While there is an abundance of literature on children's rights issues in children's homes, there is little literature on ways to address them. Furthermore, there is limited advocacy for improving the wellbeing of children and enhancing life chances based on better governance practices. Thus, a gap exists in the literature that needs to be addressed to increase the quality of children's lives through the voices of young people and their families as well as those of carers, policy makers and service providers (Roccella 2007; Save the Children 2005; Save the Children, OECD & UNICEF 2011).

External support has failed to reverse or even make significant systemic change to enable children's rights and to transform institutional care environments into a new governance culture where institutionalized children have citizenship rights and entitlements (Ariyadasa 2015a, 2015b). Past arrangements have involved devolution of powers and have been based around the fact that there are no reasonable alternatives to children's homes being utilised (Roccella 2007).

Finally, the significance of the introduction of a systemic program for successful reintegration via critical systems thinking is discussed. This allows the identification of suitable theoretical lenses to address human rights issues and enhance the life chances of institutionalized children.

2.2 Need for institutional care

The reasons for putting children into institutional care are mostly connected with families, who are unable to provide proper care. According to Wijemanna (2006) these reasons include abject poverty, loss of one or both parents, mother migrating for employment, alcoholism and drug abuse, family strife and incarceration of jailed parent. In the Sri Lankan context, the civil war, natural disasters, poverty issues, and environmental catastrophes caused by adverse human activities have made institutional care an inevitable measure to protect children's well-being and safeguard their rights. Human activities that disrupt natural systems are also among major causes for children's institutionalization in Sri Lanka. Vulnerability to tsunami, floods, cyclones, landslides, droughts and elephant attacks are all causes of institutionalisation which are made worse or more prevalent by human activity.

2.2.1 Civil war

Sri Lanka experienced civil war for more than 25 years from 1983 until 2009. Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka were the main battlefields of a conflict between the rebel group known as the Tamil Tigers and the Sri Lankan army. The conflict, which is said to be the longest running war in South Asia, came to an end in 2009 but the consequences of this war have impacted on all children in Sri Lanka. Many children in the Northern and Eastern provinces were displaced and lived for years in interim camps before returning to their original homes after the war ended (War Child 2014). Children who lost one or both parents, homeless and destitute children were directly institutionalized in VCHs.

Human Rights Watch (2004) declared that the Tamil rebels recruited over 7,000 children as child soldiers. The Sri Lankan military estimated that half of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) troops were women. According to UNICEF (2012), more than 40 % of the children recruited by LTTE were girls. The International Labour Organisation (ILO 2010) stated that some children were used as fighters and took direct part in hostilities, while others were used in supportive roles (e.g. cooks, porters, messengers, or spies) or for sexual purposes. While Jayatunge (2012) claimed that there was no concrete evidence to prove that the LTTE used female child soldiers as sex slaves, he indicated that over the years, Sri Lankan female child soldiers were exposed to unspeakable horror. They are at more risk than male child soldiers of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Hamblen's study in 1999 (cited in Jayatunge 2012) suggested that girls were more likely than boys to develop PTSD. These children were institutionalized in detention / rehabilitation camps for months to years, and later re-unified with their families or directed to VCHs. Thus, one factor that made institutional care inevitable in Sri Lanka is the overwhelming numbers of children who have become orphaned, abandoned or destitute as a consequence of the civil war.

Dissanayake (2015) states that human-elephant conflict as a consequence of the aftermath of the war has also increased the demand for institutional care of children. When fighting ended in May

2009, families that had abandoned villages in the Northern and Eastern Provinces returned. However, the end of the armed conflict contributed to the rise in human-elephant conflict. According to the Department of Wildlife, elephants had dominated the war-affected areas, and when humans reclaimed the land, this created problems. The human-elephant conflicts started to intensify in these areas around 2011. Now that most abandoned villages have been re-inhabited, the situation is stabilizing. Many families in villages vulnerable to attack have stopped cultivating family vegetable plots because they draw elephants close to the homes. People live in fear of the havoc that elephant herds would cause in the village. Thus, people's lives are threatened both directly and indirectly by elephant attacks. A person can be severely injured or killed by an elephant, which is the direct threat to their lives. The damage that elephants cause to property and/or crops, and thereby impacting the livelihood of people, represents the indirect threat. Children who have become orphaned and/or destitute because of these threats to their families by elephant attack create the demand for institutional care. The human-elephant conflict discussed here is a consequence of the aftermath of the war, because elephants lost their habitat and thus encroached on the villages in search of food.

2.2.2 Poverty issues and poverty caused by natural disasters

Over 30% of the total institutionalized population in VCHs are victims of poverty (Save the Children 2005). McIntyre-Mills (2014a) explains the relationship between poverty and climatic changes, asserting that we face risks that could undermine quality of life and our capacity to achieve wellbeing, resilience and a sustainable future. The risks that she points out are droughts, floods, and storm surges, which are regional concerns that affect human security. Her argument is that these risks are increased by climate change. As a result, families become homeless and parents become unable to care for their children resulting in institutionalization.

The Sri Lankan government, with the support of NGOs, had to provide sufficient shelter and support basic needs of children who had become orphaned and destitute as a consequence of the 2004 tsunami. Many NGOs started to expand their social activities opening children's homes to house the tsunami victims.

> "The tsunami that struck Sri Lanka and other parts of South East Asia in December 2004 resulted in a significant loss of life. In Sri Lanka, an estimated 5,500 children lost one or both parents to the tsunami and countless others were considerably affected in other ways, including through loss of housing, geographical displacement, disruption to education, contraction of tsunami related illnesses, and the like" (IDLO 2007).

Furthermore, IDLO (2007) states that the tsunami caused great pain, trauma, uncertainty, and upheaval. Parents were injured, traumatized, or lost their jobs. The siblings, relatives and friends of many children perished or went missing. Houses and schools were damaged or destroyed. Many children were required to spend long periods in temporary shelters or undergo prolonged institutionalization in children's homes, away from familiar comforting surroundings.

The necessity for mothers to work abroad because of poverty (Thambiah 2012) has also been associated with high reliance on the provision of alternative (institutional) care for children. Sri Lankan women commonly work as domestic labourers in Middle-Eastern countries to address the issue of household poverty in Sri Lanka. This is an important factor; with Save the Children (2005) identifying that over 30 % of children's institutionalization has been due to a mother's foreign employment.

2.2.3 Environmental disasters caused by adverse human activities

Environmental disasters caused, either directly or indirectly, by human activities have also increased the demand for VCHs. Romm (2015) emphasises that the earth is no longer able to carry the cost of human exploitation, whilst Steffen et al. (2011) assert that the twenty-first century provides an essential context for the transformation from resource exploitation toward stewardship of the earth system. Looking historically at the human-environment relationship, Steffen, Persson, et al. (2011) state that prior to the Anthropocene[8], i.e. during the Holocene[9], humans and their ancestors modified the natural ecosystem to gain advantage in gathering plant food sources they required or by hunting for animals, but they did not transform the ecosystem around them on a large scale. They propose that it was the industrial revolution, with its origins in Great Britain in the 1700s, that marked the end of agriculture as the most dominant human activity and set the species on a far different trajectory from the one established during most of the Holocene.

According to Steffen, Grinevald, et al. (2011) the era after the World War II (from 1945-2000) can be aptly referred to as the 'Great Acceleration'. They point out that environmental problems received little attention during much of the Great Acceleration. Indeed, emerging global environmental problems were largely ignored. During this period, there was general global consensus that economic growth needed to be accomplished at all costs, including at the cost of environmental damage. The environment was viewed as open for exploitation and manipulation for the benefit of humans. Some prominent examples of the dire consequences of environmental manipulation include the recent landslides in the hill country of Sri Lanka because of tea plantations, hydroelectric power projects and construction of reservoirs. Bandara (2015) cites investigations carried out by the National Building Research Organisation that indicate that haphazard and unplanned land use and inappropriate construction methods have led to an increase in landslide susceptibility. Sugawara (2013) lists excavation, filling and tunnelling, as some of the factors, which may cause instability. Construction of reservoirs for the purpose of

[8] This terminology has been proposed, but not yet universally accepted. The word Anthropocene fell into common usage after Paul Crutzen, an atmospheric chemist, and the late Eugene Stoemer, a biologist, used the term in the Global Change Newsletter in May 2000. The word joins the Greek word 'anthropo', for human, to the suffix 'cene', meaning new or recent, to suggest an epoch defined by recent human activity (Source: http://www.theguardian.com/science/2014/oct/16/). Furthermore, in 2015 the International Society for the Systems Sciences (ISSS) held its conference in Berlin, Germany with the conference theme "Governing the Anthropocene: The greatest challenge for systems thinking in practice".

[9] Holocene: The prior epoch of more stable human-environment relations. Source: Romm (2015), p. 2).

generating hydroelectricity and agricultural purposes have also been identified as triggers for landslides.

A devastating landslide in the Haldumulla – Koslanda area, triggered by monsoon rains, buried around 140 workers' houses at a tea plantation in central Sri Lanka. The death toll is debatable, but it was considerable (Jayawardena 2014). Jayawardena states that this is the worst natural disaster since the tsunami in 2004 that killed over 38,000 people along the coastal belt of Sri Lanka. Jayawardena's description of the Koslanda landslide as a *natural* disaster is debatable given that there is ample evidence pointing to it being the result of human activities in the area over the last few centuries. Mallawarachchi (2014) states that children who had left for school in the morning returned to find that their homes and families had disappeared without a trace. The BBC confirms Mallawarachchi's statement, quoting local Member of Parliament Udith Lokubandara; "Many parents had returned home after leaving their children at school when the landslide happened. It is a very sorry situation because there are many children who have become orphans" (BBC 2014).

The human-elephant conflict in Sri Lanka is another adverse effect of the Anthropocene epoch. Although the civil war is major cause of the issue, deforestation for human settlement, construction of reservoirs and slash-and-burn agriculture has reduced the fallow cropland in which elephants roam. Thus, elephants enter villages because, having lost much of their wilderness habitat, they compete with human communities for land and food. Elephant incursions have increased over the past five years. These animals eat crops, trample fields, smash into houses and sometimes attack people they perceive as threats (Dissanayake 2015).

Children are more susceptible to becoming victims of adults' adverse actions against the environment. The more we harm the environment, the more we produce demand for children's homes because adults are unable to care for their offspring. This may be the result of either parental death due to anthropogenically instigated disaster, or because the removal or destruction of the natural resources dictates that parents can no longer financially support their families. Thus, there is an urgent need to identify strategies to eliminate actions, which harm the environment in order to decrease the demand for institutional care of children.

2.3 Demographic patterns across different provinces

Demographic patterns within Sri Lanka have significance for the identification of ways to enhance children's rights through ensuring respect for all cultures and religions. Sri Lankan society is an ethno-religious mosaic and within the ethnic groups, there are clear religious divisions (Tamil Guardian 2014). The majority of Sri Lanka's population are Sinhalese Buddhists and they predominate in all parts of the country except the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The Tamil Hindu minority lives primarily in the north and east, while the Muslim minority lives largely in the east (War Child 2014), but can be found scattered throughout the country. The Eastern Province is

an ethnically mixed area where Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese are all found in sizeable numbers. Indian Tamils, the descendants of labourers brought from southern India by the British in the 19th century to work on tea and coffee estates, are concentrated in parts of the Central, Uwa and Sabaragamuwa provinces. Sinhalese and Tamil Christians maintain a significant presence in the coastal areas as a result of over 500 years of constant European colonial presence and the consequent conversion to Christianity of significant numbers in these areas. However, Christians can be found in all parts of the country in small numbers. Malays are mostly concentrated in and around the city of Colombo (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014a).

2.3.1 Religious perspectives on children and their rights in terms of the UDHR and the UNCRC

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (United Nations 1948) states that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Nussbaum (2000) identifies this, stating that religion is very important to people and as such it is a major source of identity. She argues that religious capabilities must be respected, but equally, that capabilities which are sometimes suppressed by religions must also be respected. The UDHR (United Nations 1948) has also given a special position to children and emphasises that children are entitled to special care and assistance. Recognising this, the UNCRC (United Nations 1989) is the globally accepted benchmark that guides many countries in the process of protecting the human rights of children. The UNCRC respects the rights and duties of parents in providing religious and moral guidance to their children. Religious groups around the world have expressed support for the UNCRC, which in no way prevents parents from bringing their children up within a religious tradition (UNICEF 2015). Article 14 of the UNCRC decrees that children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practice their religion. At the same time, it recognizes that as children mature and are able to form their own views, some may question certain religious practices or cultural traditions. The UNCRC supports a child's right to examine their beliefs, but it also states that their right to express their beliefs implies respect for the rights and freedom of others. Many articles of the UNCRC manifest the key elements of many religions with regard to child protection. This is unsurprising as the UNCRC is an outcome of the efforts of many individuals and organisations representing many religious and ethnic backgrounds.

The child holds a position of importance within diverse religious teachings. In Buddhist teachings, "Children are the greatest treasure of mankind and the first and foremost teachers of the child are his/her parents" (Sobitha 2006, p. 228). Hindus believe that "Children are humanity's greatest assets" (Ranganathananda 2006, p. 210). The Quran highlights that "Children are a trust and a child is a gift from God and a trust placed in the care of the child's elders" (Shukri 2006, p. 219). Christianity teaches, "One cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven unless one cultivates the qualities of a child" (Fernando 2006, p. 231). Lababidy (1996, p. 7) summarises the situation:

> "The notion of children as 'spiritual beings' is common to most of the world's religions, and has been portrayed in such popular figures as the young Krishna, Siddhartha, and the baby Jesus. Indeed, in many religions the archetype of spiritual purity is symbolized by the innocent child. This perception of the child as innocent and vulnerable is a common motivating factor influencing contemporary religious organizations to focus the application of their spiritual practice on supporting children in difficult circumstances as an ultimate value."

The creation and growth of orphanages and children's homes that are managed by different religious organizations can be identified as an outcome of the perception of the child as innocent and vulnerable and an acceptance of responsibility on behalf of those religions. The UNCRC has taken this into account and Article 20 states that "Children who cannot be looked after by their own family have a right to special care and must be looked after properly, by people who respect their ethnic group, religion, culture and language" (UNICEF 2015, p. 5). Furthermore, the religious influence upon the governance aspects of children's homes reflects the special position given to vulnerable children in different religious beliefs.

The teachings of a broad range of religions has undoubtedly influenced the growth of children's homes. The people of these religions tend to accept orphans as a special group of children. This influences religious institutions to respond to the needs of orphans through building children's homes. Thus, the influence of religion on the governance aspects of children's homes cannot be underestimated.

2.3.2 Historical perspectives of orphanages in Sri Lanka

Since the acceptance of Buddhism around 300 BC; the monarchy, religion, and society were so inter-connected and inter-dependent, that the role played by the Buddhist monks became crucial to sustain the community (Gamage 2015). During the British colonization of Sri Lanka, from 1815 to 1948, the Christian influence created an opportunity for building and managing orphanages. However, the majority of Sri Lankans were Buddhists and the remainder were of the Hindu and Islamic faith. Thus, the running of orphanages by the management of a faith, which was different to that of most children and the community, was challenging. Most of these homes had little contact with society in general and the connections to birth families were minimal (Rathnapala 2006).

Offering one's child to a Buddhist temple is not a new practice for Buddhist communities. Before the establishment of present day school structures, during the colonisation periods, Buddhist monks in their monasteries had provided the education of children. There was at least one temple in every village. Parents sent their children to these temples to learn how to read, write and understand the teachings of Buddhism. Gross (1996) explains that in traditional Buddhist countries, monasteries often served as important educational institutions. In Sri Lanka, according to Gamage (2015) a revolutionary change in education came with the acceptance of the Buddha's idea that every person, whether a man or a woman, had a right to be educated. Gamage adds that important temples established schools, which came to be known as monasteries or *pirivenas* for

higher-level education. During the teaching and training processes, the chief incumbent of the temple would identify the best students and request the parents' permission for them to be accepted into the temple for the betterment of Buddhism and for its dissemination. The parents recognized this as a great honour for the children and themselves. Therefore, they had little hesitation in offering their children to the temple and their inheritance to the chief monk. This tradition has continued since the introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka and still continues in some parts of the country.

During the extensive Portuguese, Dutch and British colonisation period from 1505 to 1948, many lowland Buddhists and Hindus were forced to convert to Christianity and the coastal Moors suffered religious persecution and were forced to retreat to the central highlands (Pereira 2007; Roberts 2004; Wicremasekera 2004). As a result, the Buddhist monastery structure was replaced by the Christian missionary structure. The churches did not find it difficult to keep the best students in their missions and to educate and train them in the values of Christianity. As was the case in Buddhist culture, Christian parents accepted it as a great honour to have one of their children become a priest.

According to Rathnapala (2006), before independence,[10] the church orphanages were received with goodwill by the community, as they relieved the pressures of raising disadvantaged and destitute children. Priests also found that orphanages acted as a means to fit into a new community and bring attention to the Christian faith. However, for Buddhist monks, Christian intervention was a threat to long-standing traditions dominated by their beliefs. Thus, the monks addressed this situation by creating a series of homes named *Asarana Sarana Lama Niwasa* (shelters for destitute children). Gross (1996) adds that Buddhist monasteries also served as orphanages or places for parents to deposit children when they had too many. In both situations, when churches or temples enrolled children in their orphanages or homes for destitute children, the interests of the children were largely ignored. Cultural attitudes driven by strong religious beliefs gave the adults the power to make decisions concerning the children.

The orphanage culture established by the Christian churches ultimately influenced and encouraged communities of different beliefs to initiate their own orphanages. Thus, Buddhist and Hindu temples provided facilities to commence Buddhist and Hindu children's homes and Islamic mosques began to raise Muslim orphans in Islamic children's homes. The 2010 statistics (DPCCS 2010b) indicate that around 25% of all children's homes are still overseen by Christian churches despite the fact that the children therein are from many non-Christian backgrounds. Similarly, Tamil children of Hindu faith are found in children's homes managed by Buddhist temples and vice versa with no access for such children to attend to their particular religious beliefs. In these situations, children's beliefs usually flow with the majority of the children and/or in accordance with the religious belief of

[10] Sri Lanka received independence from Great Britain in 1948.

whoever is providing the children's home. De Silva and Punchihewa (2011, p. 83) explain this situation:

> "Christian based children's homes admit children of other religions. Yet these children do not have the opportunity to practice their religion. Although a new faith is not forced on them, lack of facilities to practice their own religion and the requirement to attend to prayers in the religion of the institution scheduled according to the timetables place the children in a position conducive to the possibility of conversion."

These contexts clearly demonstrate that the multicultural environment within and outside children's homes has a historical perspective that is strongly influenced by the period of colonialism. Thus, it is clear that the formation of Christian orphanages housing non-Christian children and the subsequent formation of such children's homes by other religious faiths was an important feature of an increasingly multicultural country.

2.3.3 Multiculturalism and children's homes

The financial facilitators and caregivers of children's homes have strong links to local and international organizations that have different social, cultural and religious backgrounds. Above all, the policy guidelines on the governance of these homes are literally based on the UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010). This is an intellectual outcome of the contributions of many individuals and organizations of different religions and cultures. Thus, it is inevitable that this complex and multifaceted array of orphanage environments raises many governance issues in terms of different religious perspectives. With the intention of national unity and religious harmony, it would be best if the VCH management could accommodate children irrespective of their cultural identity, religious affiliation and ethnic backgrounds. However, the practical issues of addressing children's needs in terms of language and religious rights explained in UN Guidelines[11] undermine such intentions (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014a). This highlights the need to understand multiculturalism within children's homes.

2.4 Children's rights and the quality of life in institutional care

> "UNICEF has long been aware of the challenges facing voluntary care homes throughout Sri Lanka. These homes house almost 20,000 children, a huge population who have little contact with their parents, and as such rely on the smooth and humane functioning of systemic care for their daily needs" (Roccella 2007, p. 6).

[11] Paragraph 6: "All decisions, initiatives and approaches falling within the scope of the present Guidelines should be made on a case-by-case basis, with a view, notably, to ensuring the child's safety and security, and must be grounded in the best interests and rights of the child concerned, in conformity with the principle of non-discrimination and taking due account of the gender perspective. They should respect fully the child's right to be consulted and to have his/her views duly taken into account in accordance with his/her evolving capacities, and on the basis of his/her access to all necessary information. Every effort should be made to enable such consultation and information provision to be carried out in the child's preferred language (United Nations 2010, p. 3). Paragraph 88: Children should be allowed to satisfy the needs of their religious and spiritual life, including by receiving visits from a qualified representative of their religion, and to freely decide whether or not to participate in religious services, religious education or counseling. The child's own religious background should be respected, and no child should be encouraged or persuaded to change his/her religion or belief during a care placement" (United Nations 2010, p. 14).

Of the 488 voluntary residential homes that provide care to children in Sri Lanka, 80% do not have legal custodians appointed to children while they are deprived of parental care. The lack of legal protection affects more than 15,000 children (Roccella 2007). Furthermore, there are more than 19,000 children living in over 400 children's homes (Roccella 2007). There have been reports of child abuse within orphanages and children's homes in the North (Thambiah 2012). Save the Children (2005) states that children's voices confirm the findings of international research, which shows that, for many children, placement in institutional care has a serious negative impact on development, well-being and basic rights.

These figures do not justify the moral ethics of this multi-religious and diversely cultured state where close to 70% of the population are Buddhists, 15% are Hindus and 15% are variously Islamic, Catholic and Christian. However, the religious and ethical underpinnings have made possible Sri Lanka's ratification of the UNCRC in 1991. This highlights that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding (United Nations 1989).

Conditions within institutions are routinely found to be less than adequate. Out of Sight, Out of Mind (Roccella 2007), a report on voluntary residential institutions for children in Sri Lanka, states that 3 out of 10 homes do not have enough beds, cupboards and running water. Two out of 5 homes do not have a proper library. More than 2,000 children in homes do not attend school regularly and more than 9,000 children are not regularly visited by a doctor. Evidence of this sort highlights the fact that the rights of many children in institutional care are not properly addressed as defined by the UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010) which was adopted with the intention of enhancing the implementation of the UNCRC. Thus, it is important to find out whether the governance aspect of VCHs is based on the UN Guidelines. However, VCHs in Sri Lanka are supposed to govern in accordance with the standards laid out in the General Standards[12]. Moreover, VCHs are supposed to be standardised in terms of the criteria laid down in the Grading Criteria[13].

The human rights issues that prevail in VCHs demonstrate that the standard of care for children in these institutions does not satisfy the General Standards (DPCCS 1991) recommended by the DPCCS. Furthermore, the huge inconsistency of the standard of care among VCHs which was found at the standardizing competition in 2010 reveals that many homes have not been able to comply with the grading criteria for the standardization of children's homes (DPCCS 2010a). This emphasises the relevance of scrutinising these documents against the UN Guidelines.

[12] General standards for promoting the quality of services in voluntary children's homes in Sri Lanka: These General Standards (DPCCS 1991) are a list of norms and values that includes standards relating to: building and environment, food, clothes, furniture, crockery, educational and sports material, management, staff, children's education and reintegration.

[13] Grading Criteria for the standardization of Voluntary Children's Homes in Sri Lanka: The criteria contain herein are adopted from the norms and values stated in the General Standards and are used to standardize children's homes through a competition among children's homes (DPCCS 2010a).

2.4.1 A priori and a posteriori approaches to governance – norms, values and UN Guideline indicators

The Sri Lankan government uses General Standards and Grading Criteria as approaches to govern VCHs. When reviewing the General Standards and the Grading Criteria, it is evident that the norms and the values therein are not based on facts derived from knowledge based personal and societal experiences. The knowledge derived from personal and societal experience of policy makers has been the basis for the implementation of these standards and criteria. Thus, both these approaches belong to a priori[14] approach to governance of VCHs. However, can the policy makers' personal and societal experience alone be used to provide a good approach? Service providers may also have valuable insights, because they play a principal role in the governance aspect of VCHs. Thus, the norms and the values indicated in the General Standards and the Grading Criteria are not necessarily an ideal a posteriori approach to governance of VCHs, as they have not incorporated the knowledge derived from the personal experience of service providers. Thus, both these approaches need to be reviewed and revised to propose an ideal a posteriori approach to govern the VCHs. This research fills this gap as it incorporates knowledge derived from the personal and societal experience of both the policy makers and service providers who are responsible for the policy and the governance aspects of VCHs.

It is also important to consider whose experience counts, how much experience represents knowledge, and whether there is an exception to an a posteriori[15] argument that we have yet to come across (O'Leary 2007). The UN Guidelines are facts based on knowledge derived from personal and societal experiences of policy makers and service providers who are responsible for alternative care of children around the world. It provides a general background to propose an a posteriori approach to governance of VCHs. Thus, there is a necessity to review UN Guidelines to implement an a posteriori approach for governance of institutional care of children. This research addresses this gap as it reviews the UN Guidelines to implement an a posteriori approach for the governance of voluntary children's homes.

2.4.2 Systemic governance based on an a priori and a posteriori approaches

2.4.2.1 Revising norms and values of General Standards through an a posteriori approach

The General Standards constitute seven major guidelines with 86 sub themes and came into effect from 15 October 1991 (DPCCS 1991). The list of general standards laid down in this document does not refer to any of the international covenants related to children's rights. Clause 7.9 states that if no steps are taken to improve the conditions in accordance with general standards, the Department will have to take legal action under the Orphanage Ordinance to close down such homes. This clause reflects the fact that the General Standards have been framed and guided by the Orphanage Ordinance. However, Sri Lanka ratified the UNCRC on the 12 July 1991, 3 months

[14] A priori–knowledge that comes before the facts (O'Leary 2007, p. 3).
[15] A posteriori–knowledge based on facts derived from personal and societal experience (O'Leary 2007, p. 3).

prior to launching the General Standards. The UNCRC contains policies focused on children in general, but does not provide guidelines for alternative care of children specifically. Thus, it is not surprising that the DPCCS did not refer to the UNCRC in the General Standards. It is identified that none of these standards have been derived from the UN Guidelines because no amendments had been made to the original version of the General Standards (DPCCS 1991) after the implementation of UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010). This highlights that the General Standards for promoting the Quality of Services in VCHs have not been influenced by UN Guidelines. This ignores child rights despite the fact that Sri Lanka is a signatory to both the UNCRC and the UDHR. The UN Guidelines state that:

> "Considering that the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, the text of which is annexed to the present resolution, set out desirable orientations for policy and practice with the intention of enhancing the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of relevant provisions of other international instruments regarding the protection and well-being of children deprived of parental care or who are at risk of being so" (United Nations 2010, p.1).

This statement indicates that the UN Guidelines set out orientation for the implementation of the UNCRC. However, UNCRC is an outcome of the UDHR proclaiming that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance[16]. UNCRC states:

> "Recognizing that the United Nations has, in the Universal declaration of Human rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin property, birth or other status" (United Nations 1989, p. 1).

In the preamble of the UNCRC, it indicates that the family is the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children. It further states that the family should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance to fully assume its responsibilities within the community. The UN Guidelines state that "the family being the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth, well-being and protection of children …"

This highlights the significance of reviewing the UN Guidelines when implementing them for the good governance practices of institutional care of children. Therefore, this research is important as it guides the government of Sri Lanka to proclaim the rights of alternative care of children by applying a posteriori governance indicators outlined in the UN Guidelines.

2.4.2.2 Revising norms and values of Grading Criteria through an a posteriori approach

In 2010, the government decided to grade and standardize children's homes in Sri Lanka by implementing Grading Criteria for the Standardization of Voluntary Children's Homes (Grading Criteria). The principal object was to minimise the gap between policy and practice in all children's homes and to enhance the quality of life of institutionalized children (DPCCS 2010a). There are 12

[16] Convention on the Rights of the Child: Preamble, 5th paragraph.

separate grading criteria to be measured against. All criteria have been adopted from the General Standards. As it has been identified that UN Guidelines have not influenced the General Standards, it is evident that this Grading Criteria also has not considered the policies outlined in the UN Guidelines for its implementation. Thus, the Grading Criteria also represent an a priori approach to governance of VCHs and there is a need for it to be upgraded by incorporating indicators from the UN Guidelines.

2.4.3 Application of Social Relations Approach and Human Scale Development

In the Sri Lankan context, the concept of 'institution' can be defined in several ways. The constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka distinguishes three major institutions of the state. They are:

- Legislative power of the people that is exercised by parliament
- Executive power of the people that is exercised by the President
- Judicial power of the people that is exercised by parliament through courts and tribunals

Following (Mugabushaka 2012), I argue that the three form a single institution, which comprise the state. This span the different levels of power that have a direct impact on life chances of all Sri Lankan children and on institutionalised children in particular. This broad definition is in line with Kabeer's Social Relations Approach (SRA) (Kabeer 1991, 2003; Kabeer & Subrahmanian 1996) which argues that the concept refers to 'the household', 'the community', 'the market' and 'the state'. SRA contributes, in particular, to gender and development planning with its approach to institutional analysis (March, Smyth & Mukopadhyay 1999). This research discusses the life chances of young people in VCHs in Sri Lanka of both genders: girls, boys, men, and women. In this exercise, it has been inevitable to talk about children in general and girls in particular; parents in general and mothers in particular; staff in general and female staff in particular. Thus, Kabeer's Social Relations Approach plays an important role in this study, as the purpose of SRA is to identify, analyse how gender inequality is produced, reinforced and reproduced in various institutions, namely: household, community, market and state. On the other hand, a gender aware policy addresses the development and welfare of men and women by acknowledging that both genders have different capabilities and interests (March, Smyth & Mukopadhyay 1999, p. 108). Mervin & McIntyre-Mills (2015) assert that these sources of difference are not arbitrarily taken care of. Instead they are being used to incorporate gender sensitivity in the prevention of institutionalisation, the governance of VCHc and safe reintegration of children into the community by ensuring that appropriate policies are developed to address rights and responsibilities in the household, community, state and market to ensure social justice for women and children by mainstreaming opportunities for them to be treated with dignity and respect. This has been addressed by showing how to make changes by applying policy to provide a voice to women so that they do not have to sell their labour as domestic workers overseas. Whilst this is the long-term

policy, in the short term their children need to be protected by limiting opportunities for abuse by sole parents - often fathers.

There are number of similarities between Max-Neef's (1991, 1992) Human Scale Development and Kabeer's Social Relations Approach (1999). Both strive to address poverty. Max-Neef (1992, p. 212) asserts:

> "If one opts for the systemic assumptions, the development strategy will favour endogenously generated synergic satisfiers. Needs will be understood simultaneously as deprivations and potentials, thus allowing for the elimination of the vicious circle of poverty."

On the other hand, both approaches relate to human development arena. Max-Neef (ibid) states:

> "To integrate the harmonious realization of human needs into the process of development gives everyone the possibility of experiencing the development from its outset. This may give rise to a healthy, self-reliant and participative development, capable of creating the foundations for a social order within which economic growth, solidarity and the growth of all men and women as whole persons can be reconciled."

Both HSD and SRA have been developed with a Third World context in mind. This is also a major reason for why these approaches play a major role in this research. World Bank (2016) briefs the present poverty status of Sri Lanka as follows:

> "Notwithstanding declining poverty, 13 districts comprising 36 percent of the total population remain below the national poverty headcount. In four conflict-affected border districts, poverty rates are at or above 20 percent. While the national unemployment level is low at 4.4 percent, 14 districts report unemployment rates higher than the national average. According to Department of Census and Statistics survey data of 2011, 76 percent of total unemployed are below 29 years of age."

These similarities, as well as their relevance to the Sri Lankan context, I am adapting Kabeer's SRA by combining it with Max-Neef's HSD in this research.

2.5 Addressing wellbeing issues: A systemic approach

McIntyre-Mills (2014b) claims that capacity of service providers needs to be improved to enhance social inclusion outcomes, for those who are marginalized such as Aboriginal Australians. The same applies to institutionalized children in Sri Lanka. There is an urgent need to build capacities, enhance capabilities and explore reintegration opportunities for these children. Institutionalization in VCHs alone is a human rights violation as children have the natural right to be nurtured in a family based setting (United Nations 1989, 2010). Thus, discussions on enhancing wellbeing of children within an institutionalized care setting should lead toward finding them suitable family based permanent alternative care opportunities. For those children who have the potential for reintegration opportunities, their reintegration process should be efficiently processed.

According to McIntyre-Mills (2008, p. 54) "wellbeing is defined as living life in a balanced, harmonious manner, living the life of a caretaker and considering people and the environment". For

a child, living life in an institutional care setting is not balanced. They do not receive individual attention as would occur in a typical family setting, because the required ratio for staff to children is poor in many children's homes. Additionally, many children's homes are overcrowded (Save the Children 2005). Being single-sex homes, children cannot experience family life with regard to gender perspective; i.e. living a life surrounded by siblings and parents. They lack freedom to engage in their personal activities because many homes have daily routines, weekly schedules and monthly programs designed in the best interest of the limited staff members (Jayasooriyya 2008). These children have become performers, as they have to perform in front of philanthropists to acknowledge their generosity. They do not have the freedom of choice to say 'no' to what they do not want or dislike. Their voice is not heard (Roccella 2007). Thus, life in a children's home for a child tends to be lacking. The argument can be made that a child is institutionalized because their life in their natural birth environment is insufficient. However, it is rare that this is the fault of the child. The responsibility generally lies with their parents or other social, cultural, economic, environmental and political factors. Children should not have to pay for the inadequacies of others. Removing a child from one inappropriate place to another does not address this situation. The best way to address this issue might be to find ways to remediate the original family situation in the first instance. Runcie and Bailie (2002) suggest ways to enhance the functioning of housing[17] within communities and their environment (cited in McIntyre-Mills 2008, p. 54). This indicates that wellbeing can only be addressed by means of a systemic approach.

2.5.1 Systemic Governance: the principles of subsidiarity and Ashby's law

> "Systemic governance is based on cycles of construction and deconstruction, based on iterative questioning by the stakeholders who are to be affected by decisions. Thus, it is made and remade in context by filling it with the ideas of people at the receiving end of decisions. Iterative thinking assists in this process. The more inclusive and the wider we can draw the boundaries of participation and protection of "the other", the greater the potential for creating trust and the closer we can move towards social and environmental justice that is supported by norms of international agencies" (McIntyre-Mills 2008, p. 56).

According to McIntyre-Mills (2008), Systemic Governance is conceptualized in terms of the principle of subsidiarity and Ashby's law of socio-cybernetics and the principle of subsidiarity meaning that those who are on the receiving end of the decision should be party to the decision making process. In an institutional care setting, the receiving end of the decision represents the institutionalized children and their parents. Thus, according to the principle of subsidiarity, institutionalized children and their families should be party to the decision making process. This has also been highlighted in the UN Guidelines[18]. However, the General Standards (DPCCS 1991)

[17] Ways to enhance the functioning of housing: Access to water, sanitation, refuse removal, electricity and secure living spaces (ability to lock doors and windows) (McIntyre-Mills 2008).

[18] Paragraph 49: In order to prepare and support the child and the family for his/her possible return to the family, his her situation should be assessed by a duly designated individual or team with access to multidisciplinary advice, in consultation with the different actors involved (the child, the family, the alternative caregiver), so as to decide whether the reintegration of the child in the family is possible and in the best interests of the child, which steps this would involve and under whose supervision (United Nations 2010, p. 10).

have not included children in the decision making process. Policy makers and service providers take decisions on children's behalf. Rhetorically, parents/guardians have been included as parties to the decision making process but many researchers have found that few attend these decision making processes and their voices are infrequently heard (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014a, 2014b; Jayathilake & Amarasuriya 2005; Roccella 2007). As McIntyre-Mills (2008) points out, this must be tested to find out if the approach to participatory governance that honours the different ontologies or ways of seeing, leads to better service delivery outcomes than an approach that tries to impose one viewpoint over others. Tacit lived knowledge of all the participants is considered useful. Thus, this research informs the approach based on the principle of subsidiarity.

Ashby's law of socio-cybernetics stresses that complexity is best addressed through decisions that are informed by those with understanding of the issues and that the participants in policy making should reflect the end users (Ashby 1956). This research highlight the significance of involving institutionalized children and their families in the decision making process. It builds workforce capacity by enabling the service users (institutionalized children and their families) to teach the service providers (Managers, matrons/wardens, POs, CRPOs) about what works, why and how. Edgar (2001); Polanyi (1962) and McIntyre-Mills (2003c, 2006b, 2008) assert that it requires accountability through deliberation to achieve better decision making, based on testing out the ideas not only by experts but by people who have lived experience of issues. This is essential to address the interests of the less powerful such as institutionalized children and their parents. Thus, the reason to engage policy makers and service providers in this PAR is to enable them to understand that wellbeing can only be addressed by means of a systemic approach.

McIntyre-Mills (2006b) emphasises that communication is central to better research and better representation in society and emotions are central to policy making. She adapts Greenfield (2000) and concentrates on ways to expand consciousness or mindfulness by making connections. She asserts that emotions are a major filter of perceptions. Furthermore, we need to acknowledge emotions through expressing them in stories and pictures. This research too adapts this strategy by listening to the stories and using pictures as the basis for consciousness. The more connections we can make, the better our thinking, policy processes and governance outcomes will be (Greenfield 2000; McIntyre-Mills 2006a). A process that helps to enhance connections is adapted from Ashby's (1956) theory of socio-cybernetics and the principle of subsidiarity, i.e. policy needs to be made at the lowest level possible and by those who are to be at the receiving end of the decision. According to McIntyre-Mills (2006), the elegance and simplicity of this argument is that it is based on systemic, feedback logic that tests out ideas in such a way that the experts are those who actually have lived experience of what works, why and how.

2.5.2 The need for better coordination for practical policy outcomes

The number of juvenile offenders, drug addicts and child prostitutes found amongst the ranks of the orphaned, abandoned and destitute children is actually increasing (Ranganathananda 2006). Shukri (2006) notes that the family, which is the basic unit of society, is being threatened by an increasing sense of individualism and as a result, the social structure itself is collapsing due to increasing anti-social elements. He further asserts that abortion, infanticide, illegal adoption, and the commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of children for the pornography trade have become major threats to society. According to McIntyre-Mills and De Vries (2011, p. 3) "Trafficking, cruelty to powerless humans and other animals is prevalent in a globalized economy from which the powerful profit". De Silva and Punchihewa (2011) assert that in some of the children's homes that received funding from European countries and Sri Lankan diaspora in Europe, children looked malnourished. She interprets this situation as malpractice wherein the children who are given shelter to stay are not fed adequately. She raises the issue of what happens to the rest of the money. Lack of transparency in the exact number of children accommodated in institutions, their income and expenditure and the assets shows either the inefficiency of the monitoring mechanisms or the efficiency of the management to keep vital information away from the audit. Whichever way, the information is kept away; it appears that the system facilitates leakage of financial resources meant to provide care for the innocent children. According to De Silva and Punchihewa (2011) many of the children's homes had apparently been established after the period of the civil war and tsunami. They also asserts that substantial funding has been raised in the post tsunami period to establish new institutions and to develop the institutions that were already functioning. In reality, only 4% of the children accommodated in such institutions were affected by conflict. Therefore, it is highly probable that the funds raised thus by marketing the issues of war and tsunami were not fully utilised to benefit the children who were actually affected.

The policy and governance frameworks of institutions for alternative care are informed by the ratification of the UNCRC and implementation of General Standards imposed by DPCCS, establishment of ministerial and departmental structures and service provision of local and international NGOs. However, various studies (Seneviratne & Mariam 2011; Save the Children 2005; Roccella; 2007) have identified that the anticipated outcomes on life chances of children in institutional care are not at all satisfactory. Save the Children (2005) claims that:

> "A major flaw in the system is the lack of coordination between different agencies. There are many different actors in the process from the point of identifying a child or family in need of support and protection. These include the DPCCS, the Department of Labour, the police, the NCPA, and Child Rights Promotion Officers. However, no single agency takes overall responsibility for the child's welfare through the entire process and there is no proper coordination between these agencies."

Whilst acknowledging the above argument I have a different perspective as a service provider of a voluntary children's home in Sri Lanka. My proposal is to better develop coordination among three particular groups: policy makers, service providers and caregivers. These groups have direct affiliation to the children's homes. Thus, I propose an in-depth study to identify the viewpoints of these three bodies of workers. It is anticipated that evaluation of their combined service experiences will have great potential for emerging practical policy outcomes for the good governance of voluntary children's homes.

2.5.3 Transformation towards a user-centric policy design

McIntyre-Mills (2014b) asserts that "the weaving together of stories of what works and why shapes the approach". Participants are invited to reflect on their lives in terms of what they already have and what they still need in order to enhance their wellbeing". In this research, policy officers, service providers and caregivers tell their stories of what works and why. Their stories shape the approach. Two of the questions asked of them were:

- What is your *happiest* experience during your service period?[19]
- What is your *saddest* experience during your service period?[20]

These questions were constructed with the assumption that policy officers' and service providers' happiest experiences are positively correlated with children's wellbeing and the saddest experiences are negatively correlated. Thus, the answers for the happiest experience allows identification of what they perceive as good in order to enhance children's wellbeing and the answers for the saddest experience should identify those factors which undermine children's wellbeing. The more we weave together strands of happiest and saddest experiences the more we find ways to address complex needs by making better decisions to match services and to enhance wellbeing. McIntyre-Mills (2006a) draws on Greenfield (2000) to support this argument, stating that the more connections we can make, the more conscious and mindful we are and the more likely we are to make decisions that will promote our wellbeing and that of those around us.

Mamphela (2012) also stresses the need for local conversations to weave together stories of forgiveness, resilience and hope that are based on what local people have to offer one another, in order to develop their local communities (cited in McIntyre-Mills 2014b, p. 2). This phenomenon relates to the community of institutional care environments as well. Thus, the need for dialogues of policy officers, service providers and caregivers to weave together stories of happiness and sadness are based on what they have to offer one another, in order to develop the life chances of their service users.

[19] This research is built on the assumption that policy officers narrate their happiest and saddest stories to make better decisions to enhance wellbeing of institutionalized children.
[20] This research is built on the assumption that service providers narrate their happiest and saddest stories to provide better services to enhance wellbeing of institutionalized children.

2.6 Life chances

> "Traditionally, life chances has been related to lifestyle choices and the distribution of rewards, however has more recently been used within a social justice perspective informing the question of capabilities and inequalities between social categories" (Manuel cited in Outhred, 2010, p. 99).

Cockerham (2005, p. 12) states that "life chances refers to the opportunities each individual has to improve upon his or her quality of life and is generally correlated with the individual's social situation" (Mugabushaka 2012). Thus, life chances are positively correlated with quality of life. For better life chances of children in institutional care, their quality of life has to be improved. To achieve a better quality of life, quality of care for children has to be of a high standard. Save the Children 2005 states that the quality of care in many establishments, particularly those run by the government of Sri Lanka, was poor. There was inadequate food, poor sanitation; limited health care, poor sleeping arrangements and the emotional needs of children were severely neglected. There were no standards for state institutions. The study, recommended that standards covering the environment and quality of life of children should be developed and a comprehensive system of registration and monitoring implemented. Roccella (2007) notes that if nearly 10% of institutionalized children do not attend school regularly, it is a sad indicator for the future life chances of too many children.

McIntyre-Mills (2014b) argues that the challenge is to address ways to balance social, economic and environmental rights and responsibilities to this generation and the next. This research also addresses the ethical challenge of thinking about the policy consequences for the majority of this generation and the next, whose life chances are sacrificed by a socio-political system that no longer supports a sustainable future. The capabilities approach represents an excellent way of enhancing children's rights, needs and life chances.

2.6.1 Sen's and Nussbaum's capabilities approach as a theoretical framework

Responding to the limitation of human rights language, Nussbaum and Sen discuss the advantages of utilising a capabilities approach when assessing the ability of people to live with human dignity (Outhred 2010). Thus, with regard to building capacities and enhancing life chances of children and young people in institutional care, the capabilities approach is an appropriate theoretical lens. The following definitions highlight this relevancy.

> "Capability is primarily a reflection of the freedom to achieve valuable functioning. It concentrates directly on freedom as such rather than on the means to achieve freedom, and it identifies the real alternatives we have. In this sense, it can be read as a reflection of substantive freedom. Insofar as functioning are constitutive of wellbeing, capability represents a person's freedom to achieve wellbeing" (Sen 1992).

For Sen, the functioning space is the most basic. In other words, according to Sen, the functioning space is something of a platform upon which several other spaces perform their respective duties and interact with one another. Thus, Sen (1993) asserts:

> "We should first note that capabilities are defined derivatively from functioning. In the space of functioning any point, representing an n-tuple of functioning, reflects a combination of the person's doings and beings, relevant to the exercise. The capability is a set of such functioning n-tuples, representing the various alternative combinations any one (combination) of which the person can choose. Capability is thus defined in the space of functioning."

The relationship between capability achievement and agency is one of reciprocal constraint, insofar as the two components are functions of one another. In other words, the degree to which a person can do something is constrained by their internal qualities. One's internal qualities are, in turn, constrained by the degree to which they are able to do something. Further, like functioning, capabilities (the sum of capability achievement and agency) are constrained and enabled by the level of freedom with which they correspond. Capabilities exist at a certain point on a freedom plane.

Given concern for both opportunities as well as obstacles, evaluation demands social, political, and economic arrangements be expressed in terms of whether they enable (opportunities) or constrain (obstacles) particular beings and actions. This asserts capabilities to be all possible doings (i.e. activities) whereas functionings are the possible states of being (not doings) (see Williams 1987).

2.6.2 The UN Guidelines, capabilities approach and poverty

The UN Guidelines paragraph 14 states that "… Removal decisions should be regularly reviewed and the child's return to parental care, once the original causes have been resolved or have disappeared, should be in the best interests of the child … (United Nations 2010, p. 4). Therefore, when reintegrating an institutionalized child, it is important to evaluate the reason for the removal/separation of the child from his/her natural birth environment in the first instance.

Roccella (2007) states that poverty is the principal reason for children being in residential care. Ariyadasa and McIntyre-Mills (2014b, p. 430) also assert that:

> "For many reasons such as economic insecurity, domestic violence and changes to family configurations, a child's family dynamics based on supportive, protective and caring environments have begun to deteriorate. Often, poverty and violence have become the prime causes for a child being placed in an institutional care[21] environment."

This cannot be justified in terms of the policies outlined in the UN Guidelines[22]. As this is likely to leave young children vulnerable, mothers tend to seek institutional care for their children before they leave for work abroad. Save the Children (2005) also claims that well over 30% of children's institutionalization has been reasoned due to mother's foreign employment. These children spend lengthy periods in children's homes and are not treated as dignified beings whose worth is equal to that of other children in stable families. Homelessness or inadequate shelter is also an outcome of

[21] Institutional care: In this PAR, institutional care is mostly referred to as voluntary children's homes.
[22] UN Guidelines paragraph 15: "Financial and material poverty, or conditions directly and uniquely imputable to such poverty, should never be the only justification for the removal of a child from parental care, for receiving a child into alternative care, or for preventing his/her reintegration, but should be seen as a signal for the need to provide appropriate support to the family" (UN 2010, p. 4).

poverty, which has led to institutionalization of children. The factors and the consequences that cause children to become institutionalized can be summarized as follows:

- Being inadequately nourished and unable to live with good health.
- Lacking security against sexual assault and domestic violence, and being unable to have adequate shelter.
- Being unable to move freely from place to place.
- Missing adequate education that enables the children to use their senses, to imagine, think, and reason.
- An inability to purchase goods and services beyond basics.
- Being unable to engage in various forms of social interaction.
- Lacking a good student-life balance to develop valued activities outside the school.
- Being unable to have basic rights such as freedom of speech and religion.

We identify these listed 'incapabilities' as deprivation of capabilities (opportunities). A child may have been removed from his/her natural birth environment and become institutionalized due to deprivation of one or more of these capabilities. If the child is to be reintegrated in his/her family, those missing capacities have to be resolved and transformed into capabilities. Once these inabilities are transformed into capabilities, they are closely related to Nussbaum's (2011) fundamental capabilities that should be inculcated to enhance his/her quality of life. That is, using the capabilities approach lens of Nussbaum (2011) it is necessary to identify which of these factors are holding the child back and fix them.

The capabilities approach asks the question 'What is a person actually able to do and to be?' … When questioning what people are able to do and be, the basic capabilities are divided into ten categories. The basic capabilities are: life; bodily health; bodily integrity; senses, imagination and thought; emotions; practical reason; affiliation; other species, play and control over one's environment (Nussbaum 2011, pp. 33-34). These are considered the innate equipment of an individual that is required in order to develop the more advanced capabilities.

2.6.3 Knowledge Management

Governance of VCHs in Sri Lanka is a good example for participatory governance. McIntyre-Mills (2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2004) emphasise that participatory governance requires working with diverse people and ideas. Likewise, governance of VCHs requires working with policy makers, service providers, caregivers, parents/guardians, children, social workers, philanthropists and many government and non-government bodies and general public. This requires working with different ideas and arguments or discourses. According to McIntyre-Mills, discourse analysis strives to understand patterns in arguments and the rationale underpinning arguments. It strives to understand areas of agreement and disagreement. Knowledge management (KM) (Berger &

Luckmann) can be a process of working with different domains in order to understand the ways in which problems are defined and perceived and to develop ways to solve problems with the participants. It is based on understanding the value of diverse ways of knowing (understanding) for problem solving with the stakeholders.

The research uses narratives and in-depth interviewing as ways of understanding for problem solving with the stakeholders in institutional care environments. Thus, as McIntyre-Mills states, by introducing the notion of KM we can extend the traditional public administration approach from an organizational context to an inter-organizational context.

2.7 Critical systems thinking and the critical systemic approach

Critical systems thinking (CST) is a term recently established in the systems community that refers to a wide range of research and practice (Flood 2001, p. 3). This research is characterised by the five major commitments that Jackson (1991) explains as; critical awareness (surfacing and questioning assumptions and values inherent in any systems design), social awareness (appreciation of social rules and practices), human emancipation (concern for people's wellbeing as well as development of their potential), theoretical complementarity and methodological complementarity.

For one to be considered as an expert, a person should have lived experience. However, in institutional care environments, as McIntyre-Mills (2003b, 2008; 2011) asserts, the experts thinking is linear, systematic and top down and they lack lived experience. The lived experience people know, with great depth about their particular experience. The experts on the other hand, may not have the in depth knowledge about any one situation, but they are in a far better position to generalise because they know a reasonable amount about a whole lot of different situations. Thus, one group provides depth (lived experience people) and the other provides breadth and a far better ability to generalise (the experts). This is why I have chosen to interview both groups of people – to achieve both depth and breadth in my study.

Rosenberg (2002) argues, "Linear logic undermines reason and argues for the need to develop more critical and analytical ability". Thus, when analysing all the different perspectives of diverse stakeholders involved in the system of children's homes, linear thinking or a systematic approach may be problematic. Instead, a systemic, iterative and responsive approach is needed. Therefore, to address the diverse issues pertaining to children's homes in terms of different perspectives, it is important to see the different points of view of the child, the family and the staff whilst striving to ensure that the best interests of the children prevail. This requires a critical and systemic approach. Thus, this research involves not only the decisions made by the experts but also the lived experiences of those who are not experts. Participation of caregivers (matrons and wardens) in the field study who belong to the lowest stratum of the service provision in institutional care

environments have provided systemic insights for this research. Furthermore, exploration of available information from institutionalized children's personal files have enhanced the systemic nature of this study.

2.7.1 The significance of reintegration

> "Removal of a child from the care of the family should be seen as a measure of last resort and should, whenever possible, be temporary and for the shortest possible duration" (United Nations 2010, p. 4).

However, in the Sri Lankan context researchers have found that children undergo long-term institutionalization due to the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the reintegration mechanism. Jayasooriyya (2008, p. 36) emphasises that:

> "Though the DPCCS Standing Orders encourage family reunifications and social reintegration, the rate of reunification/reintegration is negligible… Reunification is extremely difficult due to socio-economic reasons such as difficulty in tracing the guardians of the children, the lack of a conducive family environment and family economy. The probation officers and the child rights promotion officers do not contribute as much as they are required to in facilitating the process … Though institutionalization is intended to be a temporary arrangement, it often becomes the permanent solution."

As Jayathilake and Amarasuriya (cited in Jayasooriyya 2008, p. 36) reveal, "social preparation for integration was unsatisfactory … none of the institutions had activities, plans or programs that looked at equipping the child to either reintegrate with their own family or to return to their own communities".

The significance of reintegration for an institutionalized child has been highlighted in several paragraphs of the UN Guidelines[23]. Paragraph 50 states "The aims of the reintegration and the family's and alternative caregiver's principal tasks in this respect should be set out in writing and agreed on by all concerned". Paragraph 51 states "Regular and appropriate contact between the child and his/her family specifically for the purpose of reintegration should be developed, supported and monitored by the competent body". Paragraph 52 states "Once decided, the reintegration of the child in his/her family should be designed as a gradual and supervised process, accompanied by follow-up and support measures …" (United Nations 2010, p. 10). This emphasizes the importance of reintegration and makes clear that the best place for a child to grow up is under parental care, or failing that, a relative's care. Economic reasons, cultural backgrounds, legal aspects, religious affiliations and physical/mental disabilities are all secondary to the reintegration possibility of an institutionalized child.

[23] UN Guidelines: United Nations, Resolution adopted by the General Assembly [On the report of the Third Committee (A/64/434)] 24 February 2010. Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children set out desirable orientations for policy and practice with the intention of enhancing the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of relevant provisions of other international instruments regarding the protection and well-being of children deprived of parental care or who are at risk of being so.

2.7.2 Existing reintegration approach

The existing mechanism to reintegrate institutionalized children is the placement committee meeting (PCM)[24]. In the Sri Lankan context, DPCCS is supposed to call for placement meetings at least twice a year for regular reviews of reintegration efforts (DPCCS 1991). However, "In 30% of homes, placement committees meet either irregularly or not at all" (Roccella 2007, p. 9). If placement[25] committee meetings are the structured mechanism toward successful re-unification and social inclusion of children in institutional care and if they are held irregularly or not held at all, the reintegration process becomes unstructured and ineffective. The UN Guidelines paragraph 49 dictate that:

> "In order to prepare and support the child and the family for his/her possible return to the family, his/her situation should be assessed by a duly designated individual or team with access to multidisciplinary advice, in consultation with the different actors involved (the child, the family, the alternative caregiver), so as to decide whether the reintegration of the child in the family is possible and in the best interests of the child, which steps this would involve and under whose supervision" (United Nations 2010, p. 10).

According to the General Standards, a placement committee should consist of alternative caregivers and the family, the duty of which is to consider the reintegration procedure of institutionalized children in a home. The General Standards do not include the 'institutionalized child' as a member of the placement committee. It is questionable[26] why the DPCCS has not included this most important party (the child) as a committee member. Thus, the principle expressed in paragraph 49 of the UN Guidelines is not adhered to properly in the Sri Lankan context. It is a clear indication of the malfunctioning nature of children's homes with respect to the re-unification and social inclusion of children in institutional care.

Save the Children (2005) reports that "Around 40 per cent of children had been in institutional care for longer periods than the three year limit of the DPCCS policy". This figure indicates that the reintegration process of institutionalized children is ineffective and that advocacy is needed for the implementation of a successful procedure. Furthermore, Roccella (2007) identifies that 3 out of 10 children's homes do not keep personal files on the children and this problem has affected more than 4,000 children. The reintegration process of children in institutional care is based on the information available in their personal files. If the personal files are non-existent or not available, the reintegration process is made more difficult. The more information available for institutionalized children, the greater the capacity for a successful reintegration process. The law of requisite variety,

[24] PCM: The committee meeting that is held with the intention of reviewing the position of children in the home from time to time and to plan activities oriented toward their future well-being" (Roccella 2007, p. 63).
[25] 'Placement' means to review the position of children in the home from time to time and to plan activities oriented toward their future well-being (Roccella, 2007, p. 63).
[26] Sri Lanka ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1991 and the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children is an outcome of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly. The UN encourages States to consider the Guidelines and to bring them to the attention of the relevant executive, legislative and judiciary bodies of government. UN Guidelines has identified "the child" as an important member of the team that decide whether the reintegration of the child in the family is possible and in the best interests of the child (UN Guidelines Paragraph 49).

which states that the degree of control of a system is proportional to the amount of information available (Ashby 1956; Beer 1995; Heylighen 1992), is applicable to this situation.

2.7.3 Systemic program for reintegration: Application of critical systems heuristics

Systemic governance of children's homes is a major task for policy makers and service providers to ensure that institutionalised children are supported by a program that addresses their complex social needs.

The aim of the participatory action research (PAR) and the systemic program is to prepare these institutionalized children for reintegration by empowering them through education, capacity building and enabling them to have the confidence to participate actively in the wider community. The gap between what actually "is" and what "ought to be" in the existing system, makes clear that this systemic process needs to be facilitated and monitored regularly as part of the ongoing governance process.

The 12 boundary questions of critical systems heuristics (CSH) in the actual and ideal modes (Flood & Romm 1996) have made a platform to inform the process by which plans are implemented and evaluated. By applying Ulrich's CSH, through this study, I explore praxis to address the social justice challenge encountered by institutionalized children in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, as Ulrich (1996, p. 34) states;

> "One of the most important considerations in applying the boundary questions for systematic boundary critique concerns the use of the two suggested modes for evaluating a plan. The 'is' and the 'ought' modes are closely related; only together can they unfold their critical power and drive the process of unfolding a plan's normative and empirical content. The 'ought' mode will usually (but not always) come first, for it provides us with a standard for subsequently evaluating the 'is', i.e., the boundary judgements actually contained in the plan."

Although policy officers grant institutionalization as a solution to address the issues of poverty, health, safety and the issues related to deprivation of parental care of an abandoned child, it is only the beginning of many matters to further address the denial of family integrity. Therefore, it is vital to take every possible chance to keep the child in the natural birth environment and to prevent them from becoming institutionalized.

Regardless of the preference for family based care, social, legal, cultural, environmental, economic and political environments have created a situation where institutional care has become the norm as a solution for children who have been deprived of parental care (Roccella 2007). Thus, both improving institutional care and minimising the need for it in the first place are valuable aims. It is therefore important to implement a "system" to reintegrate the child with their natural birth environment within the shortest possible time. This necessitates identifying the client (service user), the decision maker and the purpose of the design, as well as to explore the involved planners,

experts and their body of knowledge. This study engages Ulrich's approach as the praxis[27] to address the social justice challenges faced by children in institutional care in Sri Lanka.

[27] "Until the rise of science, Aristotle's view of practice (praxis) as a non-scientific domain of ethics and politics was generally accepted. It meant that practice could not be rationalized by means of theoretical knowledge (theoria) or technical skill (poiesis)" (Ulrich 1983, pp. 21-23, p. 157). Praxis: Theory informed practical action.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCESS

3.1 Introduction

In the first instance, this research synthesized a reference list of published and unpublished documents as well as a list of different practices of policy and governance concerns relevant to the life chances[28] of children in institutional care in Sri Lanka. Subsequently, the study was extended by means of fieldwork to collect primary data using a range of questionnaires and interviews.

Field surveys were conducted in all nine provinces of Sri Lanka. Research participants represented the policy makers, the service providers and the caregivers who are responsible for the well-being and protection of the human rights of children in institutional care.

Research participants were as follows,

- Policy makers (provincial commissioners and senior probation officers of DPCCSs)
- Policy officers (probation officers of DPCCSs and child rights promotion officers of divisional secretariats)
- Service providers (managers of NGOs)
- caregivers (matrons and wardens of VCHs)

The life chances of children and young people in institutional care in VCHs are determined by the decisions made by policy makers. The policy officers who act as intermediaries play a major role in the implementation of these policies. Service providers and caregivers who actually practice these policies are charged with the difficult and challenging responsibility of directly protecting children and young people. The opinions and the proposals forwarded by these four groups of people, based on their experiences, will all have weight in determining the life chances of children and young people who are in alternative care institutions. Therefore, the recruitment of these four groups as participants for the study was based on the aim of using their feedback to produce a set of guidelines for the process of policymaking and governance of children's homes informing:

- Policy makers in timely and appropriate policy making,
- Policy officers in translating these policies into practice,
- Service providers in interpreting these policies into guidelines,
- Caregivers putting these guidelines into practice.

The guidelines that will emerge as an outcome of this research will ensure that the children in Sri Lankan voluntary children's homes have the standard of care and life chances they deserve, in

[28] "Life chances refer to opportunities in life experienced by people as a result of a host of demographic, socio-cultural, political and economic factors" (McIntyre-Mills 2006, p. 389).

order for them to reach their full potential and to integrate into society as effective and productive young citizens when they attain maturity and leave care.

3.2 Research Methodology: participatory action research (PAR)

My research is characterised by the strong involvement and degree of participation of members of institutions that are responsible for institutional care of children. Hence, my research method can be described as participatory action research (PAR) as explained by Whyte, Greenwood and Lazes (1989) and Whyte (1991):

> "In participatory action research, some of the people in the organization or community under study participate actively with the professional researcher throughout the research process from the initial design to the final presentation of results and discussion of their action implications. PAR thus contrasts sharply with the conventional model of pure research, in which members of organizations and communities are related as passive subjects, with some of them participating only to the extent of authorizing the project, being its subjects, and receiving the results."

The research focus is centred on Sri Lankan institutionalized children. However, there is insufficient information available about these. Therefore, this PAR uses expert consultation as sources of data by interviewing and sending questionnaires to the policy makers and the service providers.

This PAR also uses exploratory research[29] methods. According to Sarantakos (1998) exploratory research aims to explain social relations or events, advancing knowledge about the structure, process and nature of social happenings, linking factors and elements of issues into general statements and building, testing or revising a theory. Exploration is a process that is a central element of qualitative research[30] and has been useful for developing an accurate picture of the research subjects of this PAR.

This PAR largely employs qualitative investigations to analyse the information collected during the study in order to assess and evaluate findings and arrive at valid, reasonable and relevant conclusions. Narrative and in-depth interviews have been employed for data collection, the responses of the respondents are recorded on paper and subsequently studied and analysed.

McIntyre-Mills (2003a, 2008) on action research and Denzin and Lincoln (1994) on auto-ethnography provided the impetus for me to draw on my own life experiences and work with others in order to address the area of concern.

[29] Exploratory Research: "Here, research aims at explaining social relations or events, advancing knowledge about the structure, process and nature of social events, linking factors and elements of issues into general statements and building, testing or revising a theory".
[30] Qualitative Research: This type of research refers to a number of methodological approaches, based on diverse theoretical principles, employing methods of data collection and analysis that are non-quantitative, and aiming for exploration of social relations, describing reality as experienced by the respondents.

3.3 Purpose of action research

When identifying the purpose of action research (AR), Burns (2007) subscribes to Reason and Bradbury's (2001, p. 2) assertion that:

> "A primary purpose of AR is to produce practical knowledge that is useful to people in the everyday conduct of their lives. A wider purpose of AR is to contribute through this practical knowledge to the increased well-being – economic, political, psychological, spiritual – of human persons and communities, ..." (Burns 2007, p. 14).

This PAR produces practical knowledge for policy makers and service providers who are responsible for institutional care of children in terms of policy and governance perspectives of VCHs. This knowledge will be useful to policy makers and service providers in the everyday practice of dealing with institutionalized children. Through this practical knowledge, they can contribute their service to the increased well-being – economic, political, psychological, and spiritual – of institutionalized children and their communities. Thus, this PAR is in line with both the primary purpose and a wider purpose of AR.

According to Burns (2007) many contemporary action research facilitators, particularly those associated with the PAR tradition, such as Greenwood and Levin (1998) and Kemmis (1993), advocate a direct link between AR and social change. (Greenwood & Levin 1998, p. 6), assert that:

> "…action research is a form of research that generates knowledge for the express purpose of taking action to promote social change and social analysis. AR aims to increase the ability of the involved community or organization members to control their own destinies more effectively and to keep improving their capacity to do so."

Another purpose of this PAR is to increase the ability of the institutionalized children to control their destinies more effectively and to keep improving their capacity to do so. Power relations currently do not reflect such a situation. In the majority of cases, children's and/or their parents' voices are ignored and/or neglected. For example, in many institutional care environments, children are not involved in placement committee meetings, parents are restricted in meeting with their children and thus the best interests of children are overlooked. Furthermore, the power gap among policy makers, service providers, caregivers and service users is wide. This PAR explicitly produces policy proposals to disrupt existing power relations for the purpose of democratising the society within children's homes. This is a key feature of AR (Greenwood & Levin 1998).

As the principal researcher, I have a background of acting as a service provider to a VCH for 5 years. This is the basis of my need to foster an inquiring approach to institutionalized children (see auto-ethnography section). This research concerns issues in terms of policy environments and governance practices of VCHs. My position, representing both the researcher's role and that of the service provider has equipped me with the ability to enquire face-to-face with others into issues of mutual concern. Addressing the human rights issues within VCHs requires systemic strategies to approach social, cultural, economic, political and environmental networks. Thus, this PAR aims to

create a wider community of inquiry. AR may be characterised work as first, second and third person AR that Reason and Bradbury (2001) describe this in the following ways:

> "First person AR addresses the ability of the researcher to foster an inquiring approach to his or her own life. Second person AR addresses our ability to inquire face-to-face with others into issues of mutual concern. Third person strategies aim to create a wider community of inquiry" Flood (2001).

Jacob (1987, 1988) identified six 'domains' of qualitative methodology (cited in Sarantakos 1998, pp. 47-8). Of the six, this PAR belongs to cognitive anthropology" which "studies people's perspectives as organised in schemata and categories of meanings and inter-related to each other; it employs in-depth interviewing".

This research is not merely undertaken as an outsider's view of policy and governance issues of institutions for alternative care. It is also informed by my own life experiences, which I gained through managing my own children's home. Thus as Ellis and Bochner (2000) proposes, I started by writing a draft of my story thinking of it as making retrospective field notes on my life. I included all the details I could recall. Furthermore, I have written most of this chapter in the first person as I was encouraged by the words of Arthur P. Bochmer in Denzin and Lincoln (1994) where he states that author's personal feelings and thoughts should not be omitted, and they should be encouraged to write academic articles in the first person. He further asserts that:

> "By not insisting on some sort of personal accountability, our academic publications reinforce the third-person, passive voice as the standard, which gives more weight to abstract and categorical knowledge than to the direct testimony of personal narrative and the first person voice."

I have an ongoing connection with other children's homes as well as close acquaintance with officials concerned with policy making and governance practices. I have been both a practitioner and a manager within a VCH, and I am still a service provider for a VCH. The research participants of this study are policy makers and service providers for VCHs. I am part of this group. Thus, this study involves auto-ethnography as a method of collecting and analysing empirical materials throughout the research.

3.4 Auto-ethnography: Reflexivity issues of the researcher

> "Auto-ethnography provides an avenue for doing something meaningful for yourself and the world…" (Ellis & Bochner, 2000).

Reflexive ethnography is an approach associated with auto-ethnography[31]. In reflexive ethnographies, the researcher's personal experience becomes important primarily for how it illuminates the culture under study. Reflexive ethnographies range along a continuum from starting

[31] The term auto-ethnography has been in circulation for at least two decades. Although anthropologist Karl Heider referred in 1975 to the Dani's own account of what people do as autoethnography, David Hayano (1979) usually is credited as the originator of the term. Hayano limited the term to cultural-level studies by anthropologists of their "own people", in which the researcher is a full insider by virtue of being "native," acquiring an intimate familiarity with the group, or achieving full membership in the group being studied (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 739).

research from one's own experience to ethnographies where the researcher's experience is actually studied along with other participants, to confessional tales where the researcher's experiences of doing the study becomes the focus of investigation (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 740).

Mugabushaka (2012) states that to begin critical ethnography, the researcher should honour his/her past and present personal life experiences and accumulated knowledge that he applies to the research, because there are always unconscious reasons that pull the researcher in particular directions. However, for me, the reason to conduct research on 'life chances of children and young people in institutional care' was always conscious and has never changed direction. I did know what disturbing knowledge I had about the institutionalized children and how it influenced my wish to be an advocate for children and their rights. It has been through the recall of my personal experiences since childhood as well as those of my life experiences while managing a children's home, that I realized institutionalized children's rights were my ethical responsibility.

My decision to do research in terms of the life chances of institutionalized children was based on a number of factors. These are discussed in detail in three stages as follows;

- Early reflexivity issues
- Later reflexivity issues
- Critical reflexivity issues

My personal life experiences gathered by being closely acquainted with children's homes since childhood are described in the early reflexivity issues section. My educational, social and professional background that underpins my research career as an action researcher is discussed in the later reflexivity issues section. In the critical reflexivity issues section, I discuss my managerial background as the service provider to a children's home initiated by me.

3.4.1 Early reflexivity issues: My first encounter with a children's home

As cub scouts, we were honoured by being awarded different badges and stars for the varying skills we developed. One particular badge was awarded for those who engaged in voluntary work at hospitals, elders' homes or children's homes. I selected children's homes and one day, I visited a boy's home where there were over a hundred boys institutionalized in a hostel dormitory-like atmosphere. That was my first visit to an institution of this nature and at a glance for me; it looked like fun to live with such an overwhelming number of siblings in one 'home'. The boys there were aged between five and nineteen years and thus I sensed their ages were much the same as my own family. I am the youngest of five siblings' four boys and a girl. My sister[32] was 11 years old, my brothers were 18, 16, 13 and I was 8. Therefore, the children's home environment was in some manner similar to my family structure but over 20 times greater in size. What I liked most about

[32] My sister suffered Non-Hodgkin lymphoma and died in September 2012 while I was engaged in my data survey in Sri Lanka.

this children's home was that there were about 30 children younger than I was. As four older brothers always ruled me in my family, I preferred to have younger ones who could be nurtured under my guidance. The particular home that I visited as a volunteer was a Voluntary Children's Home.

This was the beginning of my association with children's homes. However, as a child who was born and brought up in a family environment, my second and third visits to the home exhausted me with the unspoken truth of the life and behaviour of children within the home. I was puzzled by the dirtiness of the clothes, the amount of crying and the lack of care and assistance given to the children. A few boys were fighting each other like dogs, rolling on the dirty, dusty and filthy ground. Sometimes an older boy appeared and slammed into all the fighters. Suddenly the rivals became friends and blamed, shouted and attempted to hit the older one who intervened. I was astonished to see the ex-fighters having their arms around their shoulders only a matter of few minutes after their battle. That type of behaviour was unbelievable to me. If I had a fight with one of my brothers, I would not have talked to him for at least 4-5 days!

My Cub Scout group, which consisted of six cubs, was engaged in cleaning the dining room. Later we attended to help the youngsters tidy and arrange their beds and clothes. Much to my disbelief, they did not have a reading table of their own, or a shelf to keep their books, nor a wardrobe to hang and store their clothes. Two boys shared one clothes rack placed between two beds. Muddy, damp and torn shoes were hidden under the beds.

Mosquito nets had been supplied but they were unwashed and practically in tatters. I found that they were not transparent anymore because of the layers of dust that had collected on them over the years. It seemed to me that the mosquito nets were arranged there just to separate the closely packed beds rather than protecting them from mosquitos. Of course, the net must have provided them with a lonely, dark world and some kind of privacy when they were beneath them. I had asthma and was allergic to dust during my childhood and therefore my mother used to wash the mosquito net frequently. Cleaning the net was a natural habit and a basic practice in my home. It seemed to me that none of those basic principles was practised in the boys' home. Furthermore, a mosquito net was essential in those days as Kurunegala, my hometown, had a very high number of malaria cases but in this children's home, there were no mosquito repellents nor coils to be had.

The wet and damp towels of most of the boys had been just thrown onto their beds and the odour of them was almost unbearable. Our Scout Mistress summoned them all and asked the boys to go outside and to hang them over the clothesline in the sunlight. Then she lectured and stressed how important it was to dry them on the line and, of course, to wash them regularly.

Our group had to volunteer at the children's home for six consecutive weeks to complete the badge requirements. After the second week, the volunteers decreased from six to four until finally there were only two of us who had completed all six weeks. I almost ceased volunteering one day when

I had to answer the call of nature. I went to the toilet with nose pinched between thumb and forefinger. I was horrified that most of the cubicles had no doors and the ones, which did have, had big holes in them. They were just wooden pieces that leant against the doorframes as a signal of one's usage. Anybody could easily peep through and witness the most common happenings in a toilet. There was no running water inside and a pail had been provided to fetch water from a tank just outside the toilets. I collected water but when about to use it, I saw millions of mosquito larvae in the pail. As the water tank had not been cleaned for ages, it was a source of mosquito infestation for the boys' home. Volunteering at the boys' home was a stunning experience. If it were not for my thirst to win the badge and the altruistic guidance of cub scouting, I doubt if I would have completed the six weeks. The atmosphere of the boys' home was sickening and overwhelming with incidents that were foreign to us who had been brought up in a more typical family environment.

On the fifth day of my volunteering, I encountered a totally new experience. On that particular day I was just about to finish my task when a group of about 10-12 people visited the home. It seemed to be an extended family with father, mother, grandma, grandpa and children. They had brought afternoon tea with confectionary for all the boys in the home. The boys were called into the dining room. At that time, they were well mannered, nicely behaved and kept silent. They came in line one after the other, the smallest one in the front of the queue. All of them sat around the dining table each one having a plate of biscuits, a bun and a glass of orange juice. I, too, was seated as one of them. The young mother and father appeared with an infant about aged 2. They were holding a huge fruitcake. Everyone was singing 'happy birthday' and it was the birthday of that little one.

I still remember the vote of thanks delivered by one of the elder boys for the generous thoughts of the family who brought the beautiful food. After cutting the cake and enjoying it so much, the boys went out to play. I stepped into the warden's room to say good-bye and thank him. When I entered, I saw boxes of notebooks, pens and pencils, soaps and some boxes of dried foods in addition to the cake and confectionaries for the birthday celebration. They were all donations for the boys' home and the warden was making a list of the materials they had brought. That was my first experience of such a party at a home and I was determined to discuss this with my parents and have my birthday celebrated at the boys' home.

My early experience affected me immensely. I wanted to have a continuous relationship with children's homes as a whole. I started celebrating my birthdays at the boys' home and later, after some years, we changed the venue to visit other children's homes as well. After being promoted as a scout during my scout career, I was heavily involved with volunteering at the boys' home. With the passage of time, I learnt to tolerate the hardships of children's homes settings, and, gradually I familiarized myself with the system. I have no doubt that this close acquaintance with both boys'

and girls' children's homes, paved the way to accept challenges and undertake the risks of managing a girls' home of my own; and later on, engage in research in the field.

My first case study: Sampath's story

As a volunteer during Cub and Boy Scouting, the atmosphere at children's homes showed me the miserable lonely life that children experience being deprived of parental care, permanently or temporarily. I witnessed the hardships that they are subject to, both physically and emotionally. I thought they could only be helped with our compassionate and material support. One incident I recalled at a scout jamboree illustrated to me the tragedy behind the story of an institutionalized child. This was my first case study with relevance to a boy from a children's home.

The children's home, with which I was closely acquainted, had a Scout troop. I belonged to my college Scout troop. Our troops met at many Scout jamborees. I was a popular character as a stilt walker in many jamborees. In one, I was getting myself ready tying the stilts on for an evening show at a campfire.

'Sampath' from a boy's home was helping me. I had known Sampath for 2-3 years, as I had been a volunteer in his home and as a scout brother from the same district. At that time, I was 15 years old and he was about 12. While he was helping me, I noticed tears welling from his eyes. When I asked why, he started telling his life story. According to Sampath, when he was nine, his alcoholic father disappeared, leaving Sampath, his sister and his mother behind in their rented house. They had undergone a dreadful period since then. They had been totally dependent upon the daily wage that Sampath's father earned through temporary labour work. However, his mother looked after them, doing as many ad hoc jobs as she could find in the neighbourhood.

Every day Sampath walked 2km to attend school. After his father's disappearance, he stopped going to school two or three days per week because his mother had to find work for their livelihood. When his mother found work, Sampath stayed home and looked after his sister. Since his mother desperately wanted Sampath to continue his schooling, she found work at night (so Sampath innocently believed). So then, Sampath used to take care of his sister at night and went to school during the day. One day, his mother came home with a man who took the father's place. He, too, did not have a permanent job and life became terrible again.

According to Sampath, most of the time, both his mother and stepfather left home at night and returned home long after midnight. He again became the babysitter for his sister. Domestic violence became a daily occurrence at home, and Sampath fled, determined not to return. However, on the same night, the police caught him and the following day his mother was brought to the police station. He knew nothing about what was said between his mother and officials, but ultimately he became an inmate of the boy's home where I met him.

12 years later Sampath, aged 24, appeared at my front door. He said he was doing well and settled as a storekeeper in a garment factory. He wanted me to lend him 2,000 Rupees to pay the balance of his newly rented apartment. He promised me that he would settle the loan within two months. I had no second thoughts about lending him the money - his appearance alone was worth millions to me. He neither appeared again nor settled my loan.

A few months later, when I celebrated my birthday at the boys' home, I asked the warden about Sampath and told him about his sudden visit to my home. I was astonished by the warden's reply. My story was not a new one to him. Sampath had made it a habit to visit people he knew (especially the philanthropists of the boys' home) and borrow money. According to the warden, Sampath was not a bad boy at all. He behaved very well in the home and never quarrelled with others. He was above average in his studies but could not get through his ordinary level examination. When he left the boys' home at the age of 19, he had not mastered any vocational skills for suitable employment. However, when he visited the home he always brought a big cake or something for everyone there and pretended he was doing very well. Yet the warden had sensed Sampath was unemployed, because he had received complaints from a few people whom Sampath had known during institutionalization. Sampath had borrowed money from them but never settled his debts. According to the warden, Sampath was still continuing to borrow money from people.

I still wonder what Sampath is doing now? My experience with him has in many ways shaped my becoming an action researcher in the field of the life chances of children and young people in institutional care. There are many Sampaths who have been deprived of parental care or who are at risk. They have been victimized and are paying for the ills of their parents and the society.

Sampath's story clearly indicates the need for the introduction of the following strategies to children's homes responsible for institutional care of children:

- Appropriate training for staff to identify the needs of young people.
- Appropriate supervision during the institutionalization period of children and young people.
- An effort to strengthen the bond between institutionalized children and their parents.
- Structured reunification processes and precise reintegration procedure for institutionalized children.
- Vocational training and skill development identifying individual pursuits of institutionalized children.
- Supervision strategies after reintegration.

Association with children's homes as volunteer and experiencing case studies of many young people who, like Sampath, have experienced a range of challenges and disadvantages has driven my research focus. My experiences emotionally and rationally prompted me to take up the challenge of managing a children's home. These life experiences can be regarded as the

beginning of my reflexive journey, providing me with the courage to engage in research on the policy and governance perspectives of voluntary children's homes.

3.4.2 Later reflexivity issues

As the researcher, my intermediate reflexivity issues can be identified as effects of my educational upbringing, impact from my extracurricular activities, voluntary/community engagements and professional background. In the next chapter, I identify these involvements encompassing numerous fields. Since my youth, I have experienced diverse educational and cultural opportunities, locally and internationally, which have greatly influenced my intellectual and social development. These experiences have undoubtedly inspired me in creating and running a model children's home and have provided impetus to undertake research in the same area. The following is an overview of my intermediate reflexivity issues.

As a student, I won the President's Scout Parchment, led the school band and the debating team, captained the basketball, table tennis and karate squads, and chaired the English Literary Association. Academic and non-academic qualifications provided me the honour of representing Sri Lanka with an AFS intercultural scholarship to New Zealand for a period of one year in 1985. This was my first exposure to a foreign country and it changed me in a very positive manner and stimulated my leadership qualities. In 1986, I was elected Head Prefect, leading 4,000 students in my school.

As an enthusiastic table tennis and basketball player and karate practitioner, I recognized the importance of sports and its contribution as a universal language towards breaking barriers that exist among nations and races. My voluntary effort to introduce table tennis to my province as the inaugural President of the North Western Province Table Tennis Association has paved the path to produce thousands of young athletes. Furthermore, I volunteered to coach karate continuously for five years and managed to have this sport recognized as a university game throughout the universities of Sri Lanka. Subsequently, being the founder chairperson, coach, and umpire of the North Western Province Table Tennis Association and the chief instructor of Renbukan Karate-do in Sri Lanka, have all helped me contribute to our community.

I graduated with a Bachelor in Quantity Surveying from the Department of Building Economics of the University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka. My career in sports prompted me to change my educational focus to health and physical education from building economics. I received my Masters of Education from the faculty of Health and Physical Education in the Tokyo Gakugei University in Japan. I found I could apply many of the theories of building economics to physical education. For me, building economics teaches us how to construct a stable building whereas in physical education, it is the creation of a steady human character. My understanding about those two areas has greatly contributed when managing the children's home that I initiated. That is, I knew that the

well-being of institutionalized children has a strong relationship with provision of infrastructure facilities to such institutions as well as the quality of health and physical education of children.

In addition to a Diploma in Japanese Language, I mastered reading Braille with the intention of serving the visually impaired people of Sri Lanka. My research study for my bachelor's degree, was titled, "The Buildings for the Blind" where I have made many proposals for architects and financial managers to take into consideration for a barrier free atmosphere of buildings on behalf of the visually impaired.

After my high school studies, I worked as an assistant English teacher in a very remote village in the North Central Province in Sri Lanka. After my bachelor's degree, I was appointed as a Building Economics lecturer in the Kurunegala Technical College. I have had work experience as a Physical Education lecturer in Peradeniya University and as a visiting lecturer for Japanese Language in Moratuwa University.

I have striven to learn many fields to the best of my ability. It has enabled me to create the Institute for Languages, Sports and Child Education, making the most of my expertise. The aim is to serve my country in every possible manner, extending my leadership to produce youngsters, skilful in languages and sports but also educated in the ethical values necessary to pursue a successful life. This institution is presently named Sputnik International Education Centre (SIEC) and has been registered under the Tertiary and Vocational Education Commission in Sri Lanka.

My many years' experience of working, studying and fundraising overseas have enabled me to develop the professional networks to establish the Sputnik International Organization (SIO) with my colleagues in Japan. The vision of SIO is "achieving international cooperation through educational and cultural exchanges". In the year 2001, I established Sputnik International Sri Lanka Organization (SISLO) with a collection of my local and foreign colleagues to answer the diverse needs of the public and society. SISLO has been registered as a social welfare organization under the Ministry of Defence in Sri Lanka.

The establishment of SISLO is a result of my long-held dream to assist young people of Sri Lanka to realize their dreams in a very harmonious but challengeable manner. My local and international experiences have led me to realize that the youth of Sri Lanka have missed many opportunities, having had few leaders with international exposure to guide achievement of their expectations in a proper, appropriate and accurate manner. To fill this gap as a young adult, I decided to take the challenge to educate and guide the young generation to actualize their potential through confidence, building respect of others and respect by others.

Of the 5 major welfare services carried out by SISLO, Sputnik Girls Home can be regarded as the one with key concerns in every aspect of social, cultural, political and economic issues. Other projects include a library service to create and enhance the reading interest of people; a

scholarship fund to support economically handicapped children with their studies; *greenbird* activities to educate the public on the importance of preserving nature; and the cultural centre to generate and enhance global understanding among different cultures. Need for the establishment of a home for a group of marginalised, vulnerable, deprived, disadvantaged group of children (especially girls) had to be catered for, not only because of my individual interest, but also because of the society's needs.

3.4.3 Critical reflexivity issues

The major reflexivity issue that drove me to undertake the research was my life experience that I gained through managing a children's home. In the following section, I reveal the story of my children's home from its inception up until the achievement of the best children's home award and thereafter.

A number of factors persuaded me to set up a girls' children's home and to conduct it as a project under the Department of Probation and Child Care Services (DPCCS) of North Western Province (NWP). The major reason was provided by the Commissioner of DPCCS of the NWP, who informed me of the urgent need for more places to accommodate female orphans, and the abandoned and destitute living in the existing overcrowded children's homes. The commissioner explained that whilst there were vacant beds in the boys' children's homes, the girls' homes were overcrowded (See Table 5). He added that it is easy to find sponsors who wish to support and oversee the boys' homes, because they were deemed less challenging and did not carry the added risk and responsibility of nurturing girls through to maturity, especially when socializing them is a greater task as they get older. Regardless of gender difference, a vulnerable child should have equal rights to be looked after by his/her own society. Children in institutional care are a marginalized, vulnerable group, deprived of parental care, irrespective of their gender. For girls the situation is particularly dire.

I fully understood what the commissioner explained to me because I had been involved with several children's homes during the last three decades and this meeting persuaded me and firmed my resolve to accept the challenge and provide one answer to a serious situation. That was to establish a girls' home. At this point, I determined to set up and conduct the children's home in such a manner that it would be an example to other children's homes in Sri Lanka. The following data interpreted from the 2005 statistics of the DPCCS-NWP would convince the reader and justify the commissioner's request and my acquiescence to it.

Table 3.1 2005 statistics of North Western Province children's homes.

Orphanage type	Number of children's homes	Capacity	Number of residents	Comments
Female	11	400	432	32 overcrowded
Male	16	458	344	114 vacant beds

Table 3.1 very clearly indicates that when there are 114 vacant beds in the boys' homes, the girls' homes are overcrowded by 32 charges. Further, the ratio between the number of female orphanages to male orphanages (11:16), reveals that there is much more potential to find sponsors for boys' homes than girls' homes (DPCCS 2005).

In Sri Lanka, it is mostly Buddhist and Hindu temples, Anglican and Catholic churches and Islamic mosques, which are in charge of children's homes. The public has great respect for, and reliance on, monks, gurus, priests, bishops, and other religious leaders. Therefore, well-wishers tend to fund these temples, churches or mosques, rather than private organizations as they believe the funds they provide are used most efficiently by these religious groups. In general; monks, fathers, brothers and Anglican clergy are male and they keep no close relationships with females. This has also been a reason for boys' homes to be more numerous than girls' homes. There are girls' homes run by female monks and nuns but these are comparatively small in number compared with boys' homes. Therefore, in addition to the issue of less risks and responsibilities discussed earlier in this chapter there are social and cultural attitudes, which have favoured boys' homes.

The story of my children's home (Sputnik Girls' Home), helps provide a clear understanding of the social, cultural and economic challenges of this research project. Here, I have elaborated on the influence of social and cultural attitudes with regards to the idea of a girl's children's home, how I overcame the personal challenges, the various aspects of the management of the children's home; the purpose of the children's home and, policy and governance perspectives of the home.

The principal reason behind my decision to carry out a research study on "life chances of children and young people in voluntary children's homes was the achievement of the best children's home award in the province for the year 2010. The result of the above competition showed a huge inconsistency among the existing children's homes. While the best home had received 88 points out of 100, another home had received only 8 points under the same criteria. Institutionalized children were subjected to different standards of care, which could not be justified in terms of the children's rights outlined in the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (United Nations 2010). The life experience that I obtained while managing my own children's home assisted me to explore the reasons behind the inconsistency seen across children's homes. The managerial skills that led to the creation of a model children's home showed me the current necessity of my intervention to enhance the life chances of young people in children's homes in Sri Lanka. The following section unfolds the history of my children's home, how it came into being and its management structure. It helps a reader to understand the importance of my research study and positions me as an action researcher in this study.

Mostly, ideas emerge in one's mind, but to expedite them, one needs courage integrated with the support of others, especially when the idea is a project like a children's home. The success of the project and the positive outcomes depend upon the consistency of effort of the people involved.

For this to happen, the people around the initiator should have a clear understanding of the project as well as selfless thoughts and sacrifice to withstand barriers that hinder the sustenance of the project objectives. It is important to mention the personal and general issues that I encountered with the people around me when I raised the possibility of establishing a girls' children's home. From discussions with family, friends and staff, several issues became apparent:

They had issues for and against my leadership towards establishing a girls' children's home for the following reasons:

- It is a socially valued project, but it could harm my good name.
- People would extend their fullest cooperation, but it would involve endless commitments and it would overshadow my leisure and times to be spent with my family.
- Children's home could be managed by public donation, but I am too young to accept a challenge of such nature (I was 38 at that time).

My wife's, parent's, relations', friends' and staffs' opinions and questioning were very valuable and highly respected. Every opinion was justifiable opinions that were discussed and addressed from their perspectives.

The main concern of the people around me was that managing a children's home for girls could damage my reputation. This indirectly implies that many people who run children's homes have damaged their names. News about children's homes is frequently reported on TV, radio or newspapers. Cases regarding maltreatment of children, child abuse, flogging, sexual assaults, misuse of finance and illegal adoption are common. If found suspect, whoever the person is behind these cases - the manager, management or the matron/warden - is answerable, and may be jailed. Since child abuse is a criminal offence in Sri Lanka, most of the above cases are alleged abusers. If incarcerated and then later acquitted on all charges, it might not make much difference to the damage already done to the names of the plaintiffs due to negative publicity on mass media in advance. An incident of such nature could easily devastate a traditional family like ours or could wreak havoc on a family's stability. In other words, I would have to spend much time in all aspects of good governance of the children's home and it would eventually reduce my time for being with my family. Existing children's homes are mostly overcrowded and demands for more orphanages have become a common issue. This verifies that once established, a girls' home becomes a continuing project with endless effort. All these justify my family and friends 'arguments related to my leadership in establishing a children's home, that the involvement would have no ending to commitments.

Most of the infrastructures for children's homes are from donations of old houses from the elderly. The common practice in Sri Lanka is that old couples on their retirement, whose children have left home and have no intention of returning, assign their houses to the management of children's homes or retirement homes under their patronage. These couples usually have wealth invested in

banks and can fund the running cost of the children's home from the interest generated against their assets in the bank. As my family is aware of this general practice, they were astonished with my idea of managing a children's home. One reason is that I was too young to perform such a project and the second was that I possessed no assets.

My strong will strengthened my decision to establish a shelter for deprived girls while respecting my family and friends' concerns. Finally, my family, friends and the staff agreed to extend their fullest cooperation for the establishment of the children's home to bring succour to a marginalized group of children who have been penalized for no fault of theirs but for the ills of their parents and society. Furthermore, we were determined to establish and conduct the home in such a manner that it would become an example to other children's homes in Sri Lanka.

The documentation process with the authorities concerned was begun along with the first phase of fund raising activities to purchase the land for the children's home. Once the land was bought, the second phase of the fund-raising commenced and simultaneously the construction too, was begun to expedite the process.

Initially, the number of girls was limited to 20 so as to maintain the quality of services and to avoid an unforeseen crisis due to inexperience and potential discontinuation due to insufficient flow of funds from well-wishers and donors. Further, the cultural behaviour of society too had to be addressed, as some societies are immune to a children's home culture. On November 16th, 2007, the Sputnik Girls' Home (SGH) opened as the 37th children's home in the NWP of Sri Lanka with facilities to provide 20 girls with shelter, food, education and security.

We constructed the home in accordance with the General Standards for promoting the Quality of Services of Children's Homes imposed by the DPCCS. It is built with a lounge, dormitory, wash room, toilets, dining room, first aid room, kitchen, store room, staff's rooms, reading room, volunteer's room, rest room and a back garden shelter. Among the other facilities are the playground, children's park, skill development centre, open-air theatre and a security hut. Initially, 20 girls were handed over to our care by the DPCCS-NWP from the 6th of February 2008. In the process of the conducting the girls' home, particular attention has been paid to nurturing girls in a balanced environment where both the physiological and psychological needs are fulfilled.

The purpose of the Sputnik Girls' Home is to provide long-term continuous shelter for girls aged 5 – 18 years who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, where they do not receive the minimum level of care. The home aims to nurture them in a balanced environment that provides shelter, security, education, health, sanitary facilities, food and clothing, thus enabling each girl to step into society with a planned future as a good citizen with knowledge, skills, ethics and ambition.

In May 2010, the government of Sri Lanka decided to grade and select the best voluntary children's home of each province, aiming for the good governance of all homes. We humbly

celebrated being graded as “A” and placed first in the competition of the 37 children’s homes in the province within three years of its inception and being the youngest one of the 37. Furthermore, this award stimulated us to realize our dream to become a model children’s home in Sri Lanka.

The achievement of the best children’s home award persuaded me to think beyond our girls’ home and advocate for increases in the standard of care the children receive in other children homes and the opportunities they receive to reach their full potential when they attain maturity and leave the home. Hence, I decided to undertake research to identify the life chances of children and young people in institutional care in children’s homes in Sri Lanka.

3.5 Field research

3.5.1 Research approach

This PAR approach was based on learning by doing and reflecting on the processing a critical and systemic manner (McIntyre-Mills 2003a, 2006a). The focus of the systemic engagement was to enhance governance (see McIntyre-Mills 2006b) and to narrow the gap in the perceived needs between service users and service providers by changing the governance process to respond to the voices and rights of the child (see McIntyre-Mills & De Vries 2010 on User centric policy design).

Steps in creating the Participatory Action Research

During this PAR, three different hats (De Bono 1985) were worn. Wearing one hat, the focus was placed on the available data from the researchers’ perspective. The second hat characterized the author as a service provider of an NGO who has had over 12 years’ experience providing services to various social services projects. The third hat represented the author as a practitioner who has volunteered as a manager of a VCH for over six years prior to commencing this PAR.

This PAR is characterised by the active involvement of members of the agencies that are responsible for the care of children. In-depth interviews were facilitated with policy makers and service providers who are responsible for the care of children. Subsequently, the study was extended by means of PAR to collect primary data using a combination of both questionnaires and interviews. Research participants included policy makers[33], policy officers[34], service providers[35] and caregivers[36] who are responsible for the institutional care of children (see figure 2: Map of the research design). Ariyadasa (2013, p. 12) states that:

> “Life chances for children and young people in institutional care in VCHs are based on and impacted by the decisions made by policy makers. The policy officers who act as intermediaries play a major role in the implementation of these policies. Service providers

[33] Policy makers: Commissioners of provincial departments of probation and childcare services (DPCCS).
[34] Policy officers: probation officers (POs) and child rights promotion officers (CRPOs).
[35] Service providers: Heads of NGOs, mainly the managers of voluntary children’s homes.
[36] Caregivers: Matrons and wardens of voluntary children’s homes.

> and caregivers who actually practice these policies are charged with the difficult and challenging responsibility of protecting children and young people. The opinions and the proposals forwarded by these four groups of people, based on their experiences, will all have weight in determining the life chances for children and young people who are in alternative care institutions".

Thus, the recruitment of these four groups as participants for the study was based on the rationale of drawing on their experiences to produce a set of guidelines to shape timely and appropriate policies that are translated into practice.

Initially, I approached all nine commissioners of the provincial DPCCSs' and interviewed to collect information on policy implications and their role in the policy making process. Simultaneously, I received permission to have discussions with senior policy officers regarding their experiences pertaining to the supervision of children's homes. Then I was granted permission to access the list of children's homes and their grading standards for every province (Fig. 3:1). I then selected three homes from each province encompassing three levels[37] of grading standards. The purpose was to visit these homes and interview the respective managers concerning service provision. Thirty managers from 27 different children's homes were interviewed to discuss the range of possibilities in much greater depth. Access was also made available for observation of the service standards of these homes and to photograph some of the material living conditions, which may have affected the quality of life standards for the children. All 298 probation officers, 287 child rights promotion officers, and matrons and wardens of all 416 children's homes were included in a questionnaire census approach.

[37] Level 1: Best standard home ('A' graded), Level 2: Medium standard home ('B' or 'C' graded), Level 3: Weak standard home ('D' graded).

Figure 3.1 The provincial map of Sri Lanka.[38]

[38] source: https://www.google.lk/search?q=provincial+map+of+sri+lanka&biw

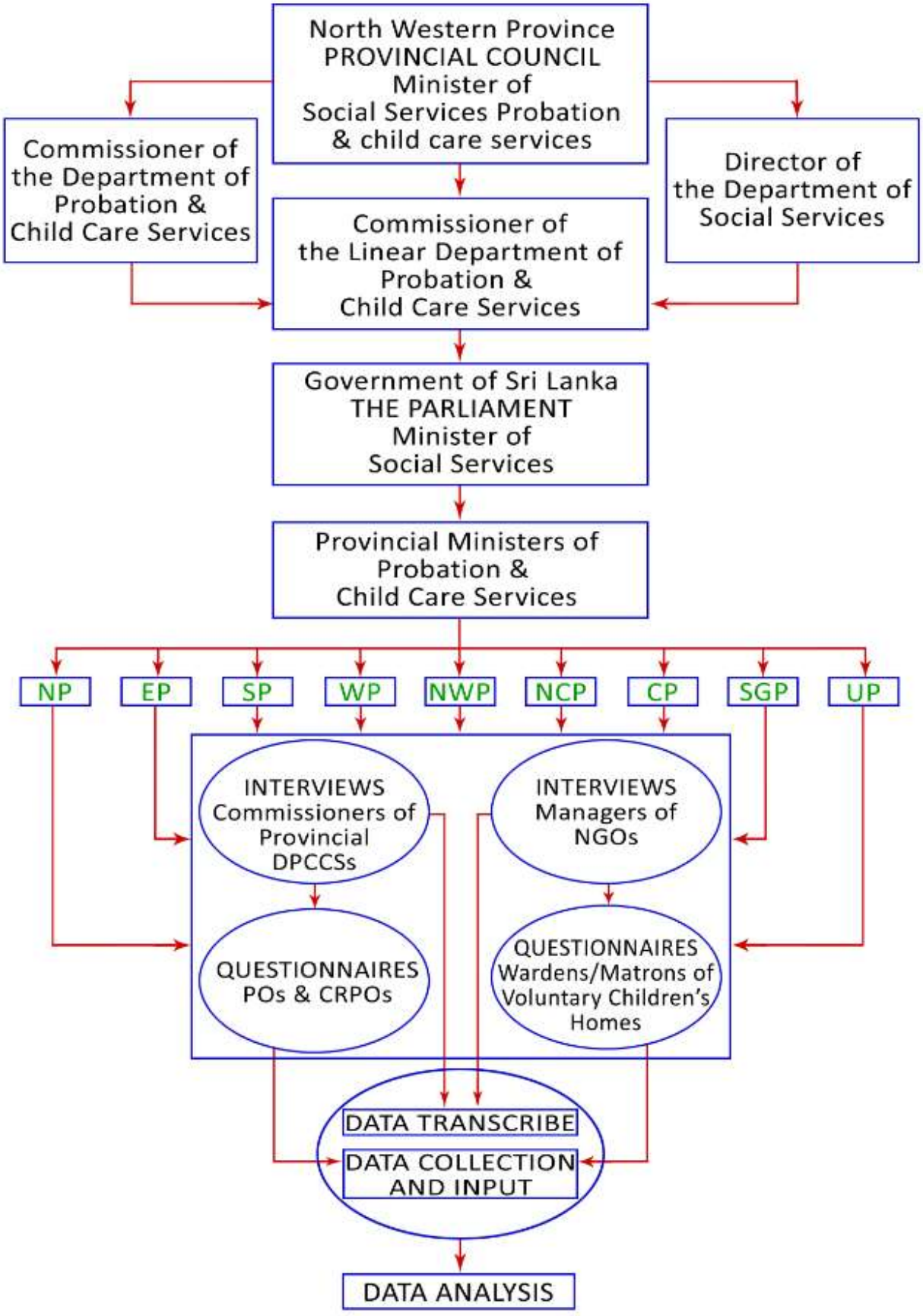


Figure 3.2 The map of the research design.

3.5.2 Structure of the questionnaires and the interview schedules

The three questionnaires (Participants: Probation officers, child rights promotion officers and wardens/matrons) and the two interview schedules (Participants: Provincial commissioners and managers) comprised of two sections. The first section was structured with closed questions to procure general information (age, gender, ethnicity, religion, educational and professional qualifications). The second section included open-ended questions to ascertain further information about the participant's views on existing policies, quality of life and life chances of institutionalised children.

In the questionnaires, a nominal scale was utilized to categorise subjects when seeking answers for gender differences, religious affiliation, and work experience, educational and professional qualifications. Answers that are generated as an outcome of these questions have been analysed in terms of percentage (or frequency).

Interview schedules

Two interview schedules were structured and utilized during interviews with policy makers (commissioners of provincial departments of probation and childcare services) and service providers (managers/directors of voluntary children's homes). The questions were selected from following areas;

Both parties were asked about their service experience and their suggestion for the improvement of life chances of institutionalized children. In addition;

1. **Policy makers;**
    a. organizing structure of DPCCS
    b. policy implications, administration procedures and evaluations of children's homes
    c. placement histories, re-unification and reintegration procedures of children in residential care
    d. funding and support for children homes
    e. suggestions for the improvement of quality of life and enhancement of life chances of children
    f. service experiences
2. **Service providers**
    a. policy guidelines and grading system of children home
    b. placement histories, re-unification and reintegration procedures of children in residential care
    c. management structure, funding and maintenance of children home
    d. correlation with children and coordination with DPCCS
    e. service evaluation and transparency of the activities of children home
    f. suggestions for the improvement of quality of life and enhancement of life chances of children
    g. service experiences

Open-ended questions have been used in questionnaires and interview schedules, because this avoided respondents being locked into pre-defined response formats. Unstructured questions have been useful for generating range, meanings and novel ideas as this was an exploratory stage of

research. Since the questions were flexible, it gave respondents freedom to express complexity and diversity (as proposed in Wadsworth (2011). Although it took more time and was more difficult when articulating choices or reasons, depending on the question, it enabled me to receive unanticipated answers. Furthermore, by using open-ended questions I was able to receive deeper and richer information and more understanding of the respondent's points of view. However, some questions had not been answered; a problem common to such surveys (Wadsworth 2011). This may have been due to more work and extra time needed for the participants to answer open-ended questions than selecting a pre-defined response. The two most challenging factors concerning open-ended questions were handwriting illegibility and coding responses to find similar themes.

When conceptualising a theoretical approach this PAR analyses responses to the following two major open-ended questions.

- What is your happiest and unhappiest reflection/memory of your service period?
- What are your suggestions to address the human rights issues and enhance the life chances of institutionalized children in Sri Lanka?

The anonymous responses to the questionnaires and the narratives of interviews were analysed based on the UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010) and the General Standards (DPCCS 1991). They have revealed many issues relevant to policy and governance aspects and their actual operation in practice. Furthermore, the ability to interview all 9 commissioners from provincial DPCCSs and 30 representatives from children's homes of different standards enabled obtaining comprehensive knowledge of the policy and governance aspects of VCHs.

3.5.3 Field research context

Following my Ethics Approval Letter (Appendix 1), I received the approval letter (appendix 2) from the provincial minister for Social Services Probation and Child Care Services of the North Western Province (NWP) to undertake my research in the NWP (See research Design: Figure 3.2). Consequently, I returned to Sri Lanka on the 8th July 2012 for field study and data collection.

I decided to conduct the pilot research in the NWP before the nationwide survey. To achieve this, I met the commissioner of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services (DPCCS) and the Director of the Department of Social Services of NWP. The reason for these meetings was to request their permission to collect the contact lists of the research participants for my field study. Commissioner's and the Director's consents (appendix 3 & 4) permitted me to receive the contact lists of all the probation officers (POs), child rights promotion officers (CRPOs), managers of NGOs and the matrons and wardens of VCHs in the NWP. The commissioner of the DPCCS also agreed to allow me an interview with him. First, the questionnaires were made ready for distribution. The NWP commissioner prepared a covering letter (appendix 5) to be sent with the questionnaires.

The successful response rates of all questionnaires distributed at the pilot survey in the NWP encouraged me to use the same questionnaires in the other provinces. Considering the time that consumes until the receiving of the responses, priority was given to posting the questionnaires first. The interviews with policy makers and the service providers were scheduled during the period of receiving the responses for the questionnaires.

For approaching the DPCCSs of other provinces, I needed an approval letter from the national commissioner of the DPCCS. The results of the pilot survey and the recommendation letter from the NWP commissioner greatly assisted me when convincing the national commissioner. National commissioner issued me a recommendation letter (appendix 6) addressing each commissioner of the remaining eight provinces. The National Commissioner had also sent me the contact list of all CRPOs in every district. The National Commissioner' recommendation letter along with other relevant documents (appendix 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13) were sent to all the provincial commissioners seeking their approval to conduct my research in their provinces. Simultaneously, I requested an appointment for interviewing them as policy makers in my PAR. Following their approvals, I also received the contact list of the probation officers (POs) and the list of the VCHs in their provinces. Provincial commissioners had also sent me a covering letter to be enclosed when sending the intended questionnaires for the POs, CRPOs and the caregivers (matrons/wardens) of the VCHs (appendix 14, 15, 16, 17).

After sending all the questionnaires to POs, CRPOs and caregivers, I started to take up the appointments given by provincial commissioners and the managers of NGOs for interviewing them. With respect to managers, I selected three different VCHs from each province that represent three different levels of grading standards. The reason for targeting these three different levels is the necessity of comparing responses and policy effects on interviews from the three categories. When selecting these VCHs, the commissioners and the senior POs of the relevant provinces extended their fullest cooperation. Once the VCHs were selected, the service providers (NGOs) of relevant VCHs were contacted to make appointments to conduct interviews with their managers. Of the 27 selected, 18 VCHs gave their permissions to have walk in interviews. The remaining nine VCHs requested the schedules prior to their interviews.

To save time and travelling expense, I tried to organise the policy makers' and the service providers' interviews during the same period while visiting their provinces. It worked with six provinces but in two provinces, I missed two service providers and had to visit them in the latter half of the fieldwork.

3.5.3.1 Policy Makers' interviews

Of the nine commissioners of the provincial DPCCSs, two had been newly appointed during the year 2012. They lacked experiences to answer the interview schedules that I had prepared for them. However, they answered in their capacities with the help of senior probation officers. Two

commissioners rejected my request for permission to record their interviews. Every commissioner's willingness to answer the questions and to share their experiences was admirable. Three commissioners' interviews lasted for over three hours despite of the fact that they were scheduled for a maximum of one hour. They were highly enthusiastic, their answers were detailed, and evidence based. They supported their answers with their lived experiences. For all of them this was the first time that they had encountered an in-depth interview as part of a Doctoral study in terms of enhancing the life chances of children and young people in institutionalized care. Of the nine commissioners, six were women and three were men.

All the provincial commissioners belonged to the Sri Lanka Administrative Services (SLAS) and are defined as SLAS officers. Most of them have had professional experience as secretaries and directors of various government departments and ministries. Of the nine commissioners interviewed, the most senior had been a commissioner for nearly four years but was due to be transferred to a different post in several weeks.

3.5.3.2 Service Providers' Interviews

It was difficult to make appointments with managers of NGOs that run children's homes. Six of the 27 managers asked me to meet their matron or the warden of their homes to conduct interviews on their behalf. I was able to get the answers from the caregivers for some of the questions, which were intended for managers. However, I managed to have telephone conversations with those managers to complete the interview schedule that the caregivers were unable to answer.

3.6 Data collection

This research applies PAR methods. PAR methodologies enable the researcher to work with the researched in the process of framing the questions and addressing the areas of concerns that they consider important (as explained in Mugabushaka (2012).

Wadsworth (2005) argues that the central characteristic of PAR is the inclusion of stakeholders in the research alongside the researcher as equal contributors. This research uses PAR in the data collection process as a way of enabling first hand life experiences to be included. Policy environments and governance practices affect all areas of the lives of the institutionalized children, because they shape the values by which these children choose to live.

In particular, the research collects and analyses the views of policy makers and service providers on the life chances of institutionalized children in order to use their experiences to address the children's rights issues and the governance challenges of voluntary children's homes. Furthermore, their views may reflect the areas of education, health safety and their citizenship rights. These areas involve the social, economic and environmental spheres of life and the research argues that achievement in the improvement of the quality of life is reflected by the extent to which they enjoy rights to education, health, safety and citizenship rights.

Wadsworth (2005) asserts that PAR is about identifying a useful solution to a problematic situation that triggered the research. It also involves relevant parties critically reflecting together on the historical, political, cultural, economic, geographic and other contexts that determine present action in order to change and improve on it. In the light of the above, PAR is relevant because it allows policy formulation in addition to being inclusive of beneficiaries' views.

The researcher and subjects work together to determine the life chances of institutionalized children and how best they can be improved. The challenges they are faced with are arguably the consequences of institutionalization, and the purpose is to bring the policy makers and service providers together to work in the best interests of the institutionalized children. The research method consisted of identifying all stakeholders' assumptions and views about development and proceeded through individual interviews using unstructured and semi structured interviews as Russel (2011) defines the tools. According to him, an unstructured interview can take place anytime from anywhere, whereas a semi-structured interview covers a number of topics and questions following a general script.

In the field, I had some prompting questions and could flexibly expand them as I felt the necessity of continuing the respondents' narration. In most cases, the interview processes evolved as informal conversations but following listed a priori topics, I termed areas of concern. Russel (2011) argues that unstructured interviewing is in accord with ethnographic interviewing.

I also used the document content analysis method, which, according to Sarantakos (2005), is the study of documents, either in the "form of literature review or a more in-depth study". I particularly compiled some quantitative data in chapter one from various documents and reports and have accessed information by searching government archives such as government websites for the Ministry of Child Development and Women Empowerments and Department of Probation and Child Care Services. Furthermore, as Silverman (2004) states, I included electronic and digital sources such as "websites, promotional videos and similar artefacts" among documentary sources of information.

The next method I used is visual ethnography, which, according to Berg (1998), is the "analysis of photographs". With the intention of using this method, I took photographs during the field study with the permission of policy makers and service providers. These photographs mostly manifest the facilities and services of children's homes. These pictures could capture some elements of the facilities in several children's homes, convey the level of threats, and risk to young people in institutional care.

The collection of data involves various qualitative methods and focused on the responses of interviewees. Sarantakos (2005) also supports observation and interviewing and adds interaction. This research however, focusses primarily on individual interviews and uses open-ended questionnaires as a mode of interaction, with the aim of obtaining and explaining meaning.

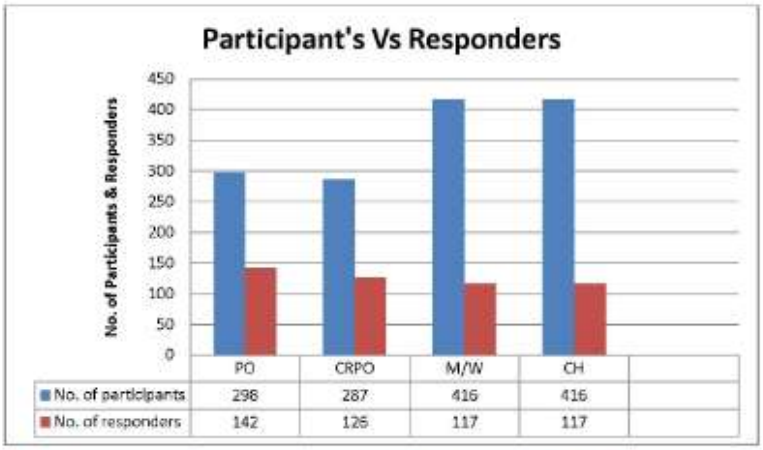
Specifically, it involves culturally attributed meaning of behaviour and other forms of social expression and identifies how they can be fed into public (institutional) policy formulation, interpretation and implementation.

This research builds on the findings from previous researchers, local and international who have done descriptive analysis of governance and development issues in institutional care with regard to children's rights. The research recommends comprehensive policies that, if adopted, will improve the well-being of institutionalized children. Furthermore, every province is strategic to the field research because of the ethnic and geographical diversity. Therefore, data was collected through a nationwide field study involving policy makers and service providers. This research has been timely and critical, because the impacts of the Sri Lankan civil war, global climatic changes and the economic recession have put great strain on the plight of the child.

Another objective was to understand the policy values that shape the governance of children's homes. To what extent do these values support the advancement of the young people in terms of rights and how do the identified values contribute to the promotion of life chances of institutionalized children?

Inglehart and Welzel (2005) argue that the public in the developed world hold different values to those held in developing societies and the socio-economic changes will predict the directions for value change. The socio-economic life in Sri Lanka has generated normative values in accordance with Sri Lankan standards, which may be different to commonly held ethical standards. It needs to be understood whether VCHs in Sri Lanka imported these values and standards from the developed or developing world and have they been contextualized and domesticated?

The research discusses the values on which the cultural system in Sri Lanka is built and examines the likelihood that the current institutional care system will generate the desired development outcomes. Debates on values with regard to children's rights have centred on conservative cultural traditions such as almsgiving (Ariyadasa, 2015a, 2015b). In this research, efficient and effective reintegration is the both strategy and the outcome of development. Conservative perspectives on institutional care do not offer better alternative options to children who have been deprived of parental care or who are at risk of being so. Moreover, only the progressive perspective, which views culture as dynamic, can be mindful of the rights of the institutionalized child.



Category		No. of participants	No. of responders	Percentage
Probation Officers	(PO)	298	142	48%
Child Rights Promotion Officers	(CRPO)	287	126	44%
Matrons & Wardens	(M/W)	416	117	28%
Children Homes	(CH)	416	117	28%

Figure 3.3 No. of participants and responders

Reasons identified for the poor response rate with regard to matrons and wardens.

The response rate for questionnaires of probation officers and child rights promotion officers are 48% and 44% respectively, matrons and wardens response rate is 28% (Figure 3.3). It is assumed that some of the questions have made it difficult for participants to fill out the questionnaires sensibly causing the poor response rate. These questions were:

- Question Nos. 2 and 3 in every questionnaire were designed to procure information on educational and professional qualifications respectively (Appendix 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17). When evaluated, a large percentage of POs and CRPOs are graduates with one or two diploma qualifications. However, there are only a few matrons and wardens who have at least passed the Advanced Level examination and who possess professional qualifications even among the answered. The disclosure of their poor qualifications may have refrained them from answering to questionnaires.
- Question No. 4 of the questionnaire (Appendix 15) of matrons and wardens was designed to gather information on their occupation's security, their standard of living and working environment within the children's home. The researcher had emphasised in the information sheet that all the information provided was to be handled confidentially and anonymity of the respondents would be shielded. However, the managers of the children's homes under whom these matrons and wardens are employed, might have stopped the questionnaires reaching the matrons and wardens or might have instructed them NOT to respond to these questionnaires as it would expose and reveal potential maltreatment and malfunctioning of these institutions.

CHAPTER 4 ENHANCING LIFE CHANCES: THROUGH THE LENS OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORISTS

4.1 Introduction: prevention of institutionalization, protection within the system and facilitation of exit strategies

This chapter draws on the premise that institutionalization has limited children's life chances and aspirations. This is a denial of basic human rights. While focusing on the key axial themes, this chapter describes the application of PAR conducted in Sri Lanka. PAR is characterised by the active involvement of participants in the research, which included policy makers and service providers responsible for the institutional care of children. Two key questions enabled participants to highlight their happiest and unhappiest memories as it related to the institutional care of children and their aspirations for addressing the human rights issues necessary to enhance the life chances of institutionalized children.

The data collected from this largely qualitative study was subject to a form of critical analysis that considered human rights perspectives and UN standards in the research framework. These included the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989) and the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (United Nations 2010). Using these standards as a framework, interview narratives drew upon the human rights and life chances of children in discussion of institutional p in Sri Lanka. The application of PAR valued the participants' aspirations for the children, as well as their visions of what needs to change to ensure the children's capabilities are realised.

Information from participants and subsequent analysis revealed many issues, conflicts and concerns in relation to governance, policy and the actual operation in practice. This was due to policy being variably interpreted and because voluntary children's homes in Sri Lanka offer vastly different standards of care. Theoretical analysis of data drew from works of Amartya Sen, Martha Nussbaum and other theorists, which enabled capabilities approaches and systemic lenses to be applied.

While it is understood that institutional care for some children in Sri Lanka may be unavoidable, the findings of this research indicate that approaches to human rights issues as they relate to children and institutional care have not been properly addressed. It is proposed that the outcomes of this research will offer a theory informed practical framework to the Sri Lankan government that supports more sophisticated application of UN human rights conventions in policymaking and service delivery, with a view to ensuring the best life chances for all the nation's children. While PAR is used in the research framework, the capabilities approach (CA) provides a sound theoretical lens for guiding the application of research findings to policy development and implementation in practice.

4.2 Lived experiences (stories) from the field

4.2.1 Perspectives of children

> "I want to go home. I want to be with my parents and sisters and live happily."

> "Here I receive food, clothes, medicines everything. I have much better comforts here, but I have a burning sadness. I do not know where my younger brothers are, I want to find them."

> "My home is far away. Therefore, my mother cannot come to see me. Here we do not have any one to tell our sorrow. Even at a time of sickness, when we tell, they scold us. My mother and father are not like that."

Save the Children (2005, pp. ix-x) brings the above children's perspective from care institutions to our attention. These narratives emphasise the principle of the child's best interest (Article 3), the right to a periodic review of care and treatment (Article 25), the duty of the state to respect the responsibilities and rights of parents (Article 5) and the duty of the state to provide material assistance and support programs (Article 27).

> "We sleep like dogs. We also like to wear good clothes like other children. Getting tasty food is a real problem in the home."

> "I do not like to eat vegetarian food. We cannot ask for fish or meat in our meals."

The two narratives above demonstrate the duty of the state to place children in institutions suitable for their care (Article 20) and the principle of responding to the views of the child (Article 12). However, we can come across stories like below where institutionalised children admire their caregivers' role that satisfies the duty of the state to ensure that institutions and services meet standards for the number and suitability of staff and provide competent supervision (Article 3)[39]

> "The big sister is like a mother to me. She looks after us very well. When I receive her love and affection I do not feel the absence of my mother."

4.2.2 Perspectives of service providers and caregivers

The unhappiest experiences expressed by service providers and caregivers have raised their hands to justify the children's experiences in care settings and provides many valued perceptions to enhance the life chances of children. They demonstrate the current need for policy changes to better govern the institutional care settings to protect and promote human rights in care institutions. Narratives below are a few examples representing many from the primary data of this study.

> "We have assigned a day per month for parents to visit their children. Children look forward to this day. When parent do not turn up, it is heart rending to witness the tearful faces after they had been waiting expectantly for so long. Some children were also unhappy to see the gloomiest faces of other children whose parents had not visited them" (matron/warden's response).

[39] UNCRC (United Nations 1989).

> "My happiest experience is to see the happy faces of our children when they meet with their parents or relatives. Of course, the saddest experience is to see the gloomiest faces of other children who do not have parents or whose parents do not turn up to visit them" (matron/warden's response).

These two narratives demonstrate children's willingness and the emotional impact upon them on occasions when they deny the opportunity to meet with their parents. Care settings for their convenience take arbitrary decisions and appoint a day once a month or once a term for parents to visit their children. Had they allow parents to visit their children on a day that convenient for them would have created more chances and longer period to associate their children. The following three narratives of managers of children's home reveal their stories on poor life chances that children experience in in health, education and vocational training within care settings.

> "Children started becoming ill one by one. Everyone had to be hospitalised. The cause was identified as contaminated water" (manager's narrative).

> "When we constructed the children's home we designed it in a manner that maximised opportunities for the children. We provided electrical sockets to each study table beside the beds enabling the children to use a computer. Now, it has been 9 years since we started the home and we have not yet been able to provide at least one computer for the home. Lack of funds available for purchasing the computers and for obtaining the service of computer instructors have restricted our ambitions in providing computer education for our children to satisfy the existing demand for computer literacy. We need the support of the state or well-wishers to provide these facilities to enhance our children's life chances" (manager's narrative).

> "My service period as a warden to this home is 23 years. We have a vocational training centre to train the children in carpentry, masonry, woodcarvings, sculpture and pottery. Most of the equipment has worn out. We do not have proper equipment to assist their training. Most of the tools are outdated. We receive the service of few volunteers, but they are not adequately trained or qualified in these trades. Since our children have no knowledge in using modern equipment or technology, they cannot compete with the outside world and find a job" (manager's narrative).

Some caregivers have admitted the deficiency of life chances and the need to promote opportunities to bring prospect to children in care institutions.

> "Every home should be facilitated with teachers to advocate and to support children's education as well as to conduct vocational training" (matron/warden's response).

> "We should conduct camps for medical check-ups for our children frequently" (matron/warden's response).

The following two narratives from the managers represent different point of views that demonstrate the significance of reintegration of institutionalized children.

> "No matter how much comfort and care that we give to a child, they are not responsive. They still prefer to be with their parents or relatives. Therefore, it is best to keep them in their natural birth environments and supporting them to overcome their basic issues. As these children undergo a very low mental status, they expect love but not the material comfort. It is not appropriate to keep them in an institutional environment. We attempted to empower them for various jobs. Children have no enthusiasm at all to learn them or to be trained. Their desire is to keep away from the home and to associate with outsiders" (manager's narrative).

> "Our duty is to provide fullest care and protection to children for those who have been deprived of parental care. However, the most important thing is to socialise them as well disciplined citizens" (manager's narrative).

Reintegration is important, but when listen to the narrative below it demonstrates the need for a proper after care supervision process to achieve the maximum outcome upon reintegration.

> "We looked after a street child in our home. We found her a job and socialised her at the age of 19. However, she had gone to her family without proper notification to her officers and thereby had lost her job. Now again, she is living on streets" (matron/warden's response)

Some managers and caregivers have realised their role, and strive to prosper their children in care settings.

> "Once I took over this job as a manager, I directed children for music. As a result, I saw how their mental satisfaction developed. Furthermore, I have made provisions to conduct courses on mushroom nursery, handicrafts, sawing, and cookery classes with the intention of children's skill development. Counselling and meditation classes too have been organised and conducted. Children are taken out for excursions, and have put efforts to develop children's sports skills. All these programs need to be continued and updated. I have witnessed the significance and the progress in children's personalities" (manager's narrative).

This study has found that in literature it is rare to come across scenarios of humanity and the homely environment within care settings. The primary data from my field study has brought several narratives in terms of best practices of children's homes.

> "Our children used to call me madam for many years. Other staff members were called by their first names with uncle or aunty at the end. The children call each other by their first names. Recently I encouraged them to call us by relative names that are used in a typical family in Sri Lanka. I am their 'amma' (mother) and my assistant is 'punchi amma' (aunty). Our cooks are 'achchi' (grandmother) and 'nanda' (aunty). Our gardener is 'mama' (uncle) and the guard is 'seeya' (grandfather). Children call themselves with 'aiya' (elder brother) and 'mallee' (younger brother) at the end of their first names. Only the same age children call each other by their first names. It was a difficult task to convince them at first; however, our children's home has been transformed into a homely environment now. Most surprisingly, there is less fighting and mutual support has developed and I feel much peaceful environment in the home than ever before" (matron/warden's response).
>
> "Our staff were overwhelmed by the news that one of our children has been awarded a scholarship to study in India for her bachelor's studies" (manager's narrative).
>
> "A mother brought her 10 year old girl to our home. The girl's father had died and she was living with her mother and stepfather. According to her mother, the girl is stubborn and uncontrollable. She does not like to go to school and always fights with people around her. Her stepfather has always physically and emotionally abused her. The mother wishes that we could mould her daughter's character. We realised the situation of both mother and the girl. Since then we looked after the child with special attention and care. Now the child has changed to a very different character. She has progressed in every aspect. She likes schooling, studying, playing, helping to prepare meals and much more. She is motivated and possess a good character. I am glad to have been able to support a child who had been neglected by her family and the society" (matron/warden's response).

> "The day our children's home was recognised as an 'A' grade home is the happiest experience in my life" (manager's narrative).

This largely qualitative study narrates its finding throughout this thesis. The outcome of the analysis of the key findings of the research are presented in line with the objectives of the study. They serve to address the research questions of this study.

4.3 Analysis: Core themes and relationship to the capabilities approach

The findings of the PAR were analysed in terms of human rights outlined in the UNCRC and the UN Guidelines, with responses separated into several themes, which were categorised to identify the core themes. Identified core themes are:

- Reintegration
- Health
- Security
- Formal education
- Informal education
- Vocational training

Of these, reintegration has been dominant among other core themes, because all nine policymakers and the majority of the policy officers and a number of service providers emphasize the significance of reintegration. They stress that successful reintegration enables the children to have as near a normal, healthy life as possible, encourages quality social interaction, maximizes basic rights including freedom of speech and religion, and enhances the standard of living. Furthermore, they argue that in some institutional care environments, malnourishment has led to physical health issues (Figure 4.1). Deprivation of parental care has fostered mental health issues. Physical, psychological and sexual safety has been endangered (Figure 4.2). Formal and informal education levels have dwindled (Figure 4.3). Facilities for play and recreational activities are minimal (Figure 4.4). Engagement in productive and valued activities such as vocational training is below the anticipated level[40] (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills, 2014a).

[40] Source: PAR, commissioners' interview narratives.

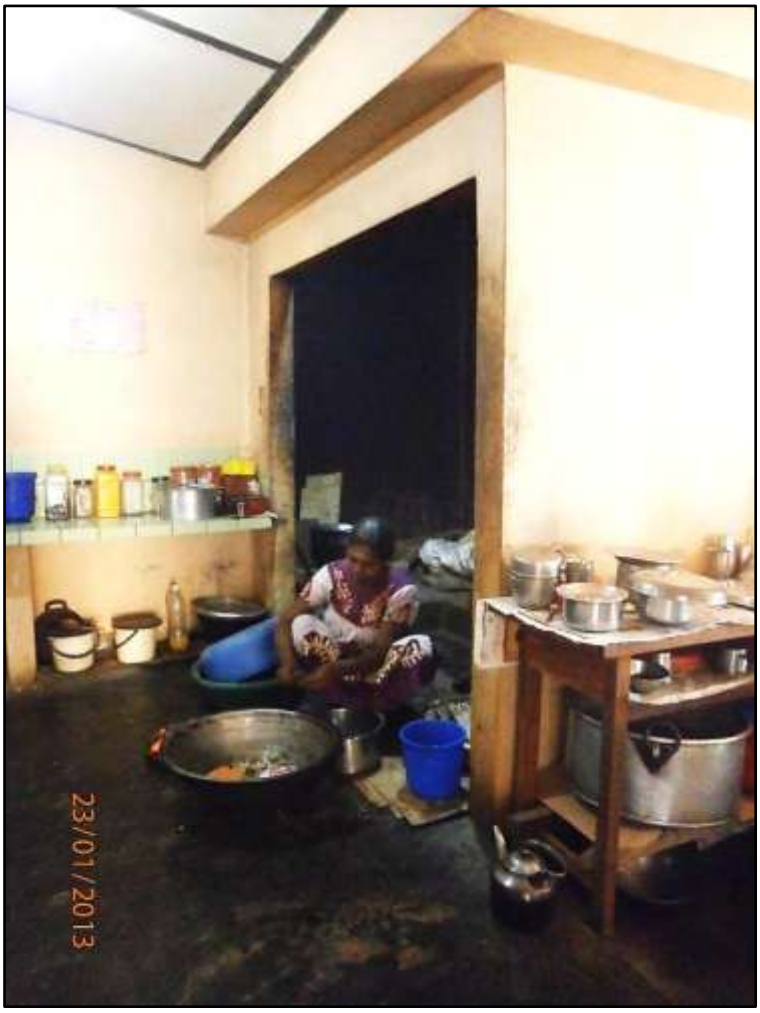


Figure 4.1 This cook makes three meals per day for over 150 girls in this home.[41]

[41] According to the manager, the limited budget has restricted the number of cooks/workers (This indirectly reflects institution's incapacity to satisfy basic needs of institutionalized children.

Figure 4.2 Another example of badly managed living standards.[42]

Figure 4.3 Education collapses. Few homes I visited had facilities to encourage after school tuition for educationally deprived children.[43]

[42] For nearly 300 children, this was the only clothesline available. The environment was filled with physically hazardous elements such as iron rods, glass pieces and trees with hanging coconuts.
[43] However, many managers expressed that no budget is allocated for hiring teachers or to facilitate volunteers.

Figure 4.4 Facilities for play and recreational activities are minimal.[44]

The core themes identified in this PAR are closely related to the capabilities approaches of Sen (1990) and Nussbaum (2011). Thus, this study indicates the appropriateness of the capabilities approach (CA) as a tool to address the human rights issues of children's homes. Furthermore, this chapter identifies that the notion of subjective and objective wellbeing discussed by Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi (2008) justify the validity of a theoretical framework influenced by the capabilities approach.

4.4 Sen's 'basic needs' perspectives and applicability to institutionalized children

Sen emphasizes the notion that people have to meet fundamental needs to achieve well-being (Saito 2003). In Sen's earliest challenges to utilitarian economics, he adopted the 'basic needs' perspective. This approach emphasised that per capita income is not an adequate measure of a person's well-being, since rising incomes alone will not always increase well-being. Moreover, it claims that everyone should have access to the goods and services that satisfy their basic needs. Alkire (2002, p. 184) asserts that in Sen's capability approach "development is not defined as an increase in GNP per capita, or in consumption, health, and education measures alone, but as an expansion of capability". Capability refers to a person's or group's freedom to promote or achieve valuable functionings. "It represents the various combinations of functionings (beings and doings) that the person can achieve" (Sen 1992, p. 40).

[44] This was the only playground for over 200 children. The area was a risky environment.

Sen focused more on people and less on commodities. That is, he paid attention to what people were able to do, rather than to what people could buy with their income. Sen (1980) introduced the concept of capability for the first time. Sen's capabilities comprise what a person is able to do or be:

- Ability to be well nourished
- Ability to avoid escapable morbidity or mortality
- Ability to read, write and communicate
- Ability to take part in the life of the community
- Ability to appear in public without shame

4.4.1 Applicability of Sen's capability approach to children

At the outset, it is worth discussing the applicability of Sen's capability approach to children. According to (Saito 2003), this question comes from the notion that lies at the core of the capability approach: the notion of capability as 'freedom – the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead'. We can discuss the well-being of children as well as of adults in terms of capabilities and the agency to achieve their goals. As Saito (2003) says, few would deny that children need support from parents, teachers or societies in choosing what is best for their lives. When it comes to education, health care, safety, basic rights and other facets of life, the same argument can be made. Since children are not mature enough to make decisions by themselves, we need to ask how we can apply the capability approach to children. According to (Saito), Sen answered by providing an example based on vaccinations to inoculate against disease in the future:

> "If the child does not want to be inoculated, and you nevertheless think it is a good idea for him/her to be inoculated, then the argument may be connected with the freedom that this person will have in the future by having the measles shot now. The child when it grows up must have more freedom. So, when you are considering a child, you have to consider not only the child's freedom now, but also the child's freedom in the future" (cited in Saito, 2003, p. 25).

Using Sen's argument applied to education, making no effort to educate a child will reduce their freedoms in the future. Such a decision will not lead the child to improve his/her well-being. Furthermore, "letting children learn what they wanted in this way might well restrict the range of possible things which they might choose for their own sake: they might fail to learn about other things which might also have been included (White 1973, p. 22)" (cited in Saito 2003, p. 26). Giving contemporary freedom to a child does not always mean that the child will have freedom in future. Similarly, restricting the temporary freedom of a child may well expand the freedom that the child will have in future.

For educational guidelines, White (1973) proposes that the least harmful course we can follow is to let a child determine what the *Good* shall be for him or her as far as possible. He claims that as long as we ensure that he knows about as many activities or ways of life as possible which he may want to choose for their own sake, and, that he is able to reflect on priorities among them from the

point of view not only of the present moment but as far as possible of his life as a whole, it is right to restrict a child's liberty now so as to give him as much autonomy as possible in future. Saito (2003) argues, that when dealing with children, it is the freedom they will have in the future rather than the present that should be considered. Children do not have the experience to apply that perspective, so adults, with their greater experience have to do it for them. Therefore, as long as we consider a person's capabilities in terms of their life span, the capability approach seems to be applicable to children. The fact that children need to have support from parents, society and others to choose which capabilities to exercise will lead us to consider what role education can play in the capability approach.

4.4.2 Relationship of the core themes of this research to the 'basic needs' of Sen's approach

It has been identified as identical to draw on Sen's capability approach as a lens to frame and evaluate the findings of this PAR, which has been entitled 'The life chances of children and young people in institutional care'.

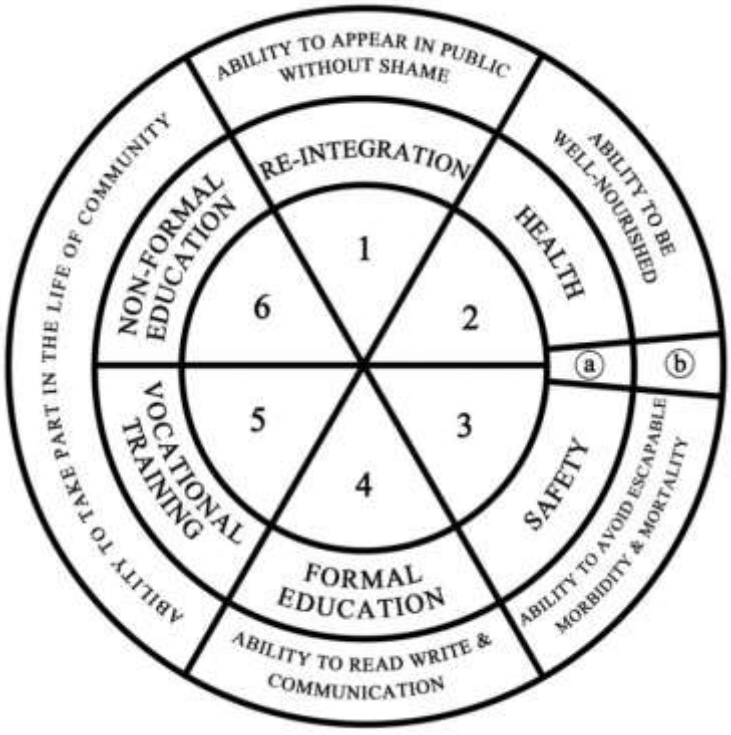


Figure 4.5 Relationship of the core themes to Sen's 'basic needs' perspective. The numbers represent the priority of the themes of this research.

The capabilities as described by Sen are often minimal or non-existent for children in institutional care. Many researchers; e.g. Jayasooriyya (2008); Jayathilake and Amarasuriya (2005); Ariyadasa and McIntyre-Mills (2014a) have demonstrated that many institutionalized children are not well nourished (health issues). Often they cannot avoid morbidity and/or mortality which others might evade (safety issues). Their ability to read and write is below par (issues related to education).

Their ability to take part in the life of the community is restrained, which often causes feelings of shame when they appear in public (significance of non-formal education and vocational training). Being labelled as orphaned, abandoned and destitute, most institutionalized children lack courage to appear in public without shame. Thus, a major theme or human right for the institutionalized children that is widely recognised by policy makers has been identified as *reintegration*. This includes re-unification with biological parents, socialization and other family based permanent alternative care opportunities such as adoption or *kafala* of Islamic law. In terms of the UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010), reintegration is important, because the child is supported with a permanent alternative care option where they can enjoy the basic needs.

Therefore, the capabilities identified by Sen for the creation and/or enhancement of well-being and quality of life of people are the life chances we should create and/or enhance among institutionalized children. The core themes identified in this PAR by evaluating interview narratives and responses to the questionnaires of both policy makers and service providers demonstrate the relevance. Interestingly, reintegration parallels ability to appear in public without shame; health parallels ability to be well nourished; safety parallels ability to avoid escapable morbidity and mortality; formal education parallels ability to read, write and communicate; non-formal education and vocational training parallel ability to take part in the life of the community (Fig. 4.5). Thus, Sen's capability approach provides a comprehensive framework for conceptualising well-being of the young people in children's homes.

4.5 Nussbaum's 'Aristotelian view on human functioning' and its applicability to institutionalized children

The work of Nussbaum (1998, 2000, 2011) is also relevant to this research on child wellbeing, policy and the governance perspectives of children's homes. Nussbaum (2000) developed the most systematic, extensive, and influential capability theory of justice to date. She aimed to provide a partial theory of justice based on dignity, a list of fundamental capabilities, and a threshold. She derived a priory list of ten essential capabilities that are clearly relevant to public policy making. Thus, when promoting policy guidelines and governance practices for institutional care of children, it is worthwhile to explore the applicability of CA to addressing the human rights issues of institutionalized children.

4.5.1 Nussbaum's list of central human capabilities

Nussbaum (2011, pp. 33-34) provided a list of capabilities which should be met for any human being. These are mentioned prior to discussing each of them below:

- *Health, longevity / Life:* Being able to live to the end of a human life of normal length; not dying prematurely; in good health, including reproductive health.

- *Safety:* Being able to be secure against violent assault and perceived danger, including sexual assault and domestic violence; having adequate shelter; feeling safe.
- *Bodily integrity:* Being able to move freely from place to place; having opportunities for sexual satisfaction and for choice in matters of reproduction.
- *Education / senses, imagination and thought:* Being able to use the senses; being able to imagine, to think, and to reason-and to do these things in a way informed and cultivated by an adequate education.
- *Standard of living / material control over one's environment:* Being able to hold property (both land and movable goods); having the possibility to seek employment; being able to purchase goods and services beyond basic ones.
- *Productive and valued activities:* Being able to find and keep a job at an adequate level, having adequate working conditions, having a good work/life balance to develop valued activities outside the job.
- *Quality of social interactions / affiliation:* Being able to live for and in relation to others, to recognize and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interaction; being able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation; having the capability for both justice and friendship. Being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others. Feeling of social justice.
- *Environment / other species:* Being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature. Being able to contribute to a sustainable world.
- *Culture and entertainment / play:* Being able to enjoy oneself, to play, to enjoy recreational activities; engaging in sport and cultural activities.
- *Basic rights / control over one's environment:* Having freedom of speech and religion, absence of discrimination, freedom of move.

Alkire (2002, p. 187) asserts that the list of capabilities which Nussbaum identified "have value in themselves" (rather than being merely instrumental), and are specific yet open to plural specification.[45] He also states that her list is flexible; as she points out, her proposed list has already been revised a number of times (ibid). The outcome of Nussbaum's inquiry is a set of central human capabilities, which "can always be contested and re-made" (see Alkire & Black 1997).

4.5.2 Nussbaum's capabilities as a children's rights approach

4.5.2.1 Health, longevity / Life:

One probation officer (PO) reveals that:

> "Some children, who had been institutionalized for they had no proper guardianship or security, reported dead after falling ill in the children's home. This was the saddest

[45] Nussbaum's capabilities approach is developed in Nussbaum (1988, 1992, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2011).

> incident during my service period. These deaths were caused not only because of the shortcomings of the children's home alone, but also because of the lack of the State's intervention to improve the quality of these children's homes. This further hurts us as we represent the government to advocate for the standard of care of these institutions" (PO's narrative).

This policy officer regrets the State's inability to advocate for the above guideline, as he strongly believes that by doing so they could have avoided such deaths. He is feels ashamed for being unable to improve the standard of quality of children's homes. This situation contravenes the UN Guidelines paragraph 91, which states, "Accommodation in all alternative care settings should meet the requirements of health and safety" (United Nations 2010, p. 14).

UN Guidelines paragraph 83 emphasises that carers should ensure that children receive adequate amounts of wholesome and nutritious food in accordance with local dietary habits and relevant dietary standards, as well as with the children's religious beliefs. Appropriate nutritional supplementation should also be provided when necessary. However, Jayathilake and Amarasuriya (2005) state that the children are not provided with a balanced and nutritious diet as required. They are rarely given meat, vegetables and fruits, a situation, which affects their physical growth. I challenge this statement as an overly generalised statement by Jayathilake and Amarasuriya. Perhaps they mean some or even many, but it cannot be applied to all. My personal experience as a practitioner of a children's home and of the perceptions of managers interviewed in this study showcases that the tradition of 'dane' (almsgiving) to children by general public celebrating their birthdays and various anniversaries brings lots of food to children's homes. In most occasions, *dane* is overwhelmed, qualitatively and quantatatively. However, of the thirty homes visited, none of them have had advocated for water tests in the provision of clean water for their charges or for the staff (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6 This overhead tank supplies water for drinking and cooking purposes for nearly 300 children. It has no cover to protect it from being contaminated. The management has ignored the danger to health and hygiene of the charges

UN Guidelines Paragraph 84 (United Nations 2010) indicates that carers should care for the health of the children for whom they are responsible and arrange to ensure that medical care, counselling and support are made available as required. Jayasooriyya (2008, p. 26) comments that:

> "Though children receive treatment when ill, it is not timely or appropriate. Though many are in need of counselling and some even psychiatric intervention, quality services are not provided. Only 16% of the state-run institutions are reported to have counselling services, the standards and quality of which are questionable."

It is clear that both previous research and the PAR of the current study demonstrate the significance of the health aspect of institutionalized children in both physical and emotional dimensions. Thus, it is evident that the enhancement of this capability in terms of Nussbaum's capabilities approach assists the achievement of children's rights in line with UN Guidelines.

4.5.2.2 Safety:

Jayasooriyya (2008, p. 30) highlights that:

> "Institutionalized children receive optimum physical security behind high walls and locked gates, under the watchful eyes of the caregivers who define 'protection' in terms of physical security."

However, it has been revealed that regimented routines were found in the majority of institutions and corporal punishment was detected in some of them. A matron's view on another matron's behaviour elaborates as such:

> "It was lunch time at a children's camp. There were not enough spaces in the dining table and therefore the boys were having their lunch sitting on the stairs. One boy had kept his plate on his knees and while eating accidently dropped some food on the floor. One

> matron jumped at him, put all the dropped food back on to his plate, and growled, 'Now, eat all these!' I was so shocked to witness the awful behaviour of the matron and, I still remember the heartrending feelings on that boy's face" (matron's narrative).

One probation officer expresses his views as "I have been disappointed by witnessing the harsh and punitive regimen applied by the managements of children's homes towards institutionalized children". Probation officer's narrative illustrates negative attitudes towards caregivers' behaviour as a whole. The above caregiver's experience justifies the PO's viewpoint. Save the Children (2005) too, states that caregivers rarely show any kindness to institutionalized children but often scold them, pass nasty remarks referring to their experiences, causing mental anguish. When these narratives are discussed in the context of children's rights, the caregivers' behaviours contravene paragraph 96 of the Guidelines which states that "inhuman or degrading treatments that are likely to compromise the physical or mental health of the child, must be strictly prohibited in conformity with international human rights law" (United Nations 2010, p. 15).

Jayasooriyya (2008) further argues that children identify 'protection' as inclusive of emotional security as well, described as receiving love, guidance and kindness and maintaining secure relationships. Despite the fact that one of the reasons for children's institutionalization is loss of this emotional security, children very rarely receive the emotional security or the individual attention and appreciation that they crave within an institutional setting.

UN Guidelines 92 indicates that States must ensure through their competent authorities that accommodation provided to children in alternative care, and their supervision in such placements, enable them to be effectively protected against abuse. Particular attention needs to be paid to the age, maturity and degree of vulnerability of each child in determining his/her living arrangements. Jayasooriyya (2008) states that children often develop harmful behaviour such as forming gangs to exert power over their peers, and engaging in exploitative homosexual activities. Channabasawanna (1996) identifies this as the result of the absence of consistent and caring relationship with adults and describes how children form intimate relationships among themselves and look for love and solace from each other, sometimes through homosexual relationships. In my personal opinion, any sexual relationship amongst children is not a good thing that in the Sri Lankan institutional care environments it is likely to be homosexual because so many homes are single gender. Channabasawanna further states that peer relationships can be nurturing and resilience building, but they have a propensity to become exploitative within an institutional setting. By virtue of placing offenders and victims together, the relations are made even more complex, as the victims are exposed to various risky and anti-social behaviours.

According to UN Guidelines paragraph 93, all alternative care settings should provide adequate protection to children from abduction, trafficking, sale and all other forms of exploitation. Furthermore, any consequent constraints on their liberty and conduct should be no more than are strictly necessary to ensure their effective protection from such acts. However, the following

interview narratives from three service providers point out the dangers that of institutionalizing children from different backgrounds together.

> "Sexually abused children should never be admitted to homes where orphans, abandoned and destitute reside. Government should manage homes separately for the sexually abused children. Special awareness programs should be conducted on these children's behalf regularly" (manager's narrative).
>
> "Juvenile offenders should not be included into the children homes where small children are being institutionalized. All the policies should be changed in a manner where every child has the full security to lead his life in the children's home" (manager's narrative).
>
> "When children are institutionalized by court orders or by the DPCCS, the child's background should be taken into consideration. Children with abused histories and juvenile offenders should be separated from other children" (manager's narrative).

These managers have seen how the quality of life of children is affected when mixed with sexually abused children or juvenile offenders. Clearly, the officials have not considered the reasons behind children's entry into alternative care when admitting them to care in children's homes. This is not to say that there is not a moral obligation to care for juvenile offenders and sexually abused children. Rather, it is necessary to care for these children in specialist ways and mixing with children not in these categories is not advantageous for either group.

Save the Children (2005) states that children who had been abused did not receive specialist care and support from staff, despite the numbers of girls (31%) in certified schools who are victims of abuse. Juvenile offenders and sexually abused children are in an even worse position than those who are simply without families. Therefore, officials need to make it clear that having refused to take in these children to children's homes because of adverse effect on other children, there is an ethical requirement to find suitable accommodation and upbringing for these children.

4.5.2.3 Bodily integrity:

According to Jayathilake and Amarasuriya (2005) many of the children expressed fear about society outside the children's institution and were worried about their inability to deal with it once they left the institution. The statement of a matron substantiate this situation:

> "We had Manel in our possession for 6 long years. We reunified her with her mother after she had become 18 years old. During the period she was staying in our home, we looked after her in our best capacity. However, within few months we came to know that a male has abused her and uses her as a prostitute" (matron/warden's narrative).

4.5.2.4 Education / Senses, imagination and thought:

Access to education for children in these institutions has become problematic. Children are faced with numerous issues due to stigmatization by the teachers and children, non-availability of Tamil medium schools for Tamil children who are compelled to learn Sinhala, and placements in grades below the age appropriate grade due to disruption in schooling. Some children are not sent to school as they are kept there pending trial. Though they are to be kept there for only a few days, there are occasions when children have to stay for long periods, depriving them of their education

(Jayathilake & Amarasuriya 2005). In fact, institutionalization itself has caused disruption in children's education, rendering them 'educationally impoverished' (Samaraweera, 1997, pp. 26-27 cited in Jayasuriyya 2008). The following manager elaborates the significance of extra support for education for children in institutions otherwise their inability to compliance to the existing flow.

> "For better life chances we should better educate children under our care. Provision of just the formal education is not going to match the existing competition to enter higher education. We should send them for extra classes outside school. Only then will our children become competent enough to compete with other children" (manager's narrative).

4.5.2.5 Standard of living / Material control over one's environment:

Many researches (Jayathilake & Amarasuriya 2005; Samaraweera 1997) indicate that children do not have sufficient clothing, which are often exchanged among each other and are not clean. Lack of space and resources due to congestion is an issue in most of the institutions as they accommodate a greater number than for which they were designed (Figure 4.7& Figure 4.8). This compels children to share beds and sleep on the corridors/concrete, even during cold weather. The sanitary facilities are also not satisfactory. Necessities such as water, soap and toothpaste are often not provided. As a result, the personal hygiene of children is not well maintained and skin diseases are rampant. The toilets are not adequately clean and there are children who need training in basic sanitary practices.

Figure 4.7 This home houses nearly 300 children. One dormitory comprises of 36 beds. Little light and air leads to illness and depression.

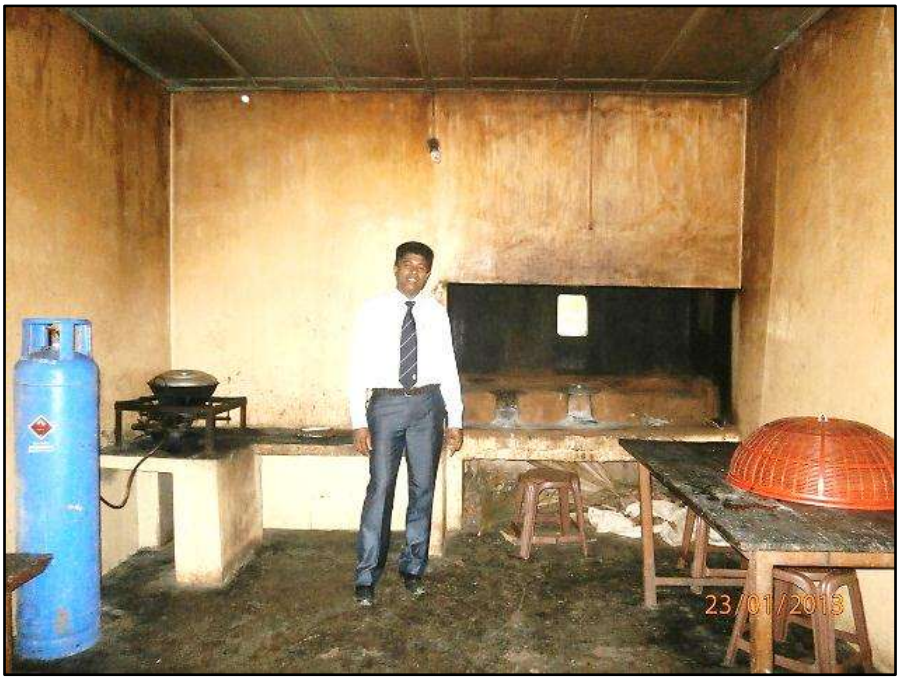


Figure 4.8 The kitchen indicated the standard of living of the residents. This kitchen is supposed to prepare meals for over 150 institutionalized girls.

4.5.2.6 Productive and valued activities:

Vocational training is provided in some children's homes (Figure 4.9). However, the training options are limited and are current or within standards. The training that has been given for many years included carpentry, metalwork, sewing, electric mechanism, masonry, agriculture and fabric painting (DPCCS 2010a).

Figure 4.9 Engagement in productive and valued activities is below the anticipated level. Of the 27 homes visited, only 3 homes had been conducting vocational training for children.

Jayasooriyya (2008) argues that at times untrained staff sometimes provide the training. Furthermore, it is questionable as to what extent this training would facilitate rehabilitation and reintegration since they do not match the demands of the modern job market. Jayathilake and Amarasuriya (2005) reveal that children are not content with this training and are keen to have training on information technology, etc. There is an obvious lack of variety in training options/opportunities as observed during the placement where most of the girls are sent to garment factories and most of the boys join the armed forces. Samaraweera (1997) argues that the skills of masonry are taught by building and breaking down, and re-building, a short wall is to wonder what vocational training means in these settings. The following narrative emphasises the introduction of productive, valued activities into institutional care settings.

> "Many children under our care just live upon free meals and have become lazy and lethargic. The institutional environment has influenced such behaviours, as they do not conduct valued programs. Their daily routine has been three meals, schooling, playing, praying and watching television. These innocent children need to be trained for a living so as to enable them to send a moderate life without being a burden to the society. Had they not been provided vocational training on demanding trades, they would become thieves, drug addicts, prostitutes and members of gangs who are threat to a peaceful society. Thus, I propose that to enhance life chances of children, establishment of a central vocational centre is worthy of consideration" (matron/warden's response).

4.5.2.7 Quality of social interactions / Affiliation:

One of the greatest concerns that has been underscored in many of the research reports written on institutionalized children, and which affects upon their competence, is the lack of opportunities to acquire the social skills required for adult life (Jayathilake & Amarasuriya 2005; Mann 2001; Tolfree 1995). The disciplined life within the confines of the institution provides limited exposure to the external world, and ill prepares its inhabitants for a complex social life and multiple role fulfilment following reintegration.

Space to develop leadership, social and decision-making skills (such as children's societies) is barely available, an issue compounded by the lack of opportunities for social interaction, life skills development and engagement in religious and cultural practices. Information regarding the child's family, placement options and case proceedings are rarely provided. The children's interaction with the community is very limited as they are kept under 'protective custody'. Attempts are made to discourage links being built with the community, reinforcing the feelings of marginalization felt by the children. The Probation Officer plays a significant role in the institutionalized child's life, as s/he is required to maintain close contact with the child and his/her family while the child is in the institution. Yet this rarely happens, due to which the child's stay in the institution is prolonged (Jayasooriyya 2008).

4.5.2.8 Environment / Other species:

Educating and young people about how to enjoy and care for the environment is very important. Children in institutional care facilities often lack opportunities to interact with the environment as

they are kept under protective custody behind high walls and locked gates (Jayasooriyya 2008). The majority of the institutions do not give the children an opportunity to engage in Boys Scout and Girl Guide movements or similar activities where talents, skills and knowledge can be encouraged, while interacting with the environment. Through participation, they will have opportunities to learn more about the implications of the way we choose to live our lives in the short, medium and long terms. Today's children will encounter the adverse effects of global population growth and subsequent pollution by adults at the expense of the environment. Thus, it is important to draw children's attention to carbon footprints and climatic changes.

Romm's declaration (2015, p. 1) "we, as humans, are called upon to play a reasonable role in our caring for each other and for the earth" is applicable to the field of institutional care of children. Indeed caring for the earth may indirectly involve caring for children. Environmental impacts due to global climatic changes and the adverse effects of human activities on natural systems are among major causes for children's institutionalization in Sri Lanka. Owing to tsunami, floods, cyclones, landslides, droughts and elephant attacks, children become orphaned and families become homeless. As a result, children are institutionalized in children's homes as a measure to address their need for housing, food and other basic human rights issues (source: Provincial DPCCS commissioners' interviews). Thus, in a Sri Lankan context, environmental impacts have been a catalyst for the creation and the growth of many children's homes, beyond the need created by other causes such as poverty, parents' migration for work abroad and domestic violence (Ariyadasa 2015b). This emphasises that while giving opportunities to enjoy the environment, institutionalized children should be trained for protecting and caring for the environment from adverse human activities.

Children learn about their rights and responsibilities by being given the opportunity to express their ideas and to translate policy into practice through small-scale interventions that make a difference to this generation and succeeding ones. Such interventions can include lessons on recycling, use and re-use of resources, composting, organic and ethical farming, water and energy conservation techniques and much more (see chapter 6.5.2 for more information).

4.5.2.9 Culture and entertainment / Play:

Sports, leisure and recreation are essential for the healthy development of a child as well as for the process of rehabilitation. Yet the required facilities are not adequately available in most institutions (Figure 4.10). For instance, space for outdoor sports is available in only some of the institutions and equipment, even for indoor games, is in short supply. In certain institutions, the children are not allowed to play outside, and even in institutions where it is allowed, they are being closely monitored by the caregivers, restricting their freedom and enjoyment. (Jayathilake & Amarasuriya 2005).

The argument of the following manager emphasises the need for sports and aesthetic education in securing future life chances of children in institutions:

> "Children should be directed for sports training and aesthetic subjects such as dancing, music and singing. Sports and aesthetic education will provide them pleasure and assist them to keep away from their pressure of being victimised as institutionalised children. Furthermore, by introducing these fields there is greater chance for some children to select their future paths as sportsmen, singers, dancers and musicians" (manager's narrative).

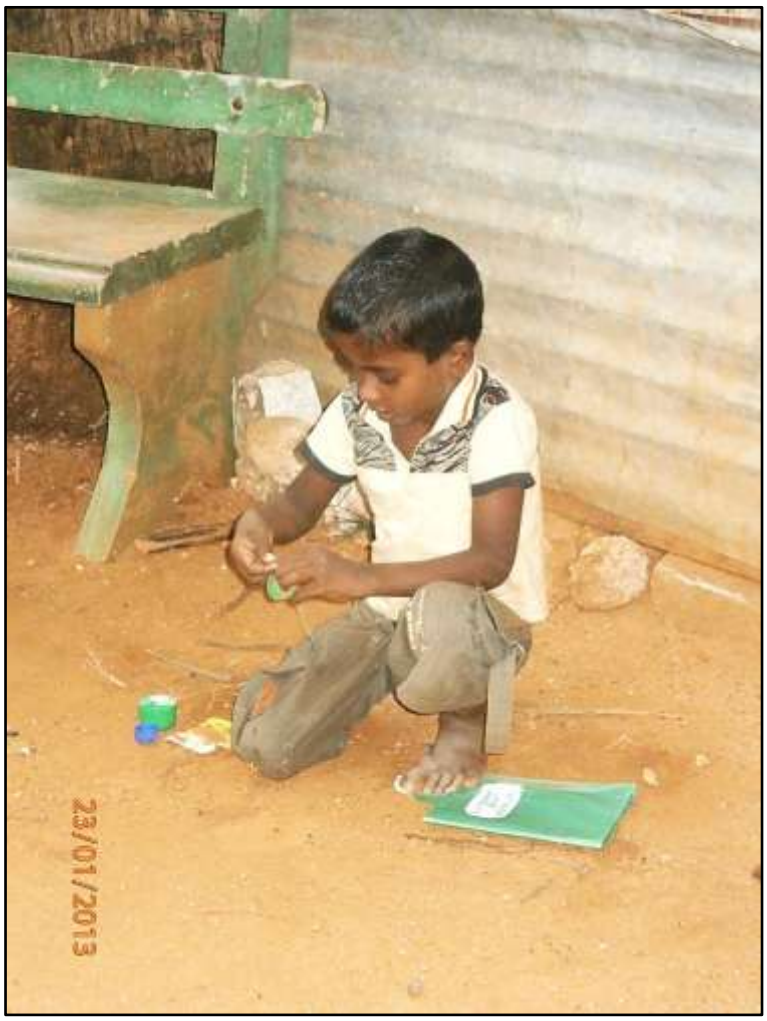


Figure 4.10 Creative play by a 6 year old with found objects.

4.5.2.10 Basic rights / Control over one's environment:

Jayasooriyya (2008) asserts that children in institutions are rarely given the opportunity to voice their opinions and participate in decision-making processes. Within the routine-driven life of the institution, there is little space for individual or collective choice and self-determination. In institutional settings, it is the norm for the individual's rights to be subsumed in deference to institutional needs such as maintenance of discipline and order.

Jayasooriyya (2008, p. 29) describes how children have denied control over their environment and how their freedom has been restricted in institutional care settings as follows:

> "Everything from meal-times to the programmes they watch on TV is controlled by caregivers. Liberty and mobility of children are severely restricted, justified by the dangers posed by the world outside the gates. Every move of the child is scrutinized for the purpose of 'disciplining' the child, to the extent that they felt that they were treated like prisoners. Progressively, the chid is subjected to subjugation and is disempowered. Cumulatively, these obstruct the child's experience of competence."

An obvious place for children to have some self-determination would be in the placement committee meetings, which will determine whether the child stays or is, moved out of the home. These meetings, which are intended to review the progress of the individual child, are not held regularly, and even when held, do not involve meaningful chid participation in accordance with Article 25 of the CRC (United Nations 1989). Furthermore, no complaint procedure is in place for children to report abuses taken place within the institution.

Children's participation essentially requires a child-friendly environment: a place where children feel safe and comfortable about speaking out freely about their concerns; where children's rights are recognised; and where children are, as a matter of course, involved in all decisions made about their lives (West 2003).

4.5.3 Relationship of the core themes to Nussbaum's capabilities

The factors that cause children to become institutionalized can be summarized as follows:

- Being unable to live in good health and to be adequately nourished.
- Lacking security against sexual assault and domestic violence, and being unable to have adequate shelter.
- Being unable to move freely from place to place.
- Missing adequate education that enables the children to use their senses, to imagine, think, and reason.
- An inability to purchase goods and services beyond basic ones.
- Being unable to engage in various forms of social interaction.
- Lacking a good student-life balance to develop valued activities outside the school.
- Being unable to enjoy life, to play, to enjoy recreational activities and engaging in sport and cultural activities.
- Being unable to have basic rights such as freedom of speech and religion.

'Being unable to' simply means inability, incapacity or incapability. Therefore, the accumulation of these listed inabilities can be identified as deprivation of capabilities. A child may have been removed from their natural birth environment and become institutionalized due to deprivation of one or more of these capabilities.

This PAR has identified that children are pushed or pulled and sustain prolonged institutionalised life in children's homes because they are deprived of one or more of the prescribed capabilities. If the child is to be reintegrated into his/her family, those missing capacities have to be addressed

and transformed into capabilities. These capabilities are closely related to Nussbaum (2011, pp. 33-4) fundamental capabilities that one should be inculcated to enhance his/her quality of life.

4.6 Subjective and objective well-being: A critical analysis of quality of life of children in institutional care

> "Quality of life is a broader concept than economic production and living standards. It includes the full range of factors that influences what we value in living, reaching beyond its material side. … arguments by themselves are sufficient to suggest that resources are an insufficient metric for quality of life. Which other metric should be used instead for assessing quality of life depends on the philosophical perspective taken" (Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi 2008, p. 61).

This argument is relevant to the lives of children in institutional care. Children from economically wealthy backgrounds too are among those undergoing alternative care in children's homes. This clearly demonstrates that resources alone are not sufficient for the well-being of children and enhancement of their quality of life. Furthermore, for those children who were brought into care due to deficient resources in their natural birth environments (resources that are required to satisfy physiological, emotional, social and esteems needs), provision of resources alone has not made much difference to their quality of life (Save the Children 2005). Stiglitz et al. (2008) contends that quality of life can be measured in both subjective and objective ways. Each of these are investigated in terms of the core axial themes identified in the PAR.

4.6.1 Subjective measures of quality of life

Concerning subjective measures of quality of life, Stiglitz et al. (2008, pp. 64-66) state that:

> "In recent years, much research has focused on what people value and how they act in real life and this has highlighted large discrepancies between standard assumptions of economic theory and real world phenomena. … Subjective approaches distinguish between the dimensions of quality of life and the objective factors shaping these dimensions. In turn, the subjective dimensions of quality of life encompass several aspects."

Life chances and aspirations of children and young people in institutional care have direct relevancy to their quality of life while being cared for in the institution, because life chances are the opportunities each individual has to improve their quality of life. The first aspect of the subjective dimension of quality of life according to Stiglitz et al. is the people's evaluations of their life as a whole or of its various domains, such as family, work and financial conditions. The second aspect of the subjective dimension of quality of life is represented by people's actual feelings, such as pain, worry and anger, or pleasure, pride and respect. "All these aspects of subjective well-being should be measured separately to get a satisfactory appreciation of people's lives" (Stiglitz et al. 2008, p. 66).

The stories behind the children in institutional care that were analysed in this PAR demonstrate this argument as most of them have been institutionalized due to these subjective dimension of quality

of life. They are issues within their family, work and financial conditions as well as worry, anger and divergence of pleasure, pride and respect.

4.6.2 Objective measures of quality of life

With references to objective features shaping quality of life, Stiglitz et al. (2008, p. 67) argues that:

> "Both the capability and the fair allocation approaches give prominence to people's objective conditions and the opportunities available to them, while differing in how these features are valued and ranked. While these objective features may also have an instrumental value for subjective well-being, both of these conceptual approaches regard an expansion of people's opportunities in these domains as intrinsically important for people's lives."

4.6.2.1 Health

"Health is a basic feature shaping both the length and the quality of people's lives. Its assessment requires good measures of both mortality and morbidity" (Stiglitz et al. 2008, p. 68). Loss of health and/or the death of the permanent caregiver of the child, influences them being institutionalized and then the recovery becomes an issue. It is best in every manner to protect one's health as it directly influences the quality of life (e.g. good health = happy family life, sustainable education/work and better financial conditions).

4.6.2.2 Education

Stiglitz et al. (2008, p. 71) identifies that:

> "Better educated people typically have better health status, lower unemployment, more social connections and greater engagement in civic and political life. …there is a consensus that education brings a range of returns that benefit both the person investing in the education and the community in which they live."

Children who undergo alternative care represent children who have, in various ways, lost one or more educational opportunities while they were living with their parent/s. As a result, children refuse schooling or they dropout from schooling. This can be better illustrated by the following story of Nirmala who undergo alternative care in a voluntary children's home in Sri Lanka.

> "Nirmala was born as the first child to a family whose father was a cattleman. Nirmala's father was a heavy alcoholic and used to fight with her mother almost every day seriously victimizing Nirmala. A second baby was born when Nirmala was aged six and therefore, Nirmala had to quit her school after nine months of her schooling. She became the baby sitter to her infant sister, as her mother had to find work to feed the family. Their father utilized all his earnings for alcohol. Two years later Nirmala's mother left home with her infant child, abandoning Nirmala to her alcoholic, drug addicted father. She could no longer tolerate the violence and torture of her husband. When the Child Rights Promotion Officer found Nirmala at the age of ten, her father had heavily, physically, and emotionally abused her. After an investigation, she was handed over to an alternative care institution (voluntary children's home) and by that time, she had only had nine months education in all her life. She had missed five years formal education as well as so much of other skills, which a typical child would have experienced at her age. The management of the institution sent her to school, kept her in a lower grade class, and gave her support with extra classes. However, none of the attempts enabled Nirmala to catch up with her studies. Nirmala draws but does not write. While she copies the words

> very nicely on her notebook from those which appear on the black board, but to her, all those characters are drawings and give no sounds or meanings" (manager's narrative).

The manager of Nirmala's home states that he requested the school principal and enrol Nirmala in a lower grade than her age group because it better suited her education level. However, it had not worked well as Nirmala was heavily bullied, not only by the students, but also by some of the teachers. As a result, she refused schooling. It is a sobering fact that 15% of children living in a residential institution do not attend school regularly (Roccella 2007) and data from the current study shows this as more than 23%.

4.6.2.3 Personal activities

Stiglitz et al. (2008) asserts that how people spend their time and the nature of their personal activities matters for quality of life, irrespective of the income generated. When evaluating the family backgrounds of children that undergo institutional care, personal activities of their families have become one of the major reasons for the children's entry into care. A story of an institutionalized child demonstrates this. According to a probation officer, this child's father was a drug dealer and earned good income to raise his family. As a consequence of his dealing, he was jailed. No matter how much he earned and how luxurious the life he spent, his personal activity jeopardised his family integrity and esteem. The PO's full statement is as follows:

> "As a consequence of father's long period of incarceration owing to drug abuse and dealing, subsequently the mother started living with a new partner. Later, she flew abroad with him leaving her child behind with her partner's family. According to anonymous information, when the DPCCS advocated for the child's safety, it was found that the child had been subjected to physical and emotional abuse from both her relatives and her mother's partner's family. No one had claimed for the child's guardianship. For the sake of child's health, safety and care, I recommend institutional care for the child at a children's home" (PO's response).

Activities such as drug dealing for income and migration of parent(s) for paid work to overcome poverty issues have reduced both subjective and objective measures of quality of life to very low levels. The subjective domain of the financial condition could be higher due to drug dealing and migration but it may result in reduction in other domains including family integrity, happiness, satisfaction and esteem.

4.6.2.4 Political voice and governance

> "Political voice is an integral dimension of the quality of life. Intrinsically, the ability to participate as full citizens, to have a say in the framing of policies, to dissent without fear and to speak up against what one perceives to be wrong are essential freedoms" (Stiglitz et al., 2008, p. 78).

Institutionalized children and their parents are often vulnerable within this domain. Children, being under 18, are denied the ability to participate as full citizens and to have a say in the framing of policies. Parents, being mostly uneducated and economically powerless, are often afraid to speak up against what they perceive to be wrong.

4.6.2.5 Social connections

Institutionalization causes barriers to social connections. According to Stiglitz et al. (2008, p. 80), “Social connections improve quality of life in a variety of ways. People with more social connections report higher life-evaluations, as many of the most pleasurable personal activities involve socializing”. This domain has mostly affected the children to be institutionalized as their parents struggle in the worst side of this domain. Alcoholic and drug addicted fathers could jeopardize their families with their social connections, reporting lower life evaluations such as un-healthiness, probability of losing the job and risking their children being abused.

4.6.2.6 Environmental connections

Stiglitzet al. (2008, p. 81) stress that “Environmental conditions are important not only for sustainability, but also because of their immediate impact on the quality of people’s lives”. Unfavourable environmental conditions have made a huge impact on the quality of people’s lives. The large number of children who have been institutionalized due to natural disasters and environmental catastrophes caused by adverse human activities demonstrates the significance of this domain with regard to the quality of life of children in institutional care (Ariyadasa 2013; IDLO 2007).

4.6.2.7 Personal insecurity

> “Personal insecurity includes external factors that put at risk the physical integrity of each person: crime, accidents, natural disasters and climatic changes are some of the most obvious factors.” (Stiglitz et al., 2008, p. 83).

Violence in countries ravaged by conflict and war also can be regarded as threats to personal security. Institutionalized children in Sri Lanka represent this domain well. Crimes committed by parents, Domestic violence and civil war have contributed to institutionalization of a large proportion of children currently in institutional care (Ariyadasa 2013). A PO has documented a story of an institutionalised child from the war-affected area in Sri Lanka (Northern Province) as follows:

> “This child’s father’s whereabouts is unknown. Mother has left home. Under these circumstances, immediate steps need to be taken for the child’s safety and care. The temporary carers (relationship is unknown) refuse to take care of the child. The child is in an extremely dangerous situation with regard to her safety. She is destitute and I recommend her to be looked after in a children’s home” (children’s home document).

4.6.3 Relationship of the core themes to measures of well-being

The core themes identified in this PAR demonstrate the relevance to the measures of well-being. Reintegration and non-formal education parallel social connection, political voice and governance, and environmental condition; health parallels health care; safety parallels security; formal education parallels education and vocational training parallels personal activities (Fig. 4.11). Thus, Stiglitz et al.’s subjective and objective well-being approach provide a comprehensive framework for conceptualising well-being of young people in children’s homes.

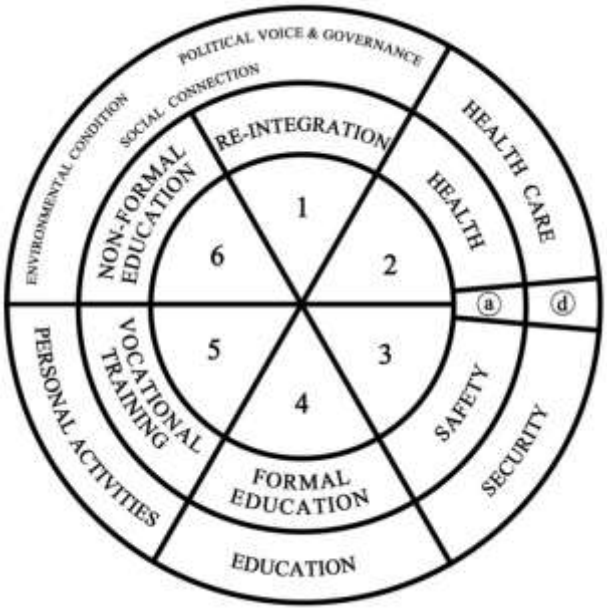


Figure 4.11 Relationship of the core axial themes (inner circle) to Stiglitz et al.'s notion of subjective and objective well-being (outer circle).

4.7 Synthesis of core themes and the capability approaches

Analysis of the primary data of this study and the reviewed literature demonstrates that institutionalization has paralyzed children in terms of mobility and limited their life chances and aspirations. The 'Basic needs' perspective outlined in this chapter has recognized that a 'capabilities approach' (CA) is applicable to children (Saito 2003, p. 26). A 'CA' has demonstrated that the fundamental capabilities are identical to a human rights development index to address the issues of the institutionalized children (Nussbaum 2011). The 'notion of subjective and objective wellbeing' justifies that the identified core axial themes are closely related to the core human rights issues of the institutionalized children (Stiglitz et al. 2008). A theoretical framework based on the CA can fill this gap. It will also allow provision from a theoretical viewpoint, the best interests of the child during reintegration with their family or alternative permanent care opportunities. Thus, this PAR clarifies that to assure the mobility of institutionalized children in terms of children's rights and to realize aspirations in terms of their life chances, application of capabilities approach is relevant and significant.

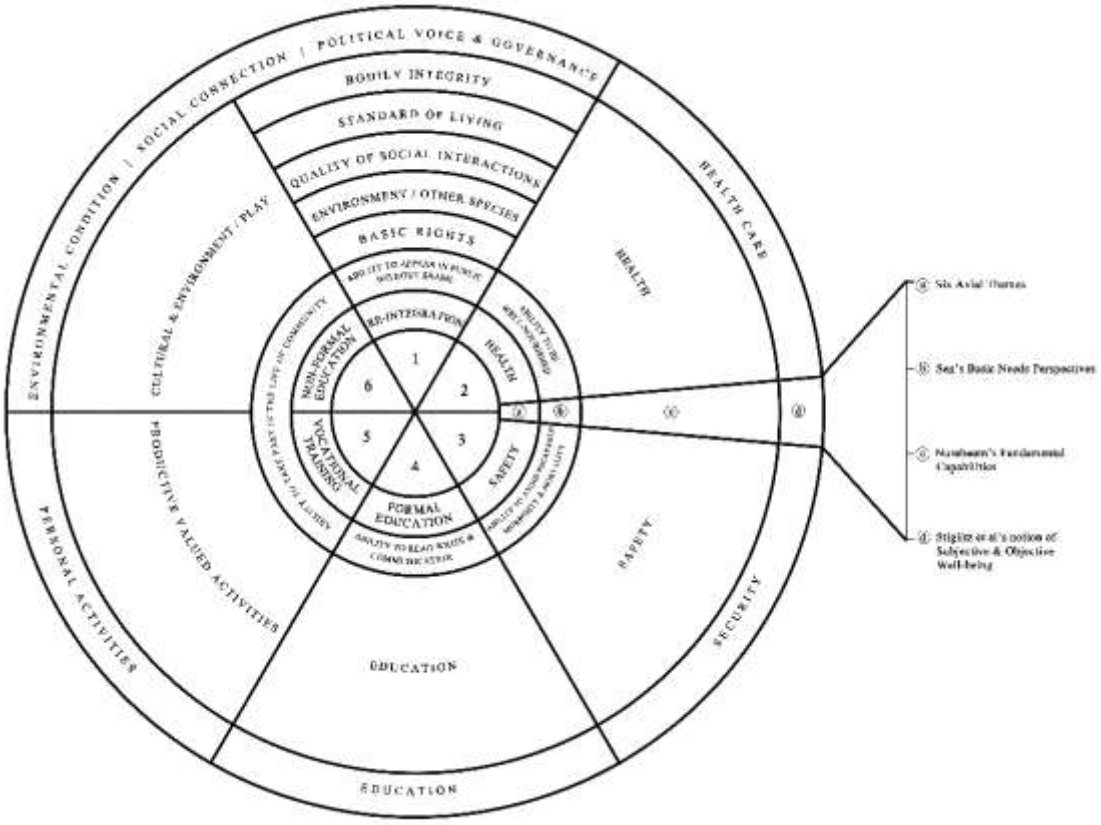


Figure 4.12 Integration of core axial themes and the concept of capabilities approach.

At first sight, the CA is a natural starting point for laying down the methodological foundations of policy evaluation and implications in achieving the aims of this PAR at the macro level. It starts from a multi-dimensional concept of the child's individual well-being. A child's well-being is demonstrated by their "functioning", that is his/her achievement in various aspects of life. Conceptually moving the space of achieved functioning to the space of capabilities introduces the theoretical framework to address their human rights issues. Robeyns (2005) explains that CA can be used as a framework to develop and evaluate policies by governments and non-governmental organisations. Thus, Sen's (1990) 'Basic needs perspective' influenced by Nussbaum (2000) 'Capabilities Theory of Justice', scrutinized by Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi (2008) 'Notion of subjective and objective well-being' well inform a theoretical framework for policy evaluation of children's homes in a broader multi-dimensional setting (Figure 4.12).Enhancing life chances: How we prevent children's institutionalization and sustain their lives in their natural birth environments.

CHAPTER 5 PREVENTING INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF CHILDREN

This study proposes a new praxis based on human scale development for prevention of the institutional care of children. It uses the Human Scale Development (HSD) based on Max-Neef's (1991, 1992) Being, Doing, Having and Interacting index. This helps to identify strategies in terms of what can be done to support families to enable them to keep their children through being caring and doing what needs to be done to support children. Furthermore, where they do not have capability to support them by having links and interactions with other organisations. This is where improved governance could be put into place through public sector involvement, NGO and private sector support.

UN Guidelines paragraph 9 highlights the state's role for preventing the separation of children from their parents as follows:

> "As part of efforts to prevent the separation of children from their parents, States should seek to ensure appropriate and culturally sensitive measures: (a) To support family caregiving environments whose capacities are limited by factors such as disability, drug and alcohol misuse, discrimination against families with indigenous or minority backgrounds, and living in armed conflict regions or under foreign occupation; (b) To provide appropriate care and protection for vulnerable children, such as child victims of abuse and exploitation, abandoned children, children living on the street, children born out of wedlock, unaccompanied and separated children, internally displaced and refugee children, children of migrant workers, children of asylum seekers, or children living with or affected by HIV/AIDS and other serious illnesses" (United Nations 2010, p. 3).

Institutionalisation separates children from their parents. It can lead deprivation of human rights. Thus, this chapter seeks strategies for preventing the institutionalization of children in line with the a priori UN norms outlined in the UN Guidelines paragraphs 32 to 38 (United Nations 2010, p. 7).

5.1 Introduction

Institutionalisation of children becomes an option as an alternative care when children do not have natural birth parents. However, in the Sri Lankan context the fact that only 8% of the institutionalized population are orphans identifies that the rest (92%) have at least one parent. When over 90% of the institutionalised population has single or both parents, there should have been a higher potential for preventing their institutionalisation. The best option would have been to identify possibilities for preventing institutionalisation in the first place. However, as explained earlier; the lack of interest in investigating family based alternatives is simply because institutional placement is far less complex. While preventing unnecessary institutionalisation, there is an urgent need to find strategies to reunify the children who have parent/s and who undergo unnecessary care at institutions. This will be discussed in chapter 7 in detail. This chapter focuses on implementing UN Guidelines in the context of designing programs that aim to keep children in their natural birth environments.

This study shows that direct and indirect effects of poverty contribute towards children's institutionalisation. The intention is to promote their wellbeing and to protect human rights. However, in many institutional care environments, children's wellbeing has not been adequately attended to. This controversy has been addressed in the UN Guidelines stating that children should be brought up in their natural birth environment or in a family based permanent alternative. This chapter investigates the impacts of socio-economic and cultural environments on children before their institutionalization and addresses the first research question of this study: "How do we prevent children from becoming institutionalized and keep them in their natural birth environments?"

5.2 Poverty drives the institutionalisation of children

Taking the primary data and literature findings into consideration, this chapter reveals how poverty has affected children's institutionalization. Numerous authors (Jayasooriyya 2008; Jayathilake & Amarasuriya 2005; Save the Children 2005; Save the Children, OECD & UNICEF 2011) have identified poverty and its consequences as the principal reason for institutionalisation of children in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, according to De Silva and Punchihewa (2011) a survey of children in institutions in the North East of Sri Lanka has showed that 40% of institutionalized population had been placed in children's homes due to poverty. These arguments are in line with the empirical findings of this PAR.

Poverty, not only sacrifices necessities but for children poverty forsake parental care and affection. Direct effects of poverty have compelled to institutionalise their children owing to their inability to provide the required food, health care and education. Another major factor that appears to have attracted many of those who placed children in institutions was the provision of free educational facilities, uniforms, shoes, exercise books, other materials and extra support for education by means of tuition classes by children's homes (Vasudevan 2014). Thus, it is identified that children are institutionalised not only because of direct poverty but also due to adverse indirect effects of poverty. In this chapter, I identify these effects of poverty that have caused children to be institutionalized and I also explore the effects of poverty on children's life chances.

5.2.1 Poverty as a direct reason for institutionalization

The following statement found amongst documents filed by a PO is one of many examples that manifest poverty as a direct reason for institutionalization.

> "This child has no father. Mother is alive but she is mentally handicapped and has no earning capacities. As a result, she has become dependent on other people. Thus, mother is unable to provide her child with proper care, nutrition and education. Furthermore, when her illness become critical, she keeps her child close to her. Under these circumstances, it is highly likely that the child is exposed to exploitative environment. Considering these poverty and safety issues she is categorised as destitute and it is recommended that she is institutionalized in a children's home for a period of one year" (children's home document).

The UN Guidelines[46] state that:

> "Financial and material poverty, or conditions directly and uniquely imputable to such poverty, should never be the only justification for the removal of a child from parental care, for receiving a child into alternative care, or for preventing his/her reintegration, but should be seen as a signal for the need to provide appropriate support to the family."

Thus, while primary and secondary data of this study indicate poverty as a major reason for the institutionalisation of many children in residential care, this cannot be justified in terms of the policies outlined in the UN Guidelines. Consequently, the UN Guidelines have influenced UNICEF's role to advocate for alternative remedies for children:

- Whose homes don't or can't provide adequate care and support and,
- Whose parents are desperate to provide their children with opportunities they themselves simply cannot provide.

Given that the best possible environment for children is generally with their families, it is optimal to prevent children being separated from their homes in the first place. Thus, the preferred solution to the first situation according to UNICEF's experience is simple and cost-effective support provided in a timely fashion to households. It may both reduce the separation of children from their families and further encourage children's reintegration after institutionalisation (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014a, 2014b; UNICEF 2012; United Nations 1989).

The UN Guidelines[47] insist that separation initiated by the child's parents should be prevented. However, the following story from a children's home document is an example of an inevitable institutionalization in terms of separation initiated by child's parents.

> "This child's father and mother live separately. Father has 6 years of incarceration history. Child used to live with her mother. Once mother migrated for work abroad leaving the child with her mother. When returned from abroad she came to know that her house had been smashed to the ground by a wild elephant. Now they have abandoned the house due to safety reasons. This mother is desperate to institutionalize her child. During the field supervision, it has been revealed that the child spends her life in a very risky and exploitative environment. She has missed her schooling for months. The child has once before been institutionalized in a children's home in Minuwangoda area. Mother admits that it is unsafe to keep her child and she voluntarily requests us to send her child to a children's home" (children's home document).

The family as a social institution has been idealised, but in reality, many children experience serious difficulties and problems in their own family environments. Vasudevan (2014) emphasises that the major reasons are the lack of safety, discipline and educational opportunities. In such circumstances that children's homes offer several educational and extracurricular opportunities, they appear for families to be a better choice for children to grow up in.

[46] UN Guidelines paragraph 15 (United Nations, 2010, p. 4).
[47] UN Guidelines paragraph 156.a & 156.b (United Nations, 2010, p. 22).

It is necessary to ensure that all households have access to basic food and medical supplies and other services, including education. Furthermore, the UN Guidelines emphasise the significance of limiting the residential care options and restricting their use to those situations where it is absolutely necessary. However, this PAR demonstrates that poverty, parents' illness, their migration or incarceration and impairments of children have become reasons for parents to voluntarily request institutionalization of their child (Figure 5.1).

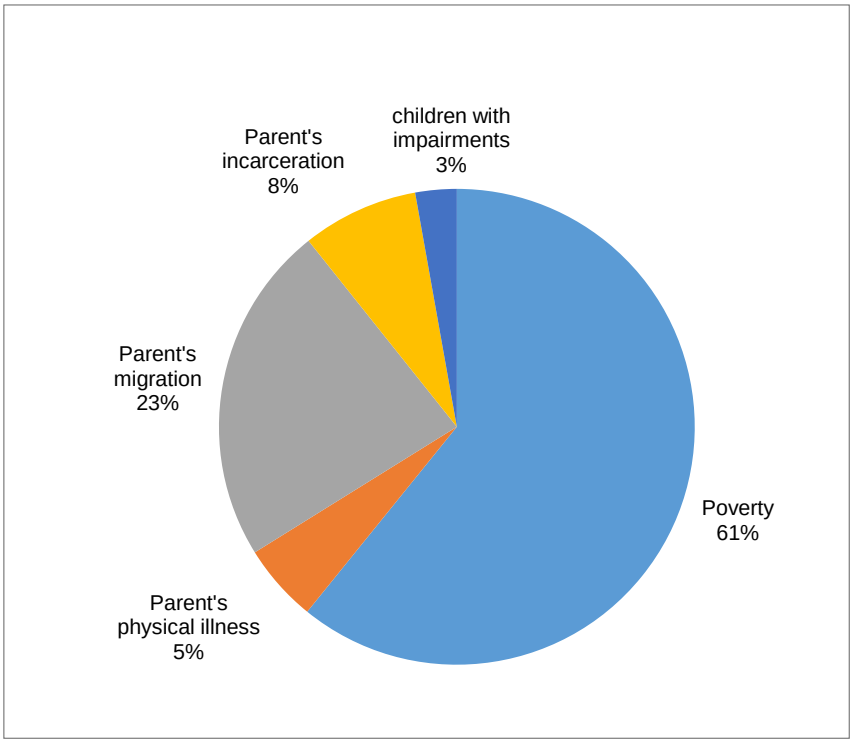


Figure 5.1 Separation initiated by child's parents and the percentages values of such contributing factors.[48]

Of the five contributing factors for separation initiated by child's parents, poverty dominates, representing the reason for 61% of institutionalisations (Figure 5.1). The prevailing opinion amongst the provincial probation commissioners is that owing to poverty, parents cannot feed their children, send them to school and attend to their health needs. Then they choose to send their children to a voluntary children's home as an institutional alternative to caring for them at home.

In cases where families are incapable of taking proper care of children as described in the second situation, the preferred solution in UNICEF's experience is the use of networks of foster families (Roccella 2007; UNICEF 2015). This is in accord with the UN Guidelines paragraphs 118 to 122 (United Nations 2010). UNICEF further suggests that additional support from the State to these foster families can form the backbone of an alternative care system for children (UNICEF 2012). For instance, this system is practiced in Australia. A family that agrees to host a child is regularly acknowledged financially through the relevant foster care agency, which is financially backed by

[48] (Number of children institutionalised for different broad reasons from 27 VCHs (3 homes from each province). Numbers represent those institutionalised from September – December 2012.

the government (Ariyadasa 2015b). Orphanages have been completely phased out in favour of this system.

Australia. is compliant with UN Guidelines[49] which state that "the use of residential care should be limited to cases where such a setting is specifically appropriate, necessary and constructive for the individual child concerned and in his/her best interests". However, officials of foster care agencies stress that finding enough foster care families is difficult. According to an officer of a South Australian foster care agency "On most occasions, the child and the social worker have to stay in hotel rooms until they find a permanent care solution. Sometimes, the child travels to school for many weeks or months from the hotel".

The UN Guidelines[50] state that:

> "while recognizing that residential care facilities and family-based care complement each other in meeting the needs of children, where large residential care facilities (institutions) remain, alternatives should be developed in the context of an overall deinstitutionalization strategy, with precise goals and objectives, which will allow for their progressive elimination…"

In Sri Lanka, the foster care system is hardly practiced and therefore, the alternative is mostly large residential care[51]. Most residential care institutions house more than 25 children and children sleep in dormitory facilities. Children's homes that house over 100 children are not uncommon. This is despite the fact that the UN Guidelines[52] explain that facilities providing residential care should be small and organized around the rights and needs of the child, in a setting as close as possible to a family or small group situation (DPCCS 1991; United Nations 2010).

5.2.2 'Parents' migration for working abroad' as an indirect reason for institutionalization

Sri Lankan women commonly work as domestic labourers in Middle-Eastern countries to address the issue of household poverty. Basnayaka et al. (2012) explain, "Migration occurs for various reasons such as education, businesses, seeking refuge, training and employment. But the truth behind the migration of Sri Lankan women is mostly poverty and low economic status of salary in Sri Lanka". Furthermore, Save the Children (2005) indicates that well over 30 % of children's institutionalization has been due to a mother's foreign employment. This PAR demonstrates that parents due to their migration for work abroad initiate 23% of the children's institutionalization (Figure 5.1).

In my own experience as the manager of a children's home, over five years of meeting records, highlight a common experience: The mother works abroad, often leaving her children behind in her

[49] UN Guidelines paragraph 21 (United Nations 2010, p. 4).
[50] UN Guidelines paragraph 23 (United Nations 2010, p. 5).
[51] Residential care: Care provided in any non-family-based group setting, such as places of safety for emergency care, transit centres in emergency situations, and all other short- and long-term residential care facilities, including group homes (United Nations 2010, p. 6).
[52] UN Guidelines paragraph 123 (United Nations 2010, p. 18).

husband's care. The deprivation of care is undesirable and cannot be replaced by her earnings, but this does provide a way to look after the children's physical needs. Largely, this salary is transferred to the children's father. The mother expects her husband to use this money in a sensible and efficient way, such as feeding the children, as material support for the schooling of the children, to address any health issues, savings and maintenance of their house. These are the priorities that the mother wants to spend her earnings on. Although she expects that the money would bring comfort to her family, the reality is often different. It is not uncommon for the money to be spent on alcohol, drugs, gambling and prostitution. Basnayaka et al. (2012) describe this situation as such:

> "The majority of migrant women belong to disadvantaged communities where the traditional livelihoods are not viable. The reasons for migration are noted as being due to lack of access to regular and substantial income and the inability to bear the rising cost of living. In addition, some of the major aspirations of the migrant women were to build houses, collect dowry and to educate their children. Among the specific problems of the women that force them to migrate are high indebtedness, domestic violence and the alcohol addiction of spouses. Female-headed households remain fair segment of the migration population. The complexity of the present day migration stream has intensified with distinctions between migrant workers, trainees, tourists, refugees and displaced persons becoming increasingly blurred. Migrants in this sense include both voluntary migrants and forced migrants" (IOM 2010).

My own experience, and that of managers who I interviewed as part of this study, highlight a sad but not uncommon scenario. While the mother is working abroad, the family dynamics become even worse than the situation when the mother was at home. While she is home, the mother provided a voice to advocate for the family despite their financial difficulties. A father may find loneliness without his wife is intense and may turn to drink or drugs. He further finds that the only thing that gives meaning to his life is her money. He may well fall into bad company which could jeopardise the children's safety. School dropouts, starvation, insecurity, health issues and humiliation become daily burdens. Children may be denied most of their fundamental rights. To overcome the deteriorating family circumstances, institutionalization of the children is sought. A commissioner of a provincial (DPCCS) conveyed this, when he said:

> "After a mother leaves family behind for working abroad, the circumstances now pave the way for the children's institutionalisation of that family. The school or the community who witness the family deterioration reports to the officials about the threat to these children from their father's acts and behaviour. Or else, the father himself may want to have his children institutionalized so that he can engage in his wasteful ways. He contrives several reasons for such a request. He claims that his wife has gone abroad and he cannot go to work when the children are at home, as it would be a significant risk to their security and safety. To justify his reason he may further claim that his wife does not send him any money and that he must find work for the children's sake" (commissioner's interview).

There are no mechanisms within the system to prove that the father's request is genuine. Thus, officials tend to approve such requests and send the children into children's homes. If the officials were to make a comprehensive research of documents and seek evidence from the different agencies and the neighbourhood, there is a distinct possibility that the appeal would be found to be

false. The lack of coordination between governmental departments makes such attempts rare and ultimately the children are admitted to children's homes. When children are institutionalized, the responsibility is removed from the father that often leads the family towards a devastating and catastrophic collapse. Another commissioner's comments on how the system needs changes to address this issue are as follows:

> "In reality, the father could look after his family well from the money his wife sends, but many use the legal loopholes within the system to satisfy undesirable behaviours. When the children are in children's homes, the father does not have to spend money on their needs. The children's home and the government provide enough for them. This encourages him to spend and waste his wife's money. There is no proper tracking system to identify how much money his wife sends to him. The government recognises his poverty as a valid reason for child's institutionalization. Therefore, when officials cannot trace a family's income and if the parent's request for institutionalization of their child under the poverty factor, the government accepts the parents request even though it may not be in the best interest of the child" (commissioner's interview).

In summary, migration of mothers for work overseas has significantly contributed to children's institutionalization in Sri Lanka. Thus, researching and finding practical alternatives is an important contemporary issue.

5.3 Strategies to prevent institutionalization:

> "The weaving together of stories of what, works and why shapes the approach. Participants are invited to reflect on their lives in terms of what they already have and what they still need in order to enhance their wellbeing. They are asked to consider what they would be prepared to add to their 'in baskets' and what they would be prepared to add to their 'outer baskets'" (McIntyre-Mills, 2014, p. 1).

Whether it be the direct or indirect effect of poverty, there is great potential to prevent institutionalization through discussion and asking what people can offer. The following two discussions (5.3.1 & 5.3.2) provide examples for practical solutions to prevent, restrict or to avoid institutionalization of children. In this paradigm, the service users (parents) have been asked to fill their 'in baskets' with what they can offer to avoid their children's institutionalization. 'Outer baskets' are to be filled with what they think they would require keeping children from institutionalisation. As McIntyre-Mills (2008) in her "User-centric policy design to address complex needs" asserts that this kind of approach builds the capacity of participants to work systematically across organizations and community settings. The research aims to enable the service user and service providers to work together to achieve a better match between service user needs and service outcomes (McIntyre-Mills 2008, 2014b) drawing on the five axial themes: Home safety, Health, Purpose, Connection/belonging (people and place), Self-respect and confidence (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.2 Map for the pro forma (McIntyre-Mills 2008, p. 307).

5.3.1 Discussion 1: User centric design to prevent institutionalization

A child rights promotion officer's happiest experience provide evidence for a successful intervention to prevent institutionalization of two female siblings. His systemic approach avoided these children being sent into care and they were successfully reunited with their family without spending a single day in an institution. He revealed:

> "A father came to my office one day and requested me to find him a children's home for his two girls who were 7 and 5 years old. He said, "There is nobody to look after my girls while I am at work". He had several reasons to justify his request, but the major reason was that his wife had recently left him."

In the Sri Lankan context, this set of circumstances is sufficient to allow the DPCCS to proceed with the process of institutionalizing these children. However, this CRPO investigated the socio-economic background of the family and challenged the children's institutionalization:

> "This father had three boys as well. They are 10, 11 and 15. All five children and this father lived in a small house, which had only one bedroom and a kitchen. The father was a carpenter; he cooked for the family and left home early for work with his eldest son who assisted him in his work. Thus, he had several reasons for his decision to institutionalize his two girls. For example; "Who looks after my girls until I get back home? How can we all sleep in one room?" etc. Sometimes he had to leave home for several days at a time and he was concerned about meals and the security of his children. Obviously, his house was too small to accommodate six people. When I visited his place I found another thing,

> which he had not disclosed, there was no proper toilet. According to the father, when nature called, boys went to the nearby stream and girls used a 4X4 ft. square long drop toilet. Inside the structure was a concrete pipe with two wooden planks to step on. There was no roof. Two woven coconut leaves were used to lean against the door when in use."

His family structure, living environment and economic conditions were all factors encouraging both officials and the father himself to institutionalize these girls. However, this CRPO had discouraged this father's decision to send his girls to children's home, explaining the future consequences for him and his family. The CRPO then asked him to consider his options about resolving his major concerns.

According to the CRPO, this father had an unmarried sister who was willing to look after the children, but there was no room to accommodate her in his house. He had the skills as a carpenter to build an extra room and a proper toilet, but he did not have the financial resources. The CRPO explained how he managed to address this case.

> "I brought this case to our divisional secretary's attention and found two philanthropists to financially fund the extension and a new toilet for this family. This father with his colleagues and family's support, during weekends in three months completed the construction and added a new room and a toilet to their living environment. Presently, his sister (the children's aunt) stays in the new room with the two girls who were intended to be institutionalized at one stage" (CRPO's response).

Had these two girls been institutionalized, the family dilemma would not have been resolved. Rather it would have worsened. This case study can be viewed in the light of McIntyre-Mills (2014b, p. 2) where it states,

> "Instead of assuming that people have nothing, each person should be asked to consider what they can offer. It may be a story of survival, time to help another with their household chores or some food that they are able to share with a neighbour. It may be sympathy, a greeting or encouragement. These local gifts of a material and non-material nature are the basis of building reciprocity."

She further states that this philosophy underpins approaches to wellbeing. Learning to save by not wasting resources (human resources in this context) could help people to be more generous to one another, and to themselves, by allowing them to connect with their surroundings.

The CRPO has explored perceptions of what works, why and how (McIntyre-Mills 2014b). He has also strived to assess whether the process of engagement enables this father to move from denial to making changes towards a more sustainable future. Pro forma documents are replete with stories having similar reasons for the institutionalisation of children. Thus, the approach implemented by this CRPO can be considered a model to balance against other stories of institutionalised children in similar situations. Their stories need to be assessed within their individual social, cultural, political, economic and environmental contexts.

Had the father of this case study not been asked what he already had, his two girl children might have endured prolonged institutionalisation. The positive outcomes of the CRPO's approach added more life chances, by increasing the quality of life of the service users by means of:

- Being able to add more rooms to their house: Enhanced standard of living, enhanced bodily integrity, avoiding abusive environment.
- Being able to accommodate a carer thereby addressing safety and provision of meal issues for the children.
- Being able to add proper toilet facilities: Addressing safety, health and hygiene issues that might have occurred without a proper toilet.
- Being able to live together as a family: Enhanced self-esteem, confidence and family bond.

The CRPO's mediation reflects an a posteriori approach to prevent institutionalization of children. By understanding that the duty of the state is to provide decent and justifiable support for wellbeing based on a priory list of central capabilities, the CRPO as a policy officer had mediated in a timely manner to strengthen the family's potential to achieve certain capabilities. Furthermore, he supported them with opportunities such as finding well-wishers to build a proper toilet to overcome the threat of being ill due to the unhygienic nature of the toilet and the risk of falling in-to the long drop hole. The family, with the guidance of the CRPO and the support from the people around them, overcame their weaknesses by applying their strengths; the opportunities were utilized to eliminate or to minimise the threats.

5.3.2 Discussion 2: Supporting family based alternatives to avoid care institution when parents decide to work abroad

To avoid unnecessary institutionalization of children owing to parent's migration for work, a manager of a girls' home provided some suggestions:

> "To address this issue, the government should regulate a system for children's well-being from the inception of the story of parents' decisions to work abroad. This could lead to an agreement between the parents and the government to decide who is going to take over the well-being of the child while the parent works abroad. This type of mechanism could avoid unnecessary institutionalization and maintains family integrity."

He further stated that:

> "If the intention of mothers for working overseas is the well-being of their families, those families should be educated on how to achieve their objective. Financial and material achievements of the neighbours and the relatives who have experienced foreign employment have persuaded these parents toward their decision on working overseas. Once it is embedded in their mind, it is difficult to educate them on the consequences of their decision. The more economic and domestic dilemmas they encounter with, the more they incline towards finding a job overseas."

This manager's opinion through his experience revealed that the mothers' decision to find work abroad is mainly for the purpose of finding a way to relieve the physical and emotional pressures

that they suffer under a hectic family atmosphere. They are blind to the drastic consequences that they would have to conquer in future due to their decision. Thus, he says that it is meaningless to attempt changing their attitudes; rather it is necessary to help them with their decision.

> "It is the Child Rights Promotion Officers' responsibility to find out if there are children who would be affected due to parents' decisions to working overseas. Assessing the family dynamics would give a better picture of the future consequences when the mother leaves the family and thereby the CRPOs can respond to such concerns before their occurrence."

He proposes that the divisional secretariat should mediate to find the most appropriate alternative care for the needy children while the mother is away. The Child Rights Promotion Officer (CRPO), with the recommendation of the divisional secretary, should prepare an agreement between the parents and the government on how the children are to be looked after during their absence. The manager emphasised that the agreement should indicate the financial commitment from the family for looking after the child. He further explained that:

> "In the Sri Lankan context, mostly the overseas recruitment agencies find domestic labour opportunities for women. These agencies with their overseas partners decide the salaries for their employees. Thus, the government can add such agencies into the agreement and retrieve the payment that is intended for nurturing the child."

This manager's suggestion renders a solution for the potential undesirable situation when such money falls into the hands of the children's father. The CRPO can advocate for the maximum effectiveness of a mother's contribution while she is working abroad. When there is a monitoring process by government officials, there is a higher potential to look after the child within their natural birth environment. As such, the remaining parent (usually the father) has the least opportunity to fall into unethical practices. If it is not appropriate to keep the child in their birth environment, the best alternative would be care by relatives.

Grandparents, aunts, uncles and other relatives may be willing to volunteer to care for the child in their homes, but their own financial obligations might discourage them. However, the potential for financial payment for their contribution would assist to find an appropriate relative. The chosen relative can be paid a sufficient amount from the portion that is sent by the child's parent and the officials can advocate for the child's health, safety, education and safeguard their fundamental rights. Care through relatives helps the child to be brought up in a similar environment to their family and reduces the pressure and the trauma that they would have to endure if cared for under an institutional care setting. The manager adds:

> "The last resort should be institutional care. Thus, if relative care is deemed impossible, a family like care environment should be sought. Neighbourhood, family friend or foster care can be investigated. Financial assistance to these carers as in a similar manner to relative care gives officials the authority in determining the sort of facility given to the child" (manager's narrative).

The manager confirms that only if such family like care is impossible, should institutional care be considered. He emphasises that even if the child is sent to an institution, the care facilitators should be paid from the earnings of the parent overseas. Such a contribution eases the financial burden on the institution and maximises the care and protection that can be offered to the child. However, for those children who have already been institutionalized under these circumstances, a monitoring process should be implemented to identify their reintegration capabilities. The first resort should be reuniting them with their natural parents, and failing that, the possibility of care by relatives should be investigated (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014a, 2014b, Seneviratne & Mariam 2011).

The commonly accepted notion is that the child should be institutionalized as a 'last resort' and 'in the best interest of the child'. However, thousands of children are discarded into institutions as a matter of course, due to lack of concern and reluctance to explore alternatives. Furthermore, there is an unfounded belief in the ability of institutions to rehabilitate, care and protect the child. It is deemed to be the objective of institutionalization yet, ironically, the failure to achieve these objectives becomes more the justification for the existence of such institutions (Jayasooriyya 2008).

5.3.3 The significance of government's role for preventing institutionalisation

Provision of financial assistance, material resources and labour to overcome poverty issues, and thereby discouraging parents from their intention to institutionalise children, is a commonly accepted policy proposal to prevent institutional care. The strength of this policy guideline is weakened by the following incentives drawn by both push and pull factors of children into institutional care.

Poverty and migration of parents or caregivers are major causative factors in pushing children out of their family homes. Relationship difficulties caused by the death of parents, family separation, abusive environments and temporary inability of primary caregivers to cope are highlighted as the other major reasons for pushing children into institutionalization. Among the factors that pull the children towards institutions and keep them within institutions; education emerges as the foremost. Some children's home that provide quality education and provision of additional tuition can be highlighted as examples. Generally, many of the basic needs provided at the institutions such as food, water, shelter, clothing, access to health care services, information and materials required for education have been pull factors for parents who cannot afford to provide them for children in home. Provision of a protective environment for the children by some institutions is also seen as an attraction towards these institutions.

Government support in providing 'Samurdhi'[53] payments for low-income families is a factor helping to avoid institutional care for their children. However, paradoxically, receiving these payments has

[53] Sri Lanka Samurdhi Authority established under the Samurdhi Authority Act No. 30 of 1995 started to function with effect from 01st February 1996 (source: http://www.samurdhi.gov.lk/)

encouraged families to receive institutional care for their children as some officials have been inclined to accept and institutionalize children totally based on background poverty.

The work that relates to preventing institutional care for children is among the scope of CRPOs role. It is an immense strength if effectively utilized. The positive responses that this study received from CRPOs with regard to prevention of institutional care are minimal, but the case study discussed in chapter 5.2.3 gives an example of effective prevention.

Discussion 2 in chapter 5.32 provides perspectives for the need to regulate policies when parents decide to work abroad leaving their children in care institutions. The Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) made it mandatory for all female workers to submit a report on their family background (FBR) before leaving for overseas jobs from August 1, 2015[54]. Since 2012, FBR has been compulsory for only female workers leaving Sri Lanka to work in domestic service abroad.

The law states "Females with children under the age of 5 years are not recommended for foreign employment, while females with children above 5 years would only be recommended for working abroad if satisfactory alternative care arrangements are in place to ensure the protection of the children". This law has been heavily criticised by different rights groups for its discriminatory nature. The need to consider the wellbeing of the children under their parents care and thereby mitigate the occurrence of child abuse is a good thing but by restricting only the mother to provide FBR, has aroused public unrest. It directly takes away all the responsibilities of the father being accountable for the care, protection and wellbeing of children.

According to Daily News (2016) after the FBR report was made mandatory, there has been a huge decrease in the number of women with children under 5 years arriving at the agencies looking for jobs as domestic workers. This is a good trend, as the country has to face immense issues by sending women as overseas workers and it influences the government needs to find other mechanisms to provide females with job opportunities within Sri Lanka. However, the continuation of this act is doubtful unless the government takes action to remove the gender based discrimination portion from it. Rights Lawyer Lakshan Dias points out the need for such alteration as without change public unrest is fully justified.

"Article 12.1 states that every person is equal before law. Therefore, there cannot be one law for men and one law for women. If the FBR has to be there, then it should be for both men and women. The regulation only targets women migrant workers. This is a violation of the basic rights of being treated equally, regardless of religion, ethnicity, gender and language" (Daily News 2016).

This study does not pass judgment as the decisions of women to choose and engage in a preferred economic activity such as work abroad and take decisions regarding their lives independently. However a significant number of women opt to go abroad to work for other reasons.

[54] This is an enactment of a cabinet paper, which was approved in 2007 (Daily News, 2015).

According to Kottegoda (Daily News 2016) women choose to work overseas as an escape from domestic violence. Sheela[55] is one of them. According to a PO, Sheela has a 4-year-old girl and a 2-year-old boy. Her husband works at a tea plantation and is an alcoholic. Domestic violence by him has been a daily problem in this family. Sheela was compelled to migrate to the Middle East to work for two reasons, one was to overcome the abject poverty situation of her family and the second was to escape from her husband's daily beatings.

This study has revealed many incidents of child abuse that have taken place in families like Sheela's and have paved the way for their children's institutionalization. For these reasons, this study does not encourage mothers to leave their children behind under an alcoholic or drug addicted husband's care. Instead, arrangements for the children's safety, health and wellbeing need to be addressed prior to their migration. Thus, without being totally pessimistic stating that "These laws deprive women from earning for themselves and supplementing the household income", the law, with regard to FBR, should be allowed to prevail to avoid unnecessary institutionalization of children and to reduce foreseen abusive environments. One should not expect happiness from their income at the expense of the possible threat to their children's lives. Implementation of these laws is an opportunity to avoid the threat towards children that is possible when parents' work overseas and encourages the prevention of children being institutionalized. The government should take precautions to address the law's weakness by making it applicable to either gender. The regulation should not absolve fathers from any responsibility in raising children, reinforcing a wrong social norm that it is the sole responsibility of mothers. A law should not be enforced requiring only women to report how the children are being looked after upon their migration, as woman is not the only family member responsible for the welfare of the children. The lack of such a law justifies the statement by Dias where he states that these type of practices belong to the 18th, not to the 21st century.

The clause "Females with children above 5 years would only be recommended for migration if satisfactory alternative care arrangements are in place to ensure the protection of the children" is the most influential part of this law. VCHs mostly admit children above 5 years. Thus, families tend to seek care for their children at VCHs when parents want to migrate for work. In such instances, this law becomes a large influence on strategies to overcome future consequences, when the mother leaves the family and thereby the officials can respond to such concerns before they occur.

The manager's suggestion (see 5.3.2 of this thesis) that to address the issues of what happens to the children when parent's migrate, is that the government should sign an agreement with the parents to decide who is going to care for the children. Nevertheless, when the intention of mothers for working overseas is the improved well-being of their families, those families should be educated

[55] Actual name has been changed to maintain anonymity.

on how to achieve their objective. The opportunities to add overseas recruitment agencies into the agreement and retrieve a payment for nurturing the child further strengthen the process. CRPO can advocate for the maximum effectiveness of a mother's contribution (retrieved from the agency) while she is working abroad. When there is a monitoring process by the government officials, there is a higher potential to look after the child properly within their natural birth environment. As such, the threat is minimised, because the remaining parent (mainly the father) can be supported to undertake appropriate parenting and monitored to ensure that the funds that have been repatriated for the children are used for the purpose intended. This governance architecture needs to be developed to support and protect children who are left with a sole parent.

If it is inappropriate to keep the child in their birth environment, the next best alternative to parental care would be by relatives. The potential for financial backing for their contribution would indeed assist to select an appropriate relative in the best interest of the child. The chosen relative can be paid a sufficient amount from the portion that is sent by the child's parent and the officials can advocate for the child's health, safety, education and safeguard their fundamental rights. Care by a relative helps the child to be brought up in a similar environment to their family and reduces the pressure and the trauma that they would have to endure if cared for under an institutional setting. After all, these types of mechanisms avoid unnecessary institutionalization and maintain family integrity.

5.4 Application of Max-Neef's Human Scale Development for the prevention of institutional care of children

5.4.1 Needs and satisfiers

Max-Neef, Elizalde and Hopenhayn (1992) assert that any fundamental human need that is not adequately satisfied reveals a human poverty. It may not fall under the traditional concept of poverty, which refers exclusively to the predicaments of people who may be classified below a certain income level. This argument is well familiar with reasons behind children's institutionalisation. A child can be institutionalised based on domestic violence parameters, health issues or environmental factors. It can be interpreted that the institutionalisation is based on poor safety environments that is the deprivation of protection (due to violence and poor health systems). Likewise, Max-Neef, Elizalde and Hopenhayn (1992, p. 200) has identified nine of the poverties that are:

- Subsistence (due to insufficient income, food, shelter, etc.)
- Protection (due to bad health systems, violence, arms, race, etc.)
- Affection (due to authoritarianism, oppression, exploitative relations with the natural environment, etc.)
- Understanding (due to poor quality of education)

- Participation (due to marginalisation of and discrimination against women, children and minorities)
- Leisure
- Creation
- Identity (due to imposition of alien values upon local and regional cultures, forced migration, political exile, etc.)
- Freedom

Any one of these poverties, in different degrees, directly or indirectly have impacted upon institutionalisation of children or seek other alternative. For instance, if parents cannot provide a child with sufficient food or shelter and therefore seek to institutionalise him, the reason behind the child's institutionalisation according to Max-Neef, Elizalde and Hopenhayn (1992) is the deprivation of the fundamental need for Subsistence. He further states that:

> "… food and shelter must not be seen as needs, but as satisfiers of the fundamental need for subsistence. In much the same way, education (either formal or informal), study, investigation, early stimulation and mediation are satisfiers of the need for Understanding. The curative systems, preventive systems and health schemes in general are satisfiers of the need for protection" (1991, p. 17; 1992, p. 199).

This explanation of Max-Neef, Elizalde and Hopenhayn (1992) establishes a difference between the concepts of needs and satisfiers. Fundamental human needs are limited, and they are the same in all cultures and at all times. What changes, both overtime and through cultures, is the means by which the needs are satisfied. Thus, what is culturally determined are not the fundamental human needs, but the satisfiers for those needs. When this concept is demonstrated by a family who decides to institutionalise a child, one should strive to identify the satisfiers of the fundamental need that has been denied for the child. The father in the case study 5.3.1 was unable to provide appropriate shelter (he had only one room for all five family members) for his children and the children grew up in a badly supervised health system (no proper toilet) and exploitative relations with the natural environments (using nearby bushes and rivers for the toilet). In this case, the denied needs can be identified as subsistence due to insufficient shelter and protection due to bad health systems. The CRPO introduced the concept of receiving help from the community. He also provided links to receive material and financial resources to add one more room and a proper toilet for the house. The skill this father had as a carpenter and the support from his community, determined the degree and intensity at which those needs were satisfied. A father from a different culture with the same deprived situation might not have satisfied the need in the same degree and the quality of satisfiers. Max-Neef, Elizalde and Hopenhayn (1992, p. 200) explains this as:

> "Each economic, social and political systems adopts different methods for the satisfaction of the same fundamental human needs. In every system they are satisfied (or not satisfied) through the generation (or non-generation) of different types of satisfiers. We may go as far as to say that one of the aspects that define a culture is its choice of satisfiers. Whether a person belongs to a consumerist or to an ascetic society, his /her

> fundamental human needs are the same. What changes is his/her choice of the quantity and quality of satisfiers."

5.4.2 Satisfiers and economic goods: Being, Having, Doing and Interacting

Max-Neef, Elizalde and Hopenhayn (1992, p. 201) describe:

> "It is the satisfiers which define the prevailing mode that a culture or a society ascribes to needs. Satisfiers are not the available economic goods. They are related, instead, to everything which, by virtue of representing forms of Being, Having, Doing, and Interacting, contributes to the actualisation of human needs."

Taking Max-Neef's example of food and family structure, it is understandable that the availability of food is a satisfier of the need for protection for a child in much the same way as a family structure might be. That is, a child becomes in need of alternative care when he is not adequately fed (due to poverty) and similarly when his family structure changes (death or divorce of parents, and discrimination due to changes in family dynamics) Furthermore, the same satisfier can actualize different needs in different periods. For e.g. education, which is the satisfier for the need of understanding in one time, becomes the satisfier of the need of subsistence at another time. To actualize the need for understanding, it includes satisfiers such as investigating, studying, experimenting, educating, analysing, meditating and interpreting. These satisfiers give rise to economic goods, depending on the culture and the resources, such as books, laboratory instruments, tools, computers and other useful resources. The function of these goods is to empower the Doing of Understanding. Max-Neef, Elizalde and Hopenhayn (1992, p. 204) summarise this as "… fundamental human needs are essential attributes related to human evolution; satisfiers are forms of Being, Having, Doing and Interacting, related to structures; economic goods are objects related to particular historical moments".

5.4.3 A matrix of needs and satisfiers and the application of the matrix

According to Max-Neef (1991); Max-Neef, Elizalde and Hopenhayn (1992) the interrelationship between needs, satisfiers and economic goods is permanent and dynamic. As Table 5.1 indicates, satisfiers can be organised within the grids of a matrix which, on the one hand, classifies needs according to the existential categories of Being, Having, Doing and Interacting, and on the other hand, according to the axiological categories of Subsistence, Protection, Affection, Understanding, Participation, Creation, Recreation, Identity, and Freedom. The flexible nature of this matrix being neither normative nor conclusive, in diverse cultures and in different historical moments, the responses might vary considerably. According to Alkire (2002, p. 189)

> "Max-Neef's set of needs is intended to be exhaustive: to indicate all dimensions of human need that are universal, even though they may not all be observable in all communities (because there may be unmet needs or poverties). Max-Neef's list remains "provisional" and open to modification."

Table 5.1 Matrix of needs and satisfiers (Max-Neef 1992, pp. 206-207)[56]

	Needs according to existential categories			
Needs according to axiological categories	*Being*	*Having*	*Doing*	*Interacting*
Subsistence	1/ Physical health, mental health, equilibrium, sense of humour, adaptability	2/ Food, shelter, work	3/ Feed, procreate, rest, work	4/ Living environment, social setting
Protection	5/ Care, adaptability, autonomy, equilibrium, solidarity	6/ Insurance systems, saving, social security, health systems, rights, family, work	7/ Co-operate, prevent, plan, take care of, cure, help	8/ Living space, social environment, dwelling
Affection	9/ Self-esteem, solidarity, respect, tolerance, generosity, receptiveness, passion, determination, sensuality, sense of humour	10/ Friendships, family, partnerships, relationships with nature	11/ Make love, caress, express emotions, share, take care of, cultivate, appreciate	12/ Privacy, intimacy, home, spaces of togetherness
Understanding	13/ Critical conscience, receptiveness, curiosity, astonishment, discipline, intuition, rationality	14/ Literature, teachers, method, educational policies, communication policies	15/ Investigate, study, experiment, educate, analyse, meditate	16/ Settings of formative interaction, schools, universities, academics, groups, communities, family

[56] "The column of BEING registers *attributes*, personal or collective, that are expressed as nouns. The column of HAVING registers *institutions*, *nouns*, *mechanisms*, *tools* (not in a material sense), *laws*, etc. that can be expressed in one or more words. The column of DOING registers *actions*, personal or collective, that can be expressed as verbs. The column of INTERACTING registers *locations* and *milieus* (as times and spaces). It stands for the Spanish ESTAR or the German BEFINDEN, in the sense of time and space. Since there is no corresponding word in English, INTERACTING was chosen *a faut de mieux"* (Max-Neef 1992, p. 207).

Participation	17/ Adaptability, receptiveness, solidarity, willingness, determination, dedication, respect, passion, sense of humour	18/ Rights, responsibilities, duties, privileges, work	19/ Become affiliated, co-operate, propose, share, dissent, obey, interact, agree on, express opinions	20/ Settings of participative interaction, parties, associations, churches, communities, neighborhoods, family
Leisure	21/ Curiosity, receptiveness, imagination, recklessness, sense of humour, tranquility, sensuality	22/ Games, spectacles, clubs, parties, peace of mind	23/ Day-dream, brood, dream, recall old times, give way to fantasies, remember, relax, have fun, play	24/ Privacy, intimacy, spaces of closeness, free time, surroundings, landscapes
Creation	25/ Passion, determination, intuition, imagination, boldness, rationality, autonomy, inventiveness, curiosity	26/ Abilities, skills, method, work	27/ Work, invent, build, design, compose, interpret	28/ Productive and feedback settings, workshops, cultural groups, audiences, spaces for expression, temporal freedom
Identity	29/ Sense of belonging, consistency, differentiation, self-esteem, assertiveness	30/ Symbols, language, religions, habits, customs, reference groups, sexuality, values, norms, historical memory, work	31/ Commit oneself, integrate oneself, Confront, decide on, get to know oneself, recognize oneself, actualize oneself, grow	32/ Social rhythms, everyday settings, settings which one belongs to, maturation stages
Freedom	33/ Autonomy, self-esteem, determination, passion, assertiveness, open-mindedness, boldness, rebelliousness, tolerance	34/ Equal rights	35/ Dissent, choose, be different from, run risks, develop awareness, commit oneself, disobey	36/ Temporal/ spatial plasticity

The following table is a practical example for the application of the matrix. The information in the table is related to the case study of 5.3.1 where a CRPO mediated to satisfy the fundamental needs of a family thereby preventing institutionalisation of two girl siblings.

Table 5.2 Application of the HSD Matrix of needs and satisfiers

	Needs according to existential categories			
Needs according to axiological categories	Being	Having	Doing	Interacting
Subsistence	Able to live in physical and mental health	Appropriate shelter, provision of food, able to work	Feeding appropriately	In a homely environment and social setting
Protection	Able to Care and self-sufficiency	Family and work	Take care of	Living space, dwelling
Affection	Self-esteem	Relationship with nature	Share, take care of	Privacy, home space of togetherness

The (Table 5.2) demonstrates how the CRPO supported the family to satisfy their basic fundamental human needs. This family attempted to institutionalise their family members mainly due to their father's inability to provide a healthy and a safe environment. Evaluation of the above table enables the relevant group (The family in this exercise) to become aware of both their deprivations and potential solutions. As Max-Neef, Elizalde and Hopenhayn (1992) asserts, after diagnosing its current reality, it may repeat the exercise in propositional terms; that is, identifying which satisfiers would be required to fully meet the fundamental needs of the group. In this case study, provision of more space to the living environment and construction of a toilet are highlighted to satisfy the fundamental needs of subsistence, protection and affection. These satisfiers enabled the family to Being: physical and mental health, care and self-esteem; Having: shelter, protecting family and relationship with nature; Doing: properly feeding the family, sharing and taking care of the family; and Interacting: home space of togetherness. This analysis demonstrates the potential capacity for local self-reliance. It has a twofold value. First, it makes it possible to identify a strategy for development aimed at the actualisation of human needs at a local level. Second, it is an educational, creative and participatory exercise that brings about a state of deep critical awareness; that is to say, the method is, in itself, a generator of synergic effects (Max-Neef, Elizalde & Hopenhayn 1992).

5.5 Governance and directions for policy changes in Sri Lanka

This chapter reveals that the number of children who have lost both parents covers less than 10% of the total institutionalised population but the rest are from families that are unable to satisfy the fundamental needs of children under parental care. This is an indication that the policy environment in Sri Lanka with regard to alternative care of children is not in line with the a priori UN norms indicated in the UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010). When the UN Guidelines propose

family based permanent alternative care for children those who have been deprived of parental care, in contrary, the situation in Sri Lanka is that the provision of institutional care has lead children toward deprivation of parental care. The existing policy environment is that when the officials find a child's abandonment, relinquishment and separation from his family, the child is institutionalised instead of attempting to address the root causes while the child is being cared in the family. Ultimately, institutional care alone further develop many child right issues.

This study proposes the following to prevent the need for alternative care and to promote parental care and thereby preventing family separation.

Governance and policy: the direction for change in Sri Lanka in line with the a priori UN norms[57].

- The government should pursue policies to address the root causes of child's abandonment, relinquishment and separation from his/her family. These policies should ensure support for families in meeting their responsibilities toward the child and promote the right of the child to have a relationship with both parents.
  How: Providing access to adequate housing and to basic health, education and social welfare services. Promoting measures to combat poverty, discrimination, marginalisation, stigmatisation, violence, child maltreatment and sexual abuse, and substance abuse
- State should develop and implement family-oriented policies designed to promote and strengthen parents' ability to care for their children.
  How: Implementation of migration policies
- The government should implement effective measures to prevent child abandonment, relinquishment and separation of the child from his/her family.
  How: Empower families with attitudes, skills, capacities and tools to enable them to provide adequately for the protection, care and development of their children.
  E.g. The complementary capacities of the government: The CRPOs role as an intermediary in the case study 5.3.1.
  The complementary capacities of the civil society, including NGOs and community-based organisations, religious leaders and the media: The philanthropists' assistance to extend the house in case study 5.3.1
- The government should introduce social protection measures:

How: 1) Family strengthening services such as parenting courses and sessions, Promotion of positive parent-child relationships, opportunities for employment and income generation. 2)

[57] UN Guidelines paragraphs 32-38 (United Nations 2010).

Supportive social services such as day care, mediation and conciliation services, substance abuse treatment, financial assistance and services for parents and children with disabilities.

CHAPTER 6 PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS OF CHILDREN IN INSTITUTIONAL CARE

Although family based care of children is optimal, in some circumstances, it is not possible to provide this immediately and children's homes become an important temporary measure. Therefore, it is critical to ensure that the children's rights are protected in an appropriate manner whilst in this form of care.

Voluntary children's homes as institutions are supposed to contribute towards facilitating emergency or temporary care needs of the children. Policies for emergency and temporary care should be well documented (see chapter 1.6.2). This chapter discusses the core themes identified as human rights issues of institutionalized children. The principal issues are child's right to a healthy and a safe environment, child's right to appropriate formal and informal education, child's right to proper vocational training, child's right to a religion and child's right as a dignified human being. The chapter suggests strategies to address these.

6.1 Praxis to address the social justice challenge: Application of Ulrich's approach introducing the critical systems heuristics (CSH)

6.1.1 Introduction

As discussed earlier in chapter 2.7.3 Ulrich (1983, p. 21) states that "in the Oxford English Dictionary, the word 'heuristic' explains as 'serving to find out or discover' and 'applied to that method of teaching which places the children, as far as possible, in the position of a discoverer'". This thesis strives to introduce a critical systemic approach to an effective and efficient pathway to reintegrate institutionalized children. Therefore, a heuristic approach, which places the children in the position of a discoverer, would be best suited for a successful outcome of such pathway.

Ulrich (1983, p. 23) states, "a heuristic approach is what a theoretical approach is not". Furthermore, Flood and Romm (1996, p. 207) assert, "Ulrich developed an approach called Critical Systems Heuristics. This aims to be a critical yet pragmatic approach to incorporating those affected and as well as those involved by social planning". These statements encouraged me to seek the viability of CSH in the reintegration process of the institutionalised children as the process is supposed to involve many practical aspects and incorporate the relevant social planners and those affected by their planning.

6.1.2 Empowering "the affected" by challenging the normative views of the planners

The "affected" that Flood and Romm (1996) refer to are, in this research, the 'children in institutional care'. Analysing secondary and empirical data, and through my own experiences, I have identified that, this most important group (institutionalised children) does not participate nor has been incorporated in the planning and design of the reintegration process. This is ambiguous

when there is an intention to empower “the affected” by challenging the normative views of the planners.

Ulrich (1983, p. 157) identifies the fact that incorporation of those who are affected (in this case the children) empowers them and helps uncover the misconceptions of planners in terms of discourse, inquiry and design of the social system. However, the PAR demonstrated the fact that such participation in the planning process by institutionalised children rarely occurs.

Ulrich (1983) argues, “When it comes to value judgements, there are no experts (Churchman 1979) and accordingly the values of the affected are of equal worth to those of the so called involved experts”. Nevertheless, in Sri Lankan children’s homes, plans are made and decisions taken which reflect only the values systems of policy makers and service providers without input from affected children and their parents/guardians, despite the fact that these are the very stakeholders whom the decisions will impinge upon.

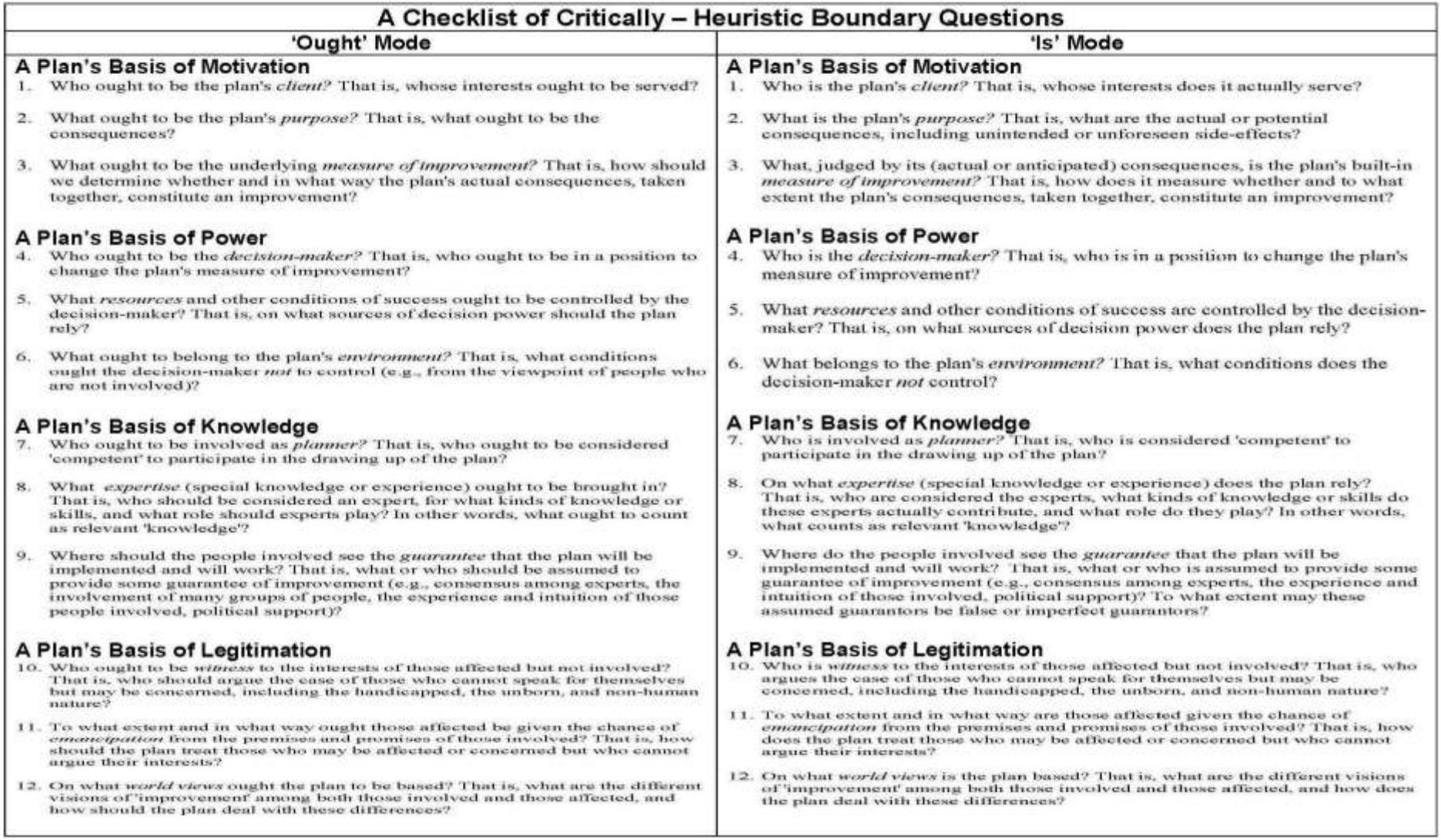
One commissioner of a Provincial Department of Probation and Child Care Services (DPCCS) answered as follows when she was asked about the unhappiest reflection/memory during her service period:

> “I regret to say that, while I was chaired as the commissioner of DPCCS, one manager of a girls’ children’s home had sexually abused 13 girls in between 6-13 years of ages. What is most disgusting is that, this manager is an eighty-two years old man. My officers had been visiting this home regularly to supervise the quality of services of the home but had never inquired of the children nor advocated directly for their quality of life issues. If my officers had done so, we could have easily avoided such an awful incident” (Commissioner’s interview).

Although the abuser has been punished, the planners (commissioner and/or the probation officers) by whose deeds or lack thereof had allowed these children to fall into such an abusive environment had not been disciplined. That is, the planners were not held responsible for their faults and/or mistakes. The values of the affected were NOT considered of equal value to those of the so-called ‘experts’. This commissioner’s statement is one of many examples that prove how the system of institutional care has neglected the ‘affected’ without holding ‘involved’ being accountable.

6.1.3 Discussion: Ulrich’s boundary questions as a medium to address the social justice challenge

By applying Ulrich’s Critical Systems Heuristics, through this chapter, I explore praxis to address the social justice challenge encountered by institutionalized children. The 12 boundary questions (Figure 6.1) of CSH in the actual and ideal modes (Ulrich 1996, pp. 24-31) have made a platform to inquire the process by which plans are implemented and evaluated.



A Checklist of Critically – Heuristic Boundary Questions

'Ought' Mode	'Is' Mode
A Plan's Basis of Motivation	**A Plan's Basis of Motivation**
1. Who ought to be the plan's *client*? That is, whose interests ought to be served?	1. Who is the plan's *client*? That is, whose interests does it actually serve?
2. What ought to be the plan's *purpose*? That is, what ought to be the consequences?	2. What is the plan's *purpose*? That is, what are the actual or potential consequences, including unintended or unforeseen side-effects?
3. What ought to be the underlying *measure of improvement*? That is, how should we determine whether and in what way the plan's actual consequences, taken together, constitute an improvement?	3. What, judged by its (actual or anticipated) consequences, is the plan's built-in *measure of improvement*? That is, how does it measure whether and to what extent the plan's consequences, taken together, constitute an improvement?
A Plan's Basis of Power	**A Plan's Basis of Power**
4. Who ought to be the *decision-maker*? That is, who ought to be in a position to change the plan's measure of improvement?	4. Who is the *decision-maker*? That is, who is in a position to change the plan's measure of improvement?
5. What *resources* and other conditions of success ought to be controlled by the decision-maker? That is, on what sources of decision power should the plan rely?	5. What *resources* and other conditions of success are controlled by the decision-maker? That is, on what sources of decision power does the plan rely?
6. What ought to belong to the plan's *environment*? That is, what conditions ought the decision-maker *not* to control (e.g., from the viewpoint of people who are not involved)?	6. What belongs to the plan's *environment*? That is, what conditions does the decision-maker *not* control?
A Plan's Basis of Knowledge	**A Plan's Basis of Knowledge**
7. Who ought to be involved as *planner*? That is, who ought to be considered 'competent' to participate in the drawing up of the plan?	7. Who is involved as *planner*? That is, who is considered 'competent' to participate in the drawing up of the plan?
8. What *expertise* (special knowledge or experience) ought to be brought in? That is, who should be considered an expert, for what kinds of knowledge or skills, and what role should experts play? In other words, what ought to count as relevant 'knowledge'?	8. On what *expertise* (special knowledge or experience) does the plan rely? That is, who are considered the experts, what kinds of knowledge or skills do these experts actually contribute, and what role do they play? In other words, what counts as relevant 'knowledge'?
9. Where should the people involved see the *guarantee* that the plan will be implemented and will work? That is, what or who should be assumed to provide some guarantee of improvement (e.g., consensus among experts, the involvement of many groups of people, the experience and intuition of those people involved, political support)?	9. Where do the people involved see the *guarantee* that the plan will be implemented and will work? That is, what or who is assumed to provide some guarantee of improvement (e.g., consensus among experts, the experience and intuition of those involved, political support)? To what extent may these assumed guarantors be false or imperfect guarantors?
A Plan's Basis of Legitimation	**A Plan's Basis of Legitimation**
10. Who ought to be *witness* to the interests of those affected but not involved? That is, who should argue the case of those who cannot speak for themselves but may be concerned, including the handicapped, the unborn, and non-human nature?	10. Who is *witness* to the interests of those affected but not involved? That is, who argues the case of those who cannot speak for themselves but may be concerned, including the handicapped, the unborn, and non-human nature?
11. To what extent and in what way ought those affected be given the chance of *emancipation* from the premises and promises of those involved? That is, how should the plan treat those who may be affected or concerned but who cannot argue their interests?	11. To what extent and in what way are those affected given the chance of *emancipation* from the premises and promises of those involved? That is, how does the plan treat those who may be affected or concerned but who cannot argue their interests?
12. On what *world views* ought the plan to be based? That is, what are the different visions of 'improvement' among both those involved and those affected, and how should the plan deal with these differences?	12. On what *world views* is the plan based? That is, what are the different visions of 'improvement' among both those involved and those affected, and how does the plan deal with these differences?

Figure 6.1 A checklist of Critically - Heuristic Boundary Questions (Ulrich 1996, pp.24-31).

Of the 12 questions, three questions that are related to sources of motivation and sources of control (Ulrich 1996) are critically discussed in this chapter to identify 'Who is/ought to be the service user?' 'What is/ought to be the purpose of systems design?' Moreover, 'Who is/ought to be the decision maker?'

6.1.3.1 Who is/ought to be the service user?

Whose interests ought to be served? Whose interests does it actually serve?

The first question posed by Ulrich is "Who is/ought to be the service user?" All the institutionalized children living within children's homes and whose institutional care status needs improvement ought to be the service users. Given the broad definition of child-care institutions[58] underlying our ideal purpose[59] (institutional care as the potential for autonomous coping with restoring children's human rights), and given the actual dependence of children on professionally delivered institutional care. Would such an answer beg the question of "Who is/ought to be the service user?" Not every child can be the planner's service user and that no conceivable plan will ever serve every child's needs. *"Any plan inevitably has redistributive effects (some benefit, others pay), and this is what the service user question is all about. If those who most urgently need support are to get significant help, we must accept the fact that not every institutionalized child can equally benefit"* (ibid).

The key service users implied in our ideal purpose map are those who actually are the most helpless in coping with deprivation of parental care or who are at risk of being so, and those children who suffer the most from the poor quality of life, which societal conditions impose on them. This means the orphan, the abandoned and the destitute.

In the Sri Lankan institutional care environment, caretakers[60] have also become service users at the expense of the institutionalized children. This PAR identifies that over 60% of caretakers (approximately 250 matrons/wardens of 416 children's homes) do not hold the required qualifications of a caretaker specified in the General Standards[61]. This situation has to be discussed in depth, because specific skills and qualifications are expected from the caretakers in the process of enhancing the life chances[62] of children under their care. According to managers[63], the prime requirement they expect from a caretakers is that they should be ready to stay in the children's home during their service period. Another requirement is that the caretakers should be ready to render their service for lesser salary or even voluntarily as the children's home provides

[58] *Child-care institution* means a non-profit private child-care institution, or a public child-care institution that accommodates no more than twenty-five children, which is licensed by the State in which it is situated, or has been approved by the agency of the State responsible for licensing or approval of institutions of this type, as meeting the standards established for licensing. The term does not include detention facilities, forestry camps, training schools or any other facility operated primarily for the detention of children who are determined to be delinquent (http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/42/435.1010).

[59] Ideal purposes: Preventing institutional care, institutional care followed by reintegration, reintegration followed by aftercare.

[60] Caretakers: Matrons and wardens of children's homes.

[61] General Standards: General Standards for the Promotion of Quality of Services in Voluntary Children's Homes.

[62] Life chances: Life chances are the opportunities that each individual has to improve their quality of life.

[63] Managers: The persons who manage the children's homes.

them with free food and lodging. These two requirements are contravene to each other as we cannot expect a 24-hour service from somebody for less salary or voluntarily even though we provide them with free food and lodging. Three managers of the thirty interviewed during PAR replied very clearly to this question. They say that women who have been destitute due to domestic violence and poverty reasons and those who are widowed, unemployed and homeless have greater likelihood of serving 24 hours a day for no or lower salary. They further explained that when employed an uneducated person who has many family dilemmas, the management has the following benefits;

- Their personal requirements are limited and their service can be received very voluntarily or by paying a very nominal fee.
- As they have fewer family commitments there are fewer impediments to residing in the children's home during their service period.
- They are easy to be ruled and controlled.

According to one manager:

> "Uneducated women hardly demand higher salaries and they are unaware of their rights; homeless women and women with family dilemmas mainly require the three meals and a place to sleep. Once these kinds of women are employed as matrons, the management hardly encounter labour issues that could arise due to non-payment of EPF, ETF and/or annual salary increment" (Manager's interview 2012).

The empirical findings indicate that among the caretakers, only 7% are paid Employment Provident Fund (EPF) and Employment Trust Fund (ETF) membership fees by their employers. Furthermore, the management does not have to bother about day and night shifts or weekly, monthly and/or annual leaves for these workers. Such a finding is consistent with the arguments made by managers for why they tend to employ men and women with these attributes. Thus, whilst orphaned, abandoned or destitute children are meant to be the direct service users of children's homes, indirectly vulnerable men and women have also become service users of these institutions.

Managers justify their decision to employ these vulnerable people as caretakers saying; *"We are helping another group of needy people while managing this difficult task of running a children's home".* Their justification was puzzling and questionable. The direct intention of these managers to employ these vulnerable people as caretakers, and their serviceability to children in institutional care may differ case by case. The position of a caretaker is an intellectual and engaging responsibility, which requires certain skills and training. Therefore, the point here is not that vulnerable people should not be employed, but the investigation is necessary to find out whether they possess the requisite qualifications. Men and women with domestic violence and widowed background may have undergone lots of trauma before they undertake work at child-care institutions. Taking the advantage of their vulnerability may adversely affect the quality of life and the life chances of institutionalized children. Indirectly these vulnerable people may benefit when

occupy them as caretakers, but in contrary, they are in many aspects similar to these institutionalized children where there is a need to look into their quality of life needs and their life chances. This paradox is well summarised by Jayasooriyya (2008, p. 34) by stating:

> "The caregivers themselves are institutionalized where their well-being is also at stake, and saddled with numerous issues such as inadequate staff, unsatisfactory remuneration and training, they are unable to build a close rapport with the children even if they so desire."

6.1.3.2 What is/ought to be the purpose of systems design?

What ought to be the consequences? What are the actual or potential consequences, including unintended or unforeseen side effects?

Ulrich's question "What is/ought to be the purpose of systems design?" can be interpreted in this context as "What is/ought to be the purpose of Institutional Care Systems Planning?" With respect to children's homes, the mission statement of the DPCCS in Sri Lanka reads as follows:

> "Our mission is to establish the rights of children in entire Sri Lanka by providing protection for orphaned, abandoned, destitute children and others in conflict with the law ensuring the maximum participation of children in keeping with national policies and international standards for children" (DPCCS 2014).

Orphaned, abandoned and destitute children are institutionalized and looked after in children's homes, which have been registered with the DPCCS. Therefore, according to the above mission statement, the function of institutional care systems planning should be to establish the rights of these institutionalized children. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed, *"childhood is entitled to special care and assistance"*. Child Rights Convention (CRC) states *"the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding"* (United Nations 1989). The United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (UN Guidelines) which set out desirable orientations for policy and practice with the intention of enhancing the implementation of the UNCRC, states:

> "Facilities providing residential care should be small and be organized around the rights and needs of the child, in a setting as close as possible to a family or small group situation. Their objective should generally be to provide temporary care and to contribute actively to the child's family reintegration or, if this is not possible, to secure his/her stable care in an alternative family setting, including through adoption or *kafala* of Islamic law, where appropriate" (United Nations 2010, p. 18).

This PAR has revealed that the percentage of children's homes that are as close as possible to a family or small group situation is well under 5% and that over 80% of the homes are dormitory based (see Figures 6.2 & 6.3).

Figure 6.2 Dormitory based institutional care environment.

This type of care environments is typical in the context of voluntary children's homes in Sri Lanka. This home accommodates over 150 girls. These settings contravene the UN Guidelines where it says "Facilities providing residential care should be small and be organized around the rights and needs of the child, in a setting as close as possible to a family or small group situation" (United Nations 2010).

Figure 6.3 The main hall situated within the children's home's premises.

This home is luxurious compared with other homes. The dormitory in fig. 1 belongs to the same girls' home, which houses over 150 girls. It is licensed by the Northern Province in which it is

situated, as meeting the standards established for licensing, but the no. of residents seriously contravenes to the definition of child-care institutions which says “Child-care institution means a non-profit private child-care institution or a public child-care institution that accommodates no more than twenty-five children” (source: http://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/42/435.1010).

The UN Guidelines and the General Standards emphasise that the child’s period of institutionalization should be temporary in nature. Furthermore, they emphasize that much effort should be focussed to contribute actively towards the child’s family reintegration while organizing around the rights and needs of the child. This definition appropriately informs “What ought to be the purpose of Institutional Care Systems Planning?” That is, the purpose of Institutional Care Systems planning ought to be “an efficient and effective reintegration process that addresses the human rights needs of children in institutional care”. However, the following observations indicate that, once a child is institutionalized, they often end up with long-term institutionalization.

- “Institutional care is at present the most common – or, rather, the almost sole – solution for children deprived of parental care in Sri Lanka” (Roccella 2007, p. 10).
- “The general impression is that the probation officers perceive residential institutions as the best welfare and protection option for children; the result of this understandable position is that little is done to facilitate the reunification of children with their families, socialization with the community and or adoption to a suitable family” (ibid).
- “Around 40 per cent of children had been in institutional care for longer periods than the three year limit of the DPCCS policy” (Save the Children 2005, p. vii).

Thus, the reality of the situation is in stark contrast to the ideal. Ideally, the purposes of the children’s homes are emancipating the child from institutional care delivery and reducing or eliminating their need for care through addressing the child’s reintegration. This serves the key service user group without hurting other children – indeed; these ideal purposes are likely to serve every child, though not to the same extent.

6.1.3.3 Who is/ought to be the decision maker?

Who is/ought to be in a position to change the plan's measure of improvement?

The next very important question posed by Ulrich is “Who is/ought to be the decision maker?” In the context of children’s homes with regard to institutionalised children, the commissioner of probation and childcare services has been vested in making decision in the best interest of the child. Probation officers (POs) and the child rights promotion officers (CRPOs) support the decisions that are made on child’s behalf. Due to administrative, social, political and legal aspects that encompass the commissioner’s post, the duration of the commissioner’s service period has been unpredictable. Therefore, much responsibility is laid upon these policy officers’ (POs and CRPOs) positions with respect to the decisions made on children’s behalves. In actual practice, the commissioner is the decision maker.

Having identified the actual decision makers, it is necessary to consider who ought to be the decision makers. This can be answered in terms of the UN Guidelines, which states:

> "In order to prepare and support the child and the family for his/her possible return to the family, his/her situation should be assessed by a duly designated individual or team with access to multidisciplinary advice, in consultation with the different actors involved (the child, the family, the alternative caregiver), so as to decide whether the reintegration of the child in the family is possible and in the best interests of the child, which steps this would involve and under whose supervision" (United Nations 2010, p. 10).

According to this guideline the child, the family and the alternative caregiver[64] should all be decision makers. However, the General Standards has not included the child as a decision maker and the child does not participate in the decision making process. This is a significant omission, because the children have not been given an opportunity to emancipate themselves from the experts and to take their fate into their own hands.

The above paragraph clearly emphasises the importance of "the family" as a decision maker in this theatre. Deprivation of parental care is only one reason for children to become institutionalized. Factors such as health, safety, education, basic rights etc. lead towards institutionalization of children, which causes deprivation of parental care. Therefore, the family's intervention and its role as a decision maker to guide the child's institutionalization or reintegration are vital. Both the UN Guidelines and General Standards have emphasised the family's role as a decision maker, but in actual practice, parents' participation in the decision making process is minimal (see Table 7.2).

The service provider[65] is responsible for the physiological and psychological aspects of the institutionalized children; they should provide education and conduct productive valued activities; they are supposed to care for the standard of living, the quality of social interactions, the health and the safety aspects of the children. This is a vast scope to be handled and requires reasonable skills and training for successful implementation. Therefore, the service provider should also be given a major position in the decision making process as a planner.

In the Sri Lankan context, POs and CRPOs are involved as experts when addressing the issues that are relevant to children homes and the children who have been institutionalized in these homes. Their expertise is two-fold. They are the educational and professional qualifications. PAR data shows that 90% of the POs and CRPOs are social sciences degree holders. The remaining 10% have at least a diploma of social science background. Over 60% of these policy officers have more than five years of professional qualifications and 20%, over ten years. Therefore, these policy officers represent the experts of the three decision makers (the child, the family, and the alternative caregiver).

[64] Alternative caregiver: Provincial Commissioner/Probation Officer of the DPCCS, manager/representative of the Board of Management of the children's home, mother/father in charge of the home.
[65] Service provider: managers and caretakers of children's homes.

In summary, CSH provides a valuable approach to assist with re-designing the governance approach. As a result of applying the questions I have addressed the participation of the affected (the child and the family) in dialogue with the involved (policy makers and the service providers). Flood and Romm (1996) indicate that *"the Habermasian way assumes that people together will know what is the best thing to do?"* Involvement of these two groups for designing an efficient and effective system for the reintegration process of children in institutional care simply means that we incorporate the views of concerned citizens within the social system. Therefore, CSH has been identified as a significant critical systemic approach for an efficient and effective reintegration process of institutionalized children.

6.2 Child's right to a healthy and a safe environment

6.2.1 Introduction

This section focuses on human rights of institutionalized children in terms of health and safety. UN Guidelines paragraph 84 states:

> "Carers should promote the health of the children for whom they are responsible and make arrangements to ensure that medical care counselling and support are made available as required" (United Nations 2010, p. 14).

In accordance with this guideline, by analysing the interview data and the questionnaire responses of the managers and caregivers of institutional care settings, this study explores ways to promote the health of the children.

6.2.2 Institutional care settings and their consequences on children's health

The following narrative of a matron demonstrates the potentially dangerous environment for children within the children's homiest.

> "Our children's home houses 35 girls. One day, I visited a medical centre to receive medicine for one of our girls who suffered from stomach-ache. The doctor's prescription at the medical centre was placed in a bottle that we had brought from home. I returned home with the girl after visiting the doctor and kept the medicine bottle on the table where we usually kept them. Then I asked my assistant to give one tablespoonful to the girl. After changing clothes, I entered the dining room and found my assistant was trying to give the dose to the girl. It seemed that the girl child was not opening her mouth. As you would know, it is very difficult to give medication to children so I went to help. I felt a little bit awkward about the medication bottle that the assistant matron held in her hand. I told her that it was not the bottle that I had brought. She said, "No, it is the one" and was about to put the spoon into the girl's mouth. I screamed "NO!" and prevented her from doing so. Both the assistant and the girl were quite amazed as they were pretty sure it was the correct bottle."

According to the matron, the content of the bottle that the assistant had attempted to give to the child was a kind of oil that is applied to girls' heads for getting rid of head lice. When I asked the matron how it was that the assistant matron or the girl could not identify the correct bottle, she replied:

> "The bottle that contained the stomach-ache medication was not there anymore. When we looked for it, we found that one girl was holding it and applying the content on her hair. She had mistaken it for head lice oil. The bottle was quite similar to the one that I had got filled at the medical centre for the girl's stomach-ache" (matron/warden's response).

Such a situation is not entirely surprising. Sri Lankans still have the habit of recycling bottles. Instead of buying a new bottle from the pharmacy, which is costly, we take a recyclable bottle to the medical centre. Doctors also are aware of this practice and they purchase medication in bulk amounts and deliver the required number of doses into the bottle that patients bring from their homes. Although there is a risk of consuming expired or contaminated medicine in improperly cleansed bottles, low cost for medication and consultancy fee outweighs the disadvantages of these practices. If well cleaned and care is taken about the expiration date of the medicine, it certainly is not a bad practice to recycle the bottles for medications. It is an eco-friendly practice and helps to conserve resources as well. However, people need to take extra attention and be careful to avoid the simplest mistake, to avoid disastrous results as stated in the UN Guidelines paragraph 91[66].

Head lice oil mistaken for stomach-ach medicine would have brought a tragic outcome to the girl's life. Consuming head lice oil, which contains toxic chemicals, could easily risk the child's long term health and harm immature organs. This is a genuine example to ascertain the life risk within large residential facilities that lead towards morbidities and mortalities. According to Sen (1980) the ability to avoid escapable morbidity and mortality is a human capability. According to Nussbaum (2011) "Longevity of life: being able to live to the end of a normal human life" is a human capability. Thus, the incident at this home exemplifies the environment within children's homes that deprives human capabilities. This is a denial of human right as the child's living environment is a threat and unsafe to her life. Badly managed medication storage system was found to be the major reason together with possible distraction of the matron by the other children.

6.2.3 Systemic approach to children's health and safety

One manager's creative idea of a 'medication pigeonhole' is a good governance practice to avoid accidents by confusion of medicines. They have a small but a pleasant first aid room (Figure 6.4) with a medication storage system (Figure 6.5). Each compartment contains a photograph of the child to whom the segment belongs. When I witnessed it, seven compartments of sixteen contained medication. A small teddy bear had been placed in 3 segments. The remaining six segments were empty, as those children had gone home with their teddy bears during the school holidays. All old bottles had been removed. A segment with a teddy bear meant that the child who belonged to that segment was leading a healthy life and had no need for medicine. The segments that contained medicines had no teddy bears sitting in them. This meant that the owners of these

[66] Accommodation in all alternative care settings should meet the requirements of health and safety (United Nations 2010).

seven segments are ill and their teddy bears are lying at their bedside to remind them to take their medications in time.

Figure 6.4 First aid room.

Figure 6.5 A pigeonhole system for storing medications. Each whole is tagged with a photo to avoid confusions.

According to the manager, he destroys all the expired medications and unexpired ones are stored in a separate first aid box, which cannot be reached by children. He says:

> "Our children love to be in good health. They are proud to have their pockets empty. The ones who are unwell take their doses properly to get rid of their medicine from their segments of the storage rack" (manager's narrative).

6.2.4 Discussion

The concept of the medication storage rack, photos to individualize the ownership of the segments, teddy bear concept to identify the children on medication, separate first aid box to keep general day-to-day medications are pragmatic decisions to cope with large number of children in care institutions. These practices certainly avoid escapable morbidities and mortalities and optimise the longevity of life by securing the health of institutionalised children.

6.3 Child's right to appropriate education

6.3.1 Introduction

The UN Guidelines paragraph 85 asserts:

> "Children should have access to formal, non-formal and vocational education in accordance with their rights, to the maximum extent possible in educational facilities in the local community" (United Nations 2010, p. 14).

June 4, 1944, was an important day for education in Sri Lanka. It was on this day that C. W. W. Kannangara, as the Minister of Education, presented the Free Education Bill in the State Council. Passing the bill, he pronounced:

> "I am responsible in giving Free Education to all. Remember all this time; you got Education for a big price. You paid a very big sum. I opened a book, which was closed all this time. I opened the door of Education to the poor, which was once meant only for the so-called Elite class of this country. It was once a right of HAVES only. I opened it to HAVE NOTS" (http://freebetterebook.blogspot.com.au/).

Kannangara's philosophy was to grant equal opportunities to all children irrespective of their circumstances. His mission was to give a wide breadth of educational experiences through the establishment of Central Schools, which provided opportunities for them to develop their intellectual capacities, creativity and humanness. Kannangara advocated and made it possible for all children to study in their mother tongue.

Sessional paper 24 of 1943, the Report of the Special Committee of Education, of which Kannagara was chairperson, covers two important aspects. Firstly, every individual must have equal opportunity, so, provided that they have the necessary innate ability, they can lift themselves from the humblest to the highest position in the social, economic and political life of the Nation. Secondly, education in a democratic society should be free at all stages. Thus, children were provided Free Education from Kindergarten to University level in Sri Lanka.

It has been seven decades since the introduction of the Free Education Bill. The Sri Lankan government has kept the promise of free education and advanced it by introducing innovations such as delivery of free books and free meals to children and 'Mahapola' scholarships to university students. However, changes in social, cultural, economic and political atmosphere over the decades have significantly impacted on the educational environment across schools. The vast disparity in distribution of material and human resources has caused a significant difference in schools' facilities and has given rise to 'good' and 'bad' schools with regard to provision of education. The designation of schools as national schools, central colleges, provincial schools, zonal schools etc. have made it worse and the general public uses phrases such as rural, remote, poor and rich when referring to the type of school. This paradigm has greatly affected the provision of education to the children in care institutions. The struggles that parents have to undergo at present when finding a 'good' school for their children in general and the VCHs managers for their children in particular do not reflect Kannangara's philosophy in education. This study identifies strategies to protect the children's right to an appropriate education at care institutions.

6.3.2 Paradox of 'free' education and 'good' education

The position of the government is that a child has the right to attend the nearest school to their home. The home for an institutionalized child is the VCH where they are housed. However, for a number of reasons, VCHs have difficulties when trying to send their children to the nearest school. Generally, the popular schools have an enrolment period of approximately six months prior to the start of the school year. Thus, most VCHs miss the chance of enrolling their children to these schools, because there is no guarantee that a children's home will receive children at the required time of a school year. Institutional care is sought only when there is a need for it. Thus, a child might enter a VCH at any time of year. However, no school is ready to accept children without some forewarning except schools, which have vacancies in the relevant class. Thus, regardless of how close the VCH is situated to a particular school, the child misses the chance of entering to not only the closest school but also the opportunity to enter a popular school. The practical experience of most managers is that their children have a greater chance in rural schools, which have fewer facilities, or schools, which are liable to close down due to lack of children. POs, also, are in agreement with the statements of these managers. As a result of the simpler, shorter enrolment process, many managers tend to send their children to the less popular schools. These schools lack the teachers, facilities and materials to provide a good formal education or sports and extracurricular activities. The entire learning process is demoralised. One matron says:

> "Our children go to the village school. It has classes from 1 to 11; one class for each grade. A class has only 5-15 students. When we first sent our 30 children to this school it was about to close down because of the lack of children. The school could not comply with the government requirement of the required number of students per class. However, the principal of the school and our manager could convince the government and was able to stop the closure. Our children's home is the biggest family for this school. Our children are spread through almost every class. They are mostly the top in their grades, but much

> below average of the province standard. The poorest families send their children to this school. Smart children who receive good results for the scholarship examination (grade 5) leave this school for a better one. Therefore, our children have no competition or targets (to base on). The exams at grade 5 and 11 are centralised nationally, but the rest of the exams are provincially centralised. Our children are nowhere near the national or provincial averages. We cannot send children to a school further away as the travel cost is too high. Most of all we have to consider the safety factor of our children" (matron/warden's response).

This matron's story elaborates the poor life chances in education for children in care institutions. It is supported by the following narrative of a matron whose children's home is situated in a town surrounded by three popular national schools.

> "We have three popular schools in our vicinity. We have tried only once or twice to send children to these schools. Every grade is filled with more than the required number, thus schools refuse to accept our children. Our children have to attend a school that is situated far away from our home. They walk this long way to a bad school when they have three good schools nearby. It is risky to have our children walking 3 km during the rush hour, but it is the only option available. Many children deliberately get sick in the morning and wag school" (matron/warden's response).

School education in Sri Lanka is compulsory through to age 14, when students may disengage in favour of an apprenticeship or job (Table 6.1). This places no financial burden upon any family as Sri Lanka provides free education in government schools. Voluntary Children's Homes too are bound to send their children to a local school for their formal education and these homes too are exempt from paying tuition fees to schools. However, schools charge a facility fee, which differs from school to school. This may take the form of a lump sum at the start of the school year or payments made from time to time to cover examinations, sports, and concert fees, etc. This represents a substantial financial imposition for VCHs. The government has sent a circular to schools requesting that principals do not receive payment of these fees from children of VCHs. However, according to managers of some children's homes, this is not happening as other children are affected. For example, one manager says:

> "I have 35 children in my home who attend the nearby school. When exams or any other event comes up, the principal demands facility fees from our children. I point out to him that children's homes are exempted from paying fees. He pointed out to me that he is unaware of such policy and if I do not pay the fee for a facility such as the term test, either the school or the remaining student population has to bear the cost, which he cannot be responsible for. I can understand his situation as my home represents one third of the students' population, as there are only 103 students in the school. To avoid the consequences, I pay for all facilities as a general family does. It is a real punishment for our home as we suffer so many constraints when raising funds for running and the development cost of the home" (manager's narrative).

Six home managers (of 27 interviewed) mentioned that they pay this facility fee on the children's behalf; otherwise, the students and teachers heavily bully their children. Five managers are overtly opposed to the payments, as they believe that it is the duty of either the school or the government to bear this payment. Another five managers did not know that the payment could be waived for their children, as they were unaware of a policy document with regard to waiving of facility fees.

The remaining 14 managers said that they had never been asked to pay and they too were unaware of such policy. This situation demonstrates that despite a need to treat every child alike, children from different homes are treated differently. This is criticised in UN Guidelines paragraph 95 as follows:

> "States, agencies and facilities, schools and other community services should take appropriate measures to ensure that children in alternative care are not stigmatized during or after their placement. This should include efforts to minimize the identification of children as being looked after in alternative care settings" (United Nations 2010, p. 15).

The government needs to investigate the financial capabilities of the VCHs and the respective schools and to decide which agency has the capability for paying the costs or whether this needs to come from the government budget. Or else, should there be a blanket payment for all VCHs.

Table 6.1 The education system in Sri Lanka[67]

	Education	School/Level	Grade From	Grade To	Age From	Age To	Years	Notes
	Primary	Primary	1	5	6	11	5	At the end of grade 5 there is an optional scholarship examination that may permit access to subsequent grades
	Middle	Junior Secondary	6	9	12	14	4	
	Secondary	Senior Secondary	10	11	15	16	2	
	Post-secondary	General Certificate of Education Ordinary Levels (G.C.E O/Ls -)	12	13	17	18	2	Students who are pursuing tertiary education must pass the G.C.E O/Ls in order to enter the collegiate level to study for another 2 years (grades 12-13) to sit for the G.C.E Advanced Level. On successful completion of this exam, students can move on to tertiary education, therefore, the GCE A/Ls is the university entrance exam in Sri Lanka.
	Vocational	Vocational						
	Tertiary	Tertiary						

[67] School education in Sri Lanka is compulsory through to age 14, when students may disengage in favour of an apprenticeship or job. (Source: http://www.classbase.com/Countries/sri-lanka/Education-System).

6.3.3 The need for non-formal strategies to support formal education

The case studies discussed above indicate that the existing educational environment has unfavourably affected children in care institutions when receiving formal education. Thus, to overcome this issue, there is a need to build children's capacities in education using in-formal strategies. The following two scenarios bring evidence for such strategies where they have emphasised the importance of providing extra support for school subjects to institutionalised children. One manager adopts a strategy to overcome this issue.

> "Our children attend an unpopular school nearby. They do not receive proper education at this school, because they do not have teachers for some subjects. However, we have to somehow enrich our children in these subjects. If they fail these subjects, they are unable to go to the next level of education. We have a strategy; we receive the support of the University undergraduates to assist our children with their school subjects. University students have time during the weekends and during long holidays. They need money to support their education as well. We have grouped our children into several grades. Our children attend these classes during weekends and long holidays. These university students do not have teaching skills but they are much updated with their knowledge" (manager's narrative).

Figure 6.6 Tuition class conducted by a university student to support children with their schoolwork.

Figure 6.7 Open-air children's class conducted by a retired teacher.

Figure 6.8 IT class conducted by university students.

The other manager's strategy is similar but uses a different source for the provision of education.

> "There are several retired school teachers around our VCH. They stay lonely at home. We receive their service voluntarily to assist our children with their homework and extra tuition. They do not expect money. Irrespective of their voluntary support, these teachers support the home in many other aspects. They buy books and other school materials for these children. They also bring many well-wishers to the home. This system works really well for both the education aspect and the wellbeing aspect of the home, and of course, the volunteer teachers too seem to be happy because, their skills have being respected" (manager's narrative).

These two narratives demonstrate how some children's homes attempt to keep their children updated and upgraded to the level of mainstream students. By adopting these strategies a children's home can overcome some issues that their children encounter in unpopular, poorly resourced schools.

Application of VISE concept in Australia to care institutions in Sri Lanka

The engagement of retired schoolteachers to support institutionalized children best matches the VISE Program that is currently practiced in Australia. VISE stands for Volunteer with Isolated students' Education. VISE volunteers provide educational assistance to families and students in rural Australia (http://www.vise.org.au/). Retired teachers volunteer to live with these families for short spells to support / relieve the mother who is normally their home teacher. We cannot deny the fact that children in care institutions are also in many ways an isolated group. Examples that are provided in chapter 6.4.2 alone demonstrate how severely these children experience isolation in the sphere of education. Difficulties are frequently experienced when finding a school available in local area. Children being placed in care have often experienced long periods without access to school – prior to their being settled in a home additionally children in care miss out an individual attention and appropriate support for school homework due to insufficient number of staff. These issues contribute to a sense of isolation from the mainstream education. There is link between these institutionalized children in Sri Lanka and children living in the outback of Australia. These could be value in introducing a similar program to VISE for the care institutions in Sri Lanka to assist with both the formal and informal aspects of education. The engagement of university students is also worth consideration as an expansion of this concept.

6.3.4 Discussion

It is clear that the Government has not properly engaged the end receivers when making decisions on their behalf. NGOs that run VCHs with restricted financial capacities and schools with financial constraints are involved and are affected if they do not charge facility fees from VCHs' children. Thus, the sphere of the decision-making boundaries should be expanded to include the involved and the affected (Ulrich 1983). Bullying of children in care institutions because of their carer's inability to pay the school's facility fee undermines their education process and damages social relations with teachers and peers. Policy-as-discourse as a form of systemic social action must therefore proceed to comprehensively analyse through dialogue, and minimise the impact of power in the actual planning process (Chambers 1983, 1997). While addressing the right of an institutionalised child to study in a popular school nearest to their home, children should be backed with non-formal strategies to support their formal education. The examples of the children's homes that use university students and retired teachers can be noted as good practices.

6.4 Praxis to address behavioural issues of Institutionalised children

6.4.1 Introduction

The challenge of the many VCHs has been to find out the strategies to overcome the behavioural issues of children in these homes. This was evident from the responses provided by the matrons and wardens to the question about their unhappiest experience during service period. More than

50% of the matrons and wardens were unhappy about the conduct and the behavioural aspect of children. They complaint their children for the lack of attention they pay for their education. They have mentioned that they have to always command or shout at children for cleanliness and tidiness. One manager from a children's home explains his strategy of how he became successful when addressing the behavioural issues of his children. It demonstrates how systemic approaches work well when addressing children's needs and enhancing their life chances. It indicates a well-documented good governance practice that can be applied to care institutions towards building capacities of children for promoting their life chances.

6.4.2 Background: ApiHappy concept

This home has strategically implemented a project to address the issues on children's education, hygiene, conduct and tidiness. This project is called "ApiHappy". The matron of the home elaborates the characteristics of the project as follows:

> "Api-Happy represents the four phonetics "a, pi, ha, pi". This phonetics stand for the initials of the four words in Sinhala Language. They are Adyapanaya, Pirisidukama, Hasirima and Piliwela. The meaning of these words in English is education, hygiene (cleanliness), behaviour (conduct) and tidiness (organisation). However, the two words, Api and Happy also bring together a meaning. That is, Api is 'we' in Sinhala and Happy is the English word for joyfulness. When you add these two words Api and Happy together ', it means 'We are joyful'. Thus in summary, it interprets that education, hygiene, conduct and tidiness make us happy or joyful" (matron's response).

According to the manager and the matron, this 'Api-happy' concept has been introduced and put into practice by this home to make their inhabitants happy and fulfilled. The matron adds:

> "Prior to the introduction of this project to our home, most of our girls had no enthusiasm for education, no interest in hygiene, their behaviour was wild and they had no passion for tidiness. By all means, it was a mess and we were all unhappy. After the project began, it did not take much longer for them to pay their attention to education, to live hygienically, to behave properly and to keep tidy. Now, they all are happy and we, the staff are also very happy."

According to the manager of this home, how he came up with the idea of 'Api-Happy' project stems from the beginning of his children's home. He explains:

> "I am the initiator of this home. Having constructed all the physical facilities such as; dormitory, living and dining rooms, study and first-aid room, office, kitchen, toilets and bathrooms, I thought any orphaned, abandoned or destitute child would love to live in a setting like this and they would be happy. However, things did not work in that way! Facilities were meant for 20 girls. I received 10 girls to begin with. From the day they were accommodated, they had minimal interest for the physical facilities of their surroundings."

When I interviewed this manager, this VCH was already 5 years old. With the interviewee, I acknowledge that this home had all the appropriate criteria that the residents can enjoy fully and it was situated in a serene environment. Why then the girls could not 'behave properly and live happily'? I asked the manager to explain what he thought the problems were. I interpreted his

perceptions by drawing on my experience of the stories shared by the young people who live in the home that I have managed since year 2007, but first I will cite his response:

> "Of course it was hard to understand at the beginning. According to the matron, the girls were extraordinarily naughty. They fought each other aggressively and had no respect for the staff or their seniors. They ripped their books and the interest for reading and schoolwork was nil. Each girl had been allocated with a table and bookrack, a bed and a wardrobe of their own, but nothing was in place. Their attention to hygiene was shocking. Some girls used to wear their underwear for days. Instead of washing them and reusing, they used to hide dirty wear underneath their mattresses and steal others to wear the next day. The story with the socks was similar. We have one matron and an assistant. They had noticed this when they sensed an unusual smell from the girls' dormitory. It is true that the staff should have identified these behaviours earlier and taken precautions. Once discovered, the staff instructed the girls to change their behaviours, but the instructions fell on deaf ears. The girls continued their wild behaviour as usual" (manager's narratives).

Clearly, this is a result of the children not experiencing any adult role models or any routines in a well ordered home.

6.4.3 Diverse backgrounds characterise the diversity

This narrative of the manager displays that the facilities of the girls' home and the instructions from the staff alone could not make a difference or the difference did not last long. According to the manager, there was a reason for this. Due to the diverse background of the girls prior to entering the home, for example: Some had no educational backgrounds or most of them were school dropouts, thus their interest for education was very low. The Majority of the girls had never used a table for studying or a wardrobe to keep their clothes. Some were used to bathing in rivers or by drawing water from wells. They were not used to showers or clean their clothes in a dormitory setting. They were aggressive, because many had undergone excessive trauma from their earlier abusive environments. The girls' conduct would have been typical to them although abnormal to the staff. The staff conducted a thorough training program for the children hoping for a reasonable change, but the atmosphere still returned to their original behaviour within a few days. Thus, the manager says:

> "I started admitting the situation and started focusing on the positive instead of the negative. Even within this negative atmosphere a few girls tried their level best to do well in their exams, assist the staff, be nice to others and keep their belongings properly. This encouraged me to re-evaluate their conduct and look more positively. To do this I used encouraging words and incentives. I did not expect magical change, but it did not take long to change atmosphere to a more passive environment. Thus, to have constant progress in girls' lives, I introduced the Api-Happy project into my home. I noticed that the Api-Happy project can make a difference in children's lives" (manager's narrative).

The ideas and interests of children have driven the ApiHappy project. This manager's approach is child cantered, because caregivers have been flexible and they lead the role of facilitators. All these characteristics alone, ApiHappy project reflects the practice implications of constructivism (Berger & Luckmann 1967, 1971; McKay & Romm 1992; Piaget 1981; Romm 2002). Focus on

student-centred approach may well be the most important contribution of constructivism (Wesley 1996).

To have better results through this Api-Happy project, the management uses the service of an independent body. They evaluate children's progress as stated at the beginning. All 25 children receive gifts and/or incentives for their endeavours. The ten children who do well in all four categories are named and acknowledged. Their special effort is recognized. Manager says:

> "We are not too tough, when we see their keenness to progress; we acknowledge every one of them. During the first year, we conducted the evaluation frequently, perhaps monthly. After this, it was conducted in every other month and then quarterly. This is the third year and now we do it only half annually. The children have begun to experience the joy of admiration from their teachers for their efforts/achievements in education. They also feel the satisfaction in tidiness, good conduct and hygienic life."

When I posed the question, "How do you manage to get volunteers for the evaluation and materials in order to acknowledge the children's efforts?" He replied:

> "We have chosen a team of volunteers from our donors to assist us in evaluating tidiness and organisation capabilities of the girls'. They award points after observing children's personal cupboards, working table and bookracks. Teachers' comments and the progress reports help us to evaluate their advancement in education. My staff are the best evaluators for children's conduct and hygiene. The older girls too take leadership in this project. The donors bring varying goods to support the home and children's lives. We use these goods efficiently and effectively to run this project. Furthermore, analysing children's hobbies and attitudes we have identified the ideal gifts to best suit their interests" (manager's narrative).

According to manager and the matron, the Api-Happy project has changed the home's environment to a more peaceful and happy setting than ever before. During my short visit to this home, I too witnessed some positive feelings in contrast to other homes. The positive change that staff wanted has come into being because of the Api-Happy project. This project is based on a constructivist approach to education that enhances life chances of children in multiple ways, which are in line with the capabilities approach. The progress in education makes their ability to think. Imagine and communication; the children being able to live hygienically improves their capability for longevity of life; emphasis on correct conduct and behaviour pave the way for building quality social interactions; tidiness improves their standards of living. Thus the implementation of 'ApiHappy' project in institutional care settings not only enhances the life chances of children but also it enables the capacity building of number of capabilities into children's lives.

6.4.4 Discussion: Application of constructivist approach for higher achievements

In this particular children's home, the manager has identified four areas where he strives for improvement. They are; education, hygiene, behaviour and tidiness. He uses the 'ApiHappy' project, which represents to a constructivist approach. This is based on the notion of role modelling

by the staff and setting benchmarks for children to achieve. Using this approach the manager is achieving improved standards of education, hygiene, behaviour and tidiness from the children.

Children in care come from many socioeconomic and culturally diverse backgrounds, which contributes towards making their learning styles and goals unique. Cultural and societal background together with prior experience and knowledge, contribute toward constructing the total educational experience. These interrelated factors create a challenge for the caregivers. A constructivist approach is vital and ideal in these care settings, because "it is not a theory about teaching … it is a theory about knowledge and learning … the theory defines knowledge as …, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and thus, non-objective" (Brooks & Brooks 1993, p. vii).

Berger and Luckmann (1971) assert that the social implication of childhood may vary greatly from one society to another – for instance, in terms of emotional qualities, moral accountability or intellectual capacity. However, it is questionable why Berger and Luckmann claim "western civilisation tended to regard children as 'innocent' and 'sweet'; other societies considered them 'by nature sinful and unclean'" (1971, p. 156). In the Sri Lankan situation, which cannot be considered western, there is no evidence for considering children by nature as sinful and unclean. The situation of the millions of children in the modern eastern world including the recent Sri Lankan history of child soldier recruitment during the civil war (Chapter 2.2.1), the illegal use of child labour, the increase in the number of street children (Chapter 2.2.2), and the rapid increase of the institutionalized children population (Chapter 1.6), are a result of the social, cultural, economic, political and environmental factors within the region. This is not because the children are sinful or unclean. However, the need for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child alone demonstrates that, in both western and eastern societies, the inherent innocence of children is endangered.

According to Piaget (1981) the factors that are in-dissociable in an individual's concrete behaviour are cognitive and affective. The term 'affectivity' according to Piaget includes emotion, feelings as well as the various drivers or tendencies including the will. He says it is impossible to find behaviour arising from affectivity alone without any cognitive elements. It is equally impossible to find behaviour composed only of cognitive elements. He also asserts that:

> "Affective states that have no cognitive elements are never seen, nor are behaviour found are wholly cognitive… affectivity would play the role of an energy source on which the functioning but not the structures of intelligence would depend."

Piaget's definition for adaptation is well suited for a child in institutional care. He says, purely cognitive or purely affective factors can be found in the most general characteristics of behaviour such as adaptation, assimilation, accommodation and equilibration. Children show diverse behavioural aspects when adapting to a new environment such as an institutional care setting. "All

behaviour is adaptation and all adaptation is the establishment of equilibrium between the organism and its environment" (Piaget 1981, p. 4).

The 'ApiHappy' approach, which is incentive based, is compared to an approach where a different manager turned his care setting into a family based atmosphere (Chapter 4.2.2). The two children's homes are named 'A' and 'B' and the two approaches are named 'X' and 'Y' respectively. Although the strategy 'X' works in home 'A' and the strategy 'Y' works in home 'B' either strategy may or may not work in both homes. As explained earlier, in care settings, learning styles and preferences are unique to individuals, because children range of different socio-economic backgrounds.

6.5 Child's right to be educated and empowered on how to care for the environment: Application of critical systems thinking

6.5.1 Introduction

This chapter links with chapter 2.2.3 where it discusses the relationship between environmental problems caused by human activities and the institutional care of children. This chapter emphasises the significance of educating and empowering children for governing the Anthropocene by unfolding three examples of good governance practices exercised by children's homes. It also demonstrates how diverse knowledge systems can be included in the discussion of enhanced eco-system governance. The lessons learnt from these case studies confirm that there is enormous potential for these homes to provide education for institutionalized children to improve their ability to deliver stewardship of the environment.

Today's children will encounter the adverse effects of global population growth and subsequent pollution by adults at the expense of the environment. Thus, it is important to draw children's attention to carbon footprints and climatic changes. Through participation, they will have opportunities to learn more about the implications of the way we choose to live our lives in the short, medium and long terms. Children learn about their rights and responsibilities by being given the opportunity to express their ideas and to translate policy into practice through small-scale interventions that make a difference to this generation and succeeding ones. Such interventions can include lessons on recycling, use and re-use of resources, composting, organic and ethical farming, water and energy conservation techniques and much more.

During the PAR, it was identified that some children's homes have initiated a few enhanced ecosystem governance practices that redress problems associated with the worst aspects of industrialisation. These practices promote the harmonious coexistence of humanity and nature and have adopted the concerns of critical systemic thinking with consequent improvement of human well-being and ecosystem health. The potential of these homes to provide education for these

vulnerable children by improving their ability to deliver stewardship responsibilities towards the environment should never be underestimated.

Romm (2015, p. 1)'s declaration "that we, as humans, are called upon to play a reasonable role in our caring for each other and for the earth" is applicable for the field of institutional care of children. If NGOs are to promote the care and protection of children deprived of parental care in its "true" meaning and not for any other hidden agendas[68], they are obliged to care for the earth too. For they cannot achieve the former in any long term sense without catering for the latter, i.e. to care and protect children well, the earth should also be cared for and protected well. The number of institutionalized children and the government and non-government bodies involved in the management of these children's homes is quite substantial. Thus, managing children's homes is a significant Anthropocene assignment. Looking after the children's social, cultural, educational, physical and emotional development is the major aim of children's homes. Whilst there are a number of studies that have researched these aspects of children's homes, literature on the environmental context is lacking. This chapter fills this gap and identifies three genuine exercises for 'governing the Anthropocene' by managers' of children's homes in Sri Lanka.

6.5.2 The case studies: Three narratives from the managers of VCHs

6.5.2.1 Case study-1: Integration of Renewable Resources

During my visits to thirty children's homes, I witnessed that every children's home manages a garden of their own to produce vegetables and fruit. With few exceptions, however, un-healthiness, untidiness, lack of maintenance and attention were common features of most gardens visited. In contrast to the optimistic approach and outlook of the most productive and successful gardens, the unsuccessful gardens had many reasons for their failure. This case study reveals the story of the most successful home. This home caters for the needs of twenty young vulnerable children and has been mindful of its governance challenges in social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects. The manager of this children's home expressed the opinion that the day he could feed all children under his care with food that was not exposed to agrochemicals would be the day that he could be considered as the children's true carer. His full statement when I posed the question "What are the strategies that you have taken to enhance the life chances of children under your care?" was as follows:

> "I am well aware that most of the vegetables, grains and fruit that we purchase from markets to feed our children are exposed to range of poisons from their birth to harvest and storage until sales. The artificial fertilizers, pesticides and agro-chemicals that are utilized for preserving food during storage, lead us towards unforeseeable illnesses. The most affected are the children. By consuming these foods their un-matured organs, start deteriorating day by day. Therefore, I am hesitant to feed children under my care with poisoned foods. In fact, if I am not hesitant to do so, in its true meaning I am not a true carer. That is why I started running an organic farm in our children's home premises.

[68] Some provincial commissioners of DPCCSs revealed that some NGOs have hidden agendas such as financial gain and religious conversion in lieu of the "true" meaning of their manifestation, i.e. care and protection for children.

> Now it provides around one third of the provisions that are required for children's meals. I will be a real father on the day I can supply 100% of organic food to these children. I am driven by the possibility of thriving organic farming and eco-friendly projects for enhancing the life chances of children" (manager's narrative).

In achieving these objectives, the management of this home strategically manages and integrates the renewable resources. This in turn makes a positive contribution toward creating an eco-friendly society while simultaneously responding to its own governance challenges. This children's home consists of a series of interconnected eco-systems (Figure 6.9). They produce biogas energy using human and animal waste along with the home's kitchen food scraps. The biogas then runs through the kitchen first, supplying energy for cooking meals for the inhabitants of the home. The remainder runs through the vocational training centre (VTC), supplying gas for boiling herb containers. The VTC produces garments using clothes dyed with varying colours soaked in boiled herbs. The manager says:

> "Dying clothes using herbs is a pure and natural process, free from use of artificial chemicals of any kind. Then the leftovers from the VTC are directed to the organic farming field directly, the wastewater is used for watering the organic farm and the herb waste is used in the compost yard. The effluent from the biogas tank is effectively utilized for producing compost and for the home's worm farm. The cattle shed houses three cattle and provide sufficient dairy products for the residents. The wastewater from the kitchen and the toilets runs to a field that grows grass for the cattle. The waste from the cattle shed is in turn used to enhance the biogas and compost production. All vegetables and the fruit from the garden are fully organic and have assured residents' food safety. In addition to the vegetable garden, the home has built a productive plant nursery and herb garden. The beehives positioned in three places around the premises contribute not only to the supply of honey for the home but the bees also pollinate the trees in and around the premises" (manager's narrative).

The manager also identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to their eco-system health. Paddy fields and coconut plantations surround his organic farm. People spray excessive amounts of pesticides to protect paddy from insects. According to the manager, these insects attack the vegetable garden, which is free from pesticides. However, they have been able to protect most of their harvest using indigenous eco-friendly methods. Systemic characteristics of this project have also been helpful to address the challenges of their own eco-system. The VTC uses the parts of the Neem tree called colloquially kohomba (Azadirachta indica) tree that is famed in the country and indeed throughout South East Asia for its medicinal/antiseptic and insecticidal properties. Kohomba seeds, leaves and bark are used to dye clothes at the VTC and the boiled leftovers are used in the organic farm. The wastewater that comes out as a result of boiled kohomba tree parts are sprayed on vegetable plants as it is a natural insecticide. Ruk Rakaganno (2006) asserts that some insects have been found to starve rather than to eat plants treated with kohomba oil. Thus, through this project, the capabilities of being able to live with concern for and in relation to animals, plants, and the world of nature; being able to contribute to a sustainable world and being able to enjoy oneself, are applied by enabling the children to develop the capability of 'Environment / other species', outlined by Nussbaum (2000).

The tradition of ‘Dane’ or alms giving brings many donors to this children’s home (Ariyadasa 2015b). During their presence at the home, the donors receive the opportunity to visit the VTC, organic farm and to view all other eco-systems maintained in this home. Visitors purchase the produce of the VTC, plants from the nursery and the organic products such as honey, vegetables and compost. The knowledge and the experience that they learn while roaming around the cattle shed, beehives, organic farm, plant nursery, herb garden, worm farm, compost yard and bio-gas unit enables the spread of eco-system governance practices into society and thus a so-called ‘learning community approach’ (see McIntyre-Mills 2014b; Sheng 2012; Wenger 1998) is fostered by the demonstration projects. Hundreds of schoolchildren in the region who have visited this home learn and experience its practices, demonstrating the popularity that this project has gained over the recent years.

The combination of different ecosystems and their coexistence have systemically balanced the children’s home environment. The VTC contributes employment, has empowered three disadvantaged women, and continues to provide vocational training for numerous institutionalized children. The organic garden and herb farm employ two labourers and a traditional agricultural inspector. The opportunity for children to spend their leisure time helping with the gardening activities contributes to building their capacities and capabilities in many fields. These include biological dyeing techniques, organic farming, worm farming, compost production, plant nursery marketing, bee keeping and dairy farming (Figure 6.9). The dynamics of the eco-systems governed by this particular children’s home can be described in a systemic manner (Figure 6.10). It demonstrates how systems and sub systems can share their values to contribute to a common goal. The children grow up immersed in an environment that values the ecosystems health, which contributes immensely to each child developing a greater understanding of the significance of environmental protection and stewardship.

This project characterises the harmonious existence between humanity and nature. The management sees nature as a relative, which reflects the notion that relatives, should live in harmonious relationships[69]. It makes provision for the suggestion that a critical systemic approach need not imply that ecological concerns are undervalued in the quest for human emancipation (Midgley 1996). (Smith, T 2011, p. 1) adopts a similar approach with regard to the concerns of critical systemic thinking with a description of “the simultaneous improvement of human well-being and ecosystem health” (as cited in Romm 2015). This management team has designed their project to maintain their own natural resources. While managing the children’s home, which is their primary objective, the manager has introduced processes for enhanced ecosystem governance. As McIntyre-Mills (2014b, p. 10) reminds us “the environment is primary and that designs need to ensure that they protect the web of life, rather than pitting profit versus the planet systemic ethics”.

[69] Harris and Wasilewski (2004) cited in Romm (2015).

Figure 6.9 Illustration to interpret the systemic intervention for governing the Anthropocene through integration of renewable, reusable and recyclable resources.

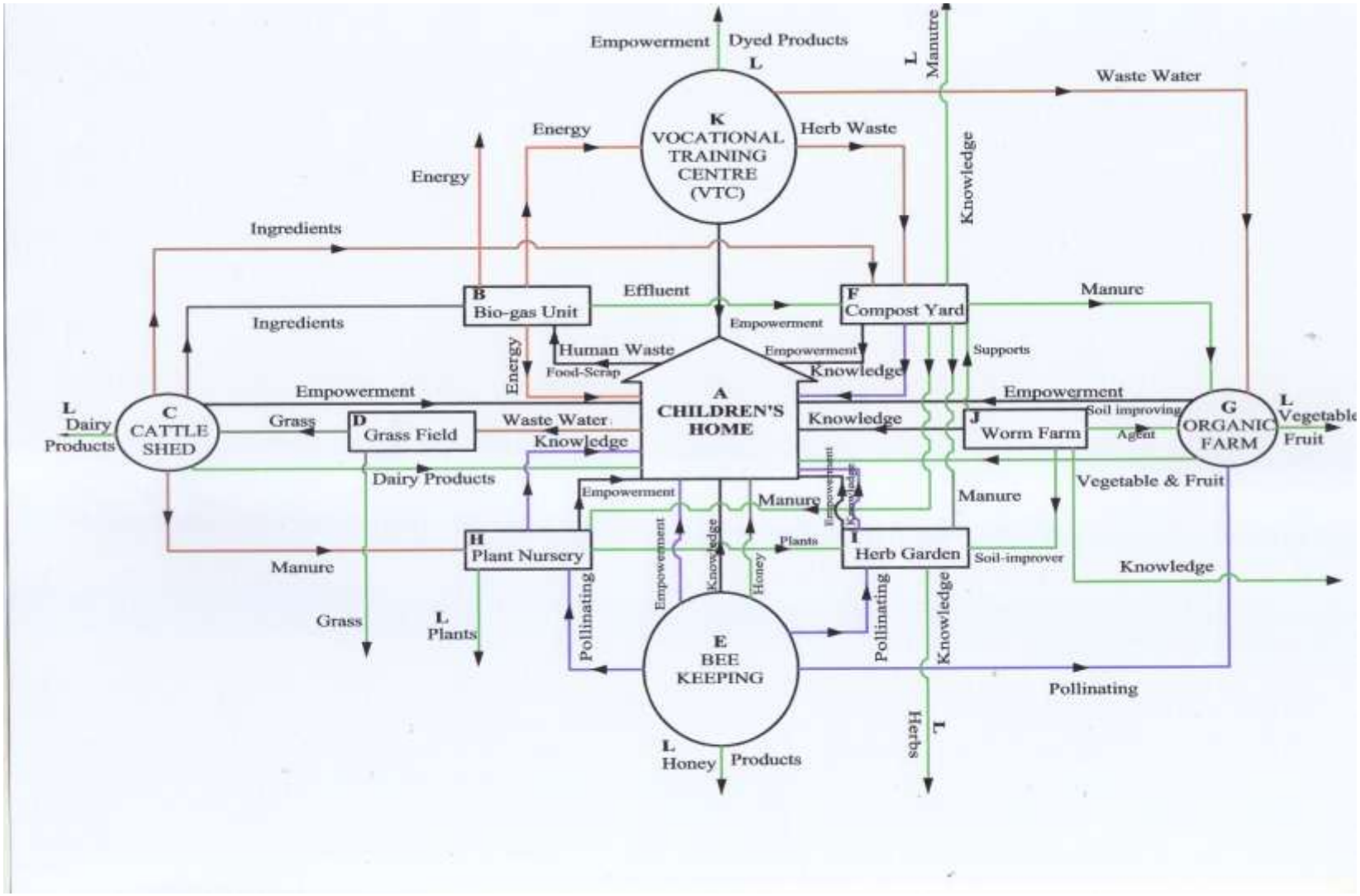


Figure 6.10 Systemic diagram to represent the eco-system dynamics of case study-1 (Figure 6.9): A combination of different ecosystems and their interactions have systemically balanced the children's home environment and its management.

Wanigasuriya, Peiris-John and Wickremasinghe (2011) assert that chronic kidney disease (CKD), of uncertain aetiology, in the NCP mainly affects males from poor socio-economic backgrounds who are involved in paddy farming raising the possibility of agrochemical exposure as a cause for this disease. Thus, the systemic strategies that this home practices can be further studied to address the increasing trend in mortality and morbidity due to CKD mainly in the NCP of Sri Lanka. It could be too early to comment on the relationship between CKD and institutional care of children. However, in the recent future, it is highly likely to emerge families of orphaned and destitute children seeking accommodation in VCHs who have lost their breadwinners affected by CKD. The case study-1 can be identified as praxis that paves the ways of understanding our environmental stewardship responsibilities for governing the Anthropocene.

6.5.2.2 Case study-2: Governing the Anthropocene - The Lunch Packet Concept - Reject, Renew, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle (5R)

The industrial revolution has influenced people to travel away from their homes for work or schooling during the daytime. Thus, it is generally expected that they have their lunch at the work place or at school. The lunch routine and context could understandably be different for each individual. One could have lunch at the work place canteen or in a restaurant near the work place. In the Sri Lankan context however, it is typical to have a pre-prepared lunch that one takes from home. The most customary lunch consists of rice and curry served on a thin polythene paper (referred to as 'lunch sheet'), and wrapped using a sheet of newspaper and packed in a polythene bag (referred to as 'shopping bag').

After the lunch is eaten, several kinds of waste material are generally disposed of into the environment. They are; shopping bag, newspaper sheet, lunch sheet and the food left overs. Managing the waste that has been generated by the lunch packet can be regarded as an Anthropocene assignment, because it is an outcome of the Anthropocene epoch. The significance of this typical lunch packet and its relationship to waste management is reflected in both empirical findings and secondary data of this study. The following case study provides strategies of how to overcome environmental problems that result from lunch packet use. This particular children's home has placed four bins for the disposal of waste (Figure 6.11). The bins are for specific categories of waste; polythene / plastic, paper / cardboard, waste food materials and lunch sheets. The manager explained the reasoning behind this:

> "The most common form of excess rubbish at any workplace or school is the waste as a result of lunch packets. When one has eaten his lunch, he rolls the left overs using the lunch sheet and then wraps it using the sheet of newspaper. Then he puts it into the polythene bag and throws it into the garbage bin provided, or throws it into a space where garbage had already being stacked. This is the beginning of many disasters. The stray dogs and cats steal them and mostly end up consuming the food leftovers along with the very thin lunch sheet. When this waste is taken to an open garbage disposal premise away from human vicinity, it becomes the meals of crows, cows and any other animal varying from hedgehog to an elephant. The big animals who can only smell the food but unable to unwrap it, eat it along with the lunch sheet and/or the shopping bags.

> Anyone can understand the consequences to their health. Not only that, the rain collects the waste, takes it to drains, and has become the major cause of recent floods in urban areas. These garbage collection centres have become major fly breeding beds and the sources for various diseases. Thus, I have built the lunch packet concept for disposing of garbage systemically that gives many solutions to these environmental dilemmas" (manager's narrative).

Figure 6.11 Lunch packet concept: segregated disposal

This manager convinces us that the rubbish disposed in accordance with the "Lunch packet concept" represents the majority of waste disposed by a family or an institution. Shopping bags represent clean polythene/plastic based materials that can be reused or recycled. Newspaper sheets represent clean paper/cardboard based materials that can also be reused or recycled. Leftovers from the lunch represent organic materials that can be used as a renewable resource to feed animals or to produce compost and biogas. Unfortunately, the lunch sheets are contaminated by oil and food materials. This type of waste represents materials that cannot be reused or recycled.

According to Yatawara (2014), a considerable portion of the post-consumer plastic consists of lunch sheets and shopping bags. In recycling these plastic and polythene items, the biggest problem is its contamination with dirt – in the case of lunch sheets, these are thrown away with leftover food. This contamination needs to be removed, thus recycling lunch sheets and shopping bags is not an easy task. They have to be separated from other materials if an efficient and an effective recycling process is expected. The mechanism becomes much easier and more cost effective, if the users themselves do the initial separation. In this home, a flyer has been displayed above the waste disposal space to inspire and instruct (Figure 6.12). It educates the residents and guests of the wider meaning of the lunch packet concept. They have added two new 'R's to the popular '3R' concept "Reduce, Reuse and Recycle": namely 'Reject and Renew'. They want the public to reject lunch sheets and renew the organic waste into fertilizers or use them as renewable resources for producing animal food or biogas.

A number of researchers have demonstrated the significance of the timely, critical and appropriate action of this manager. Jayawardane (2015) asserts that:

> "According to recent study estimates, in Sri Lanka, we dispose of 15 million lunch sheets a day; 20 million shopping bags are dumped each day, nearly 20 million food containers such as yoghurt cups are disposed of in addition to many other plastic products. Only a fraction of this is recycled, and a greater percentage ends-up in landfill or other natural ecosystems such as water bodies and wetlands causing serious environmental issues."

Figure 6.12 Lets dispose our waste into the correct bin.

Plastic and polythene account for approximately 6% of the municipal solid waste composition in Sri Lanka" (Figure 6.13). Yatawara (2014) states that every time someone goes shopping they bring home several polythene bags, which are not recycled or reused. A family discards around six to seven food packaging bags each day. When multiplied by approximately 4.2 million families in this country, this represents a significant waste stream.

Figure 6.13 In the Western province alone, 60 to 70 percent of the waste is perishable waste and another 15 to 20 percent is recyclable waste.[70]

Dr. Priyan Perera, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Forestry and Environmental Science, University of Sri Jayawardenepura asserts:

> "Irresponsible disposal of plastics and polythene degrades aesthetic beauty and environmental quality. Plastic and polythene that is improperly dumped can impede water-flow in drainage channels, and provides breeding places for disease vectors such as mosquitoes. Open burning of Plastic and polythene contributes to atmospheric pollution and may cause serious health problems. Many plastics and polythene ends up in aquatic environments such as inland water bodies and oceans. Some reports indicate that over 80% of ocean debris is in fact plastic. Plastic degrades due to solar radiation (photo-degradation) and oxidation into smaller particles, eventually forming plastic dust. They can pollute deep ocean sediments and then enter food chains" (Jayawardane 2015).

Plastic was invented during the latter part of the 19th century, and large-scale manufacturing and applications took place only after the First World War so, it is technically possible to live in a world without plastic or polythene, and our own history can provide such evidence. Before lunch sheets were introduced, people used to pack their lunches using eco-friendly materials such as banana or water lily leaves and betel nut leaf stems. In rural areas, even in the present day, banana leaves are used in lieu of umbrellas for protection from rain. Thus, the majority of families had identified the significance of growing banana trees in their gardens, in addition to its benefit as a fruit provider. In the present day context, urban life, with minimal space for gardening, has undermined the use of these eco-friendly materials. Furthermore, the convenience, low-cost and multi-purpose characteristics of polythene have substituted and marginalized the use of once common organic materials for household purposes.

When adopting the lunch packet concept as the garbage disposal mechanism, it convinces individuals to consider that lunch sheets should be rejected or reduced as it pollutes the environment in many ways. It also focuses attention on the importance of the separation of waste

[70] Improper waste disposal, a colossal loss to the country [Source: (Yatawara 2014)].

as an outcome of lunch packets in particular and all other waste in general to maximise their reusability, recyclability and renewability.

6.5.2.3 Case study-3: Caring the environment - Learning by doing

One particular children's home runs a club activity called "Green-birds". According to the manager, he attempts to enhance children's life chances and build their capacities whilst engaged in environment conservation projects. He explains their major green-bird activity as follows:

> "We have divided our children in the home into three groups. Once a fortnight, each carer takes one group to a nearby town or a temple where many people gather. Then we start collecting all sorts of litter that the public have thrown away. It does not take long to fill our bags. We come across many materials. Temple premises are full of polythene bags. Devotees bring fresh flowers and after offering them, bags are thrown to a corner of the temple premises. We sort them out and collect them into our rubbish bags. At viewpoints, PET[71] bottles, polythene bags, empty confectionery boxes and leftovers from lunch packets are often encountered. Our intention is not just to collect as much rubbish as possible, but to enhance our children's awareness of the immense environmental impact from this waste. Most of all, when children collect rubbish, the people around them can learn from the children's action and may reconsider throwing litter around, and of course regret previous littering. Some people join us and help us with our deeds. I have also found this a better way for our children to interact with the public. The public have a general consciousness that institutionalized children are vulnerable and helpless and that it is public's duty to support children's homes. When we have initiated this kind of social work, people admire the children's action which naturally empowers them to build their morale and confidence" (manager's narrative).

The manager's words are indicative of a children's home, which presents a good example of educating children for caring the environment. He has provided children with "Green-bird" T shirts, gloves and tongs for use when they are engaged in collecting rubbish (Figure 6.14 & Figure 6.15). The manager has also extended the project to include participation from other local schoolchildren outside his children's home. His intention is to promote the Green-bird project nationally around Sri Lanka to protect the environment from discarded rubbish, educate, and change the public's unacceptable habit of excessive littering. His activity in his own words is; "example is better than precept". He ends his narrative saying "I am pretty sure that in future we will have number of environmentalists produced from our children's home".

[71] Poly-Ethylene Terephthalate.

Figure 6.14 Green-birds Collect rubbish by the roadside.

Figure 6.15 Collected rubbish at a temple by green-birds.

After every rubbish pickup, Green-birds gather around their picked rubbish bags and have a discussion over refreshment. It gives an opportunity for the participants to express their feelings and attitudes about their participation. A comment book provides them with further space to express their thoughts. Of many hundreds valuable comments, the following three from participants are provided to emphasise the significance of the green-bird activity whilst educating children.

> "I have not taken much effort to throw litter into a garbage bin earlier. For example, throwing a toffee paper, bus ticket or a grocery bill into the environment was a very general habit of mine. I am convinced that the litter that I collected today was the result of many individuals whom might have the same habit as mine. If every one of us had refrained from littering everywhere, we need not have collected rubbish today. The environment would have been free from litter and a pleasant place for everyone" (children's home document).
>
> "The places that have been most visited by people are the most affected by rubbish. Of course, in many places the garbage bins either had not been placed or were overflowing. Loads of litter has been stacked everywhere with no proper covers to protect them from being exposed to the environment. It is a pity to witness how people have destroyed the beautiful places at the expense of their attractiveness. If they do not find a proper waste disposal mechanism around, mindfulness to take back their own litter with them, would have kept the environment clean without harming its beauty" (children's home document).
>
> "I am proud to be a green-bird" (children's home document).

6.5.3 Examples to other institutions for inventing their own strategies to empower their children

Crutzen (2002) cited by Smith, BD and Zeder (2013) assert, "A daunting task lies ahead for social and natural scientists and engineers to guide society toward environmentally sustainable management during the Anthropocene". There is an ongoing debate on reckless and abuse conduct in children's homes. Children's homes that build capacities and enhance the capabilities of institutionalized children on environmental affairs were found to be rare. However, the three case studies that have been discussed in this chapter highlight the endeavours of a few individuals who have guided their children's homes and their societies toward environmental sustainability by implementing projects on eco-systems and environmental protection. The ethos of these people is summed up by the words of Margaret Mead, who stated, "A small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it's the only thing that ever has" (cited in Seneviratne 2006).

The most important aspect of these projects is that these managers have incorporated institutionalized children in their projects with the intention of empowering them to be the future governors of the Anthropocene. They have pioneered a change in the attitudes of the general public which once held that children in institutional care are helpless and hopeless (Ariyadasa 2015a). While educating children on the consequences of the human activities in the Anthropocene epoch, these managers attempt to ensure that the current ones do not repeat the mistakes made by earlier generations. Children learn about their rights and responsibilities by being given the opportunity to express their ideas and to translate policy into practice through small-scale interventions that make a difference to this generation and the next.

These explicit examples are exemplary exercises for governing the Anthropocene. They provide intellectual materials to other homes and similar institutions for inventing their own strategies when governing their institutions with the mind-set that we all belong to a single biosphere[72] which

[72] The biosphere is the part of the Earth, including air, land, surface rocks, and water, within which life occurs, and which

includes “not only the biota, but all of their relationships – the web or network of life, the life community” (Caddy 2014)

6.5.4 Discussion: strategies for maintaining the human-environment friendly relations in the Anthropocene

Constructing reservoirs for hydroelectricity and agricultural purposes, tunnelling for roads and railways for transportation, filling and excavation for building roads, deforestation for tea plantations and agriculture are human activities that continue in the Anthropocene epoch. Although these said human activities are supposed to enhance human well-being and the standard of living, sometimes the opposite happen. As an outcome of this study, it reveals that these human activities have been the major causes for many environmental problems including landslides and human-elephant conflicts. Thus, it is time to learn from past experience to avoid future depredation. This study emphasises the importance of a thorough consideration of environmental impacts and the consequent adverse effects to the human lives prior to the implementation of any project that might hinder the environmental equilibrium. The significance of ethical conduct in accordance with Environmental Impact Reports and the importance of listening to the voice of the public have been discussed as strategies to maintain the human-environment friendly relations in the Anthropocene epoch.

The first case study shows that our existence is contingent on our supporting, and being supported by, others (including non-living entities). It also teaches us to limit our use of fertilisers and pesticides, which have the potential for environmental harm. It introduces alternative measures on how to protect crops from agrochemicals that eradicate endangered herbs at the expense of commercially driven food production. Strategies for avoiding and banning chemically driven food production and reducing carbon footprints through systemically integrating interdependent renewable resources are the lessons learnt from this children’s home. According to the manager of this home, he has initiated the organic farming with the principal intention of maintaining the good health and longevity of the children. It is interesting to note that the central focus on organic farming has become the hub of many capacity building initiatives that are linked with central capabilities including; safety, education, standard of living, productive valued activities, quality social interactions, recreation and play (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014a; Canoy, Lerais & Schokkaert 2010; Nussbaum 2011). Furthermore, the eco-system governance practices of this home have paved many paths in empowering children for diverse occupations such as organic, dairy and worm farmers; bee keepers; plant nursery marketing; compost and bio-gas producers; herbal medicine practitioners; environmentalists; and agricultural inspectors. The vocational training atmosphere is consistent with the Guidelines[73] for the Alternative care of Children (United

biotic processes in turn alter or transform. The geologist who in 1875 coined the word biosphere, Eduard Suess, defined it as “the place on Earth’s surface where life dwells” (Source: http://www.morning-earth.org/).

[73] UN Guideline 134 & 135.

Nations 2010) and the General Standards[74] for Promoting the Quality of Services of Voluntary Children's Homes (DPCCS 1991).

The second case study builds capacities in resource management for institutionalized children in particular and the public in general. It involves lessons on recycling use and re-use of resources. The lunch packet concept has conceptualized a practical solution for the issue of waste management in Sri Lanka. It also addresses many issues related to environmental impacts, health hazards, and social and economic crises due to improper waste disposal mechanisms. Furthermore, it prompts the urgent need to develop alternatives to lunch sheets and encourages us to at least use a lunch box made of reusable material that can be recycled after a reasonable time. The manager showed the author the records of three high school students who had researched this lunch packet concept for their final year assessments. According to the manager, two schools have initiated schemes to implement waste disposal mechanisms in accordance with the lunch packet concept. It indicates the significance of this concept for wider application throughout the country.

The third case study shows that volunteering to clean up the cities empowers the citizens' attitudes to maintain an eco-friendly environment by eradicating the habit of the careless disposal of litter. Furthermore, the generous gesture of this children's home to involve other schoolchildren and public in their green-bird activities demonstrates their willingness to campaign for public awareness of a clean environment. It not only helps to keep the environment clean, but also keeps a harmonious relationship between the children's home and the external world through a worthy cause. The discussion after every rubbish pickup helps participants to reflect on their activity and provides an incentive to take home the message of their good deeds. The certificates that the manager awards for green-bird participants, are a manifestation of the manager's enthusiasm to encourage children to become leaders, guiding society toward a clean and healthy environment.

One of the greatest concerns that has been underscored in many of the research reports written on institutionalized children, and which impedes upon their experiencing competence, is the lack of opportunities to acquire social skills required for adult life (Dunn, Jareg & Webb 2005; Mann 2001; Save the Children 2005; Tolfree 1995). Jayasooriyya (2008, p. 30) state "Many of the children expressed fear about society outside the children's institution and were worried about their inability to deal with it once they left the institution". However, the most prominent characteristic of the three examples of good governance practices discussed in this paper is the ability for institutionalized children to interact with wider society and environment. Thus, during their institutionalization, they acquire the courage and confidence that they need to deal with societies outside the high walls and the locked gates of children's homes when they are reintegrated[75]. All three projects educate and

[74] General Standards 5.22 & 5.23.
[75] Reintegration: In this PAR *reintegration* is referred to as 'a child's reunification with family/natural birth environment, socialization with society/community or other permanent care solutions such as local/foreign adoption'. Source: (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills, 2014b).

empower children, young people and also the adults about how to care for the environment. Mindfulness of eco-friendliness, global warming and climatic changes are the underlying features of the tacit endeavour of these management teams. These practices characterise the harmonious existence between humanity and nature and have adopted the concerns of critical systemic thinking with the simultaneous improvement of human well-being and ecosystem health.

6.6 Child's right to a religion

6.6.1 Introduction

UN Guidelines paragraph 88 states:

> "Children should be allowed to satisfy the needs of their religious and spiritual life, including by receiving visits from a qualified representative of their religion, and to freely decide whether or not to participate in religious services, religious education or counselling. The child's own religious background should be respected, and no child should be encouraged or persuaded to change his/her religion or belief during a care placement" (United Nations 2010, p. 14).

This section focuses on human rights of institutionalized children in terms of religious perspectives. It explores ways to enhance children's rights through ensuring respect for all cultures and religions. The significance for this exploration become evident when studying the demographic patterns in terms of different provinces in Sri Lanka (see Chapter 2.3 of this thesis).

This study has demonstrated that children's homes and religious institutions are closely related to each other and religions play a major role in the governance aspect of children's homes. However, it has also been identified that religious rights and the multicultural needs of institutionalized children have often been poorly addressed.

This study also addresses the demographic patterns in terms of different provinces in Sri Lanka as it becomes vital when exploring ways to enhance children's rights through ensuring respect for all cultures and religions. It discusses religious perspectives on children and their rights in broader aspects in terms of the UDHR (United Nations 1948) and the UNCRC (United Nations 1989). It emphasises the influence of religion on the evolution of children's homes and governance practices within these. Subsequently, it discusses the need to understand multiculturalism (Sarah 2014) within children's homes in terms of different religious perspectives. Particular emphasis is put on the practical public education example identified during the PAR, which has been demonstrated in a children's home.

De Silva and Punchihewa (2011) stress the need by stating, "A significant percentage of children in institutions fall prey to unethical forced or coerced religious conversion carried out by many institutions that are established directly or indirectly by faith based organisations". Thus, the discussion section emphasises the significance of the incorporation of religious perspectives in the governance aspect of children's homes in terms of addressing children's rights and their needs.

Finally, the study makes recommendations on governance practices of children's homes in terms of different religious perspectives.

6.6.2 Multiculturalism and children's homes

It is clear that the formation of Christian orphanages housing non-Christian children and the subsequent formation of such children's homes by other religious faiths was an important feature of an increasingly multicultural country. The Sri Lankan civil war that lasted for nearly three decades caused thousands of children to be admitted into children's homes. In many cases, these homes have taken no account of their cultural backgrounds or religious affiliations. As a result, many children's homes host and facilitate the care of children of different faiths and diverse cultures.

The financial facilitators and caregivers of children's homes have strong links to local and international organizations that have different social, cultural and religious backgrounds. Thus, it is inevitable that this complex and multifaceted array of orphanage environments raises many governance issues in terms of different religious perspectives. With the intention of national unity and religious harmony, it would be best if VCH management could accommodate children irrespective of their cultural identity, religious affiliation and ethnic backgrounds. However, the practical issues when addressing children's needs in terms of language and religious rights, as explained in UN guidelines paragraph 6**,** undermine such intentions (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014a)**.** Thus, it has highlighted a need to understand multiculturalism within children's homes.

6.6.3 The need for an approach that supports implementing children's rights in multicultural environments

Some of the traditional practices in religions may contravene to the UNCRC. It may not be ethical to criticize a tradition that has its roots embedded in the history. However, in less than four years since its inception, more than 170 nations, or close to 99% of the global community, have accepted the convention as an internationally agreed minimum standard for the treatment of children (Cook 1996). In the UNCRC, there is no room for a caste system or gender based discrimination. Any religion that worships God/s accepts that God/s is/are just and good. Different people may have different definitions of good but no one can expect God/s to justify the caste system or to compromise gender-based discrimination. Nussbaum (2000) comments that conduct of these traditions are egregiously bad and must be a form of human error, which can be remedied while leaving the religion itself intact.

It is clear that the tendency for Sri Lankan children's homes representing multicultural environments is strong. Furthermore, they demonstrate that these multicultural environments have created human rights issues in terms of religious perspectives. The provisions of the UN Guidelines have directed service providers in addressing issues pertaining to a child's right to a religion or belief and his/her right to practice a religion. These guidelines are helpful when the

service providers and the service users belong to a same religion. For example, the tradition of the Islamic faith to not consume pork or pork related food and the Hindu tradition of not consuming beef or beef based food presents issues within a multicultural environment. If all belong to one faith, it is possible to maintain their religious traditions consistently. However, where individuals from different faiths are present, some degree of compromise is necessary. A Buddhist or Hindu management team may encourage the prevention of meat consumption, but a Christian within that environment may not share such a concern. Whilst the right to eat meat in this environment ought to be respected, this conflicts with the right of children of other faiths to not be associated with such a practice. An acknowledgement of these conflicts needs to be made and an appropriate compromise found. The UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010, p. 14) emphasise that “Carers should ensure that children receive adequate amounts of wholesome and nutritious food in accordance with local dietary habits, relevant dietary standards and the children’s religious beliefs”. Thus, to be in line with the UN Guidelines when providing meals, the children from a multicultural institutional care environment need to be attended to on a case-by-case basis considering the best interest of a child in terms of dietary habits and standards, and religious beliefs.

One commissioner’s narration, about an incident relevant to a children’s home of all Buddhist children, provides another example related to multicultural issues within a children’s home. This particular home had been managed by a foreign NGO. The management team had introduced a poultry and pig farm as vocational training for the children as well as a measure to meet the financial constraints of the home. However, the people around the home who were mostly Buddhists did not tolerate this management style. The DPCCS received a number of petitions from the villagers opposing the managers’ role that included killing animals, a practice that is at odds with Buddhist traditions. DPCCS was obliged to request that the manager discontinue any vocational training that involved killing animals or selling animals for meat. According to this commissioner, the manager did not positively respond to the department’s request and the home soon closed.

The provision of vocational training to children of institutional care is encouraged by UN Guidelines. The paragraph 135 (United Nations 2010, p. 19) states “Ongoing educational and vocational training opportunities should be imparted as part of life skills education to young people”. However, this incident reveals that the neglect of religious perspectives when providing vocational training in a multicultural setting can lead to the termination of institutional care for needy children. This indicates the significance of an approach that values multiculturalism and supports addressing children’s rights issues in similar environments.

6.6.4 Discussion: Practical public education example: Integration of multicultural values into institutional care settings

The following account of a manager from a children’s home explains the complex situation of an institutional care environment where children of varying ethnic backgrounds have to practice

different religious beliefs that challenge their linguistic backgrounds, prompting issues of cultural identity. It also identifies the prompt actions that this home has taken to address the issues of multicultural needs within the institutional care setting. This home encourages children to see the relevance of multiple religions on a daily basis, and enhances their capabilities to live a multicultural world (Ariyadasa 2015d, p. 41).

> "My children's home is situated in a small village where most of the villagers are Sinhalese Buddhists. Therefore, the Department of Probation and Child Care Services recognize mine as a home mainly for Sinhalese Buddhist children although it is not intended for a particular race or a religion. We have 18 children. Of them, 16 are Sinhalese Buddhists by birth and the other two are Muslims by birth. These two girls who are sisters have no parents or known relatives. When they were placed in our home, they were aged 8 and 6. Prior to the transfer, they had been raised in another children's home, which was managed at a Buddhist Temple since they were 3 and 5 years old. They are well versed in the Sinhalese language and Buddhist traditions as they had been brought up within a Sinhalese Buddhist community. Thus, we have not found any issues related to language or religion when nurturing them in our home. The fact that these two children had been brought up within a Sinhalese Buddhist community, they were characterized as such. However, when they were addressed by their names, anybody would know them as Muslims, because their names are common Muslim names. Although their names are of Muslim origin, these two girls hesitate to identify themselves as Muslims. The reason for this is that, they do not behave as a typical Muslim girl would. In Sri Lanka, Muslims generally speak the Tamil language. These girls know no Tamil and have not had any experiences of observing the Islamic religion.
>
> We have never forced them to learn Sinhalese nor have they been forced to observe the Buddhism. However, for an outsider, it may look as if we have insisted on them becoming Sinhalese Buddhists. When they were asked whether they wanted to practice Islam, they had no answer, because they knew nothing about Islam and saw no reason why they should observe a religion that they have never practiced. Interestingly, until I asked them such a question, they thought that they were Sinhalese Buddhists. Thus, it is only their names that identify them as Muslims. In all other ways, they are Sinhalese Buddhists.
>
> In our home, we have provided our children with every facility to practice Buddhism. If we had children from other religions, we would have facilitated them to practice their religions as well. However, we have never disregarded other religions. At the religious observing corner, we have kept the pictures of Jesus Christ, Lord Shiva and the picture of Mecca in addition to the Lord Buddha's shrine to symbolize the four major religions practiced all over in Sri Lanka. This demonstrates and convinces the charges and the public how much we respect the other religions and how much we really care for the devotees from other religions. Many individuals and organizations that represent different ethnicities and diverse religious backgrounds fund our children's home. Therefore, our religious corner pleases anyone from other religious affiliations and gives them an identity in our home and everyone feels as part of our own family" (manager's narrative).

The management team has maintained the values of multiculturalism by incorporating shrines of many religions into their religious observance space (Figure 6.16). This simple gesture has manifested many things and is discussed below as it educates other homes that systems thinking and systemic approaches help identify strategies to address children's rights and needs.

Figure 6.16 The religious observance space of this VCH represents all the four major religion beliefs in Sri Lanka.

It does represent the four major religions practiced in Sri Lanka and symbolizes religious harmony (Figure 6.17). The other 26 homes that I visited during fieldwork also had religious observing spaces. In contrast, they were all confined to the major religion for which the children's home was originally intended. Some children who were raised under a different religion before coming into these homes had to observe the prevailing religion in the homes or to refrain from observing their personal religious beliefs. Lababidy (1996, p. 6) regrets such situations and states "Unfortunately, many children's programs in developed and developing countries are still designed with little thought to cultural or religious diversity even though the importance of culture is highlighted in articles within the Convention".

Figure 6.17 Symbolic representations of the four major religions practiced by the majority of the Sri Lankans have been displayed above the entrance to the dining room.

The example of the manager who has placed symbols to represent all major religions in his home not only gives respect to all children from diverse cultural backgrounds and different religious affiliations, but also pays respect to visitors and donors who support the home. This manager summarised his perspective as a Buddhist "The one who pays respect to his own religion, pays respect to other religions and the one who pays no respect to other religions, pays no respect to his own". This manager's example can be regarded as good governance practice and a body of thought that manifests the proper way to respond to cultural and religious diversity (cited in Ariyadasa 2015d, p. 42).

6.7 The child's right as a dignified human being

6.7.1 Introduction

UN Guidelines paragraph 13 asserts:

> "Children must be treated with dignity and respect at all times and must benefit from effective protection from abuse, neglect and all forms of exploitation, whether on the part of care providers, peers and or third parties, in whatever care setting they may find themselves" (United Nations 2010, p. 4).

However, the people's attitude is that institutionalized children are welfare cases and inevitably forget the child's citizenship right to be recognised as a dignified human being. The following statement highlights this situation.

> "The governance of children's homes for vulnerable children in Sri Lanka has long been regarded as a social welfare activity rather than a social responsibility. For this reason, it has led to the existence of many children's homes lacking even the basic amenities and a few homes with extraordinary infrastructure and a far higher standard of amenities" (Roccella 2007).

In line with this statement, firstly the socio-economic and cultural perspectives of the tradition of Dane[76] (almsgiving) is discussed below. Secondly, the paradox of relative and absolute poverty with regard to the tradition of Dane and the peoples' attitudes towards the governance of children's homes is discussed using two case studies provided by service providers.

6.7.2 Documentation as a barrier to dignity

There are two areas of discrimination when a child has an 'Assumed Birth Certificate' (ABC). Firstly, the holding of an ABC is seen by other children as an indication that the child has no parents and a stigma of illegitimacy is attached to the child. Secondly, the lack of a normal birth certificate means the child has no known birth date, only an assumed one. In areas where an exact birth date is required, for example, age related sports events and examinations; the child experiences some discrimination.

[76] Dane: The word 'Dane' is largely used when giving 'alms' to monks in the Buddhist culture. The charitable giving of money, food, or goods to people in need is also referred to as 'Dane' (Ariyadasa, 2015).

This researcher, as a service provider to a girls' home, has experienced the above on many occasions. Furthermore, he has found the bureaucracy associated with obtaining an ABC is involved and time consuming.

According to the Introduction and Article 2.1 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989), there should be no distinction of any kind relating to birth or other status. Further, in Article 2.2 it states that the "State's parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status …" (p. 2).

6.7.3 The tradition of Dane: Socio-economic and cultural perspectives

Many Sri Lankans believe that the tradition of almsgiving to children's homes helps one to achieve a better future in this life and to create an even better one in the next. This is the belief of the Buddhist and Hindu religions, which represents over 85% of Sri Lanka's population. There are local and foreign individuals and some companies who assist children's homes by providing or funding meals and/or materials. For their contribution, they choose their own birthdays or any other memorable day to celebrate it at the children's home. This tradition has continued over generations and many children's homes have printed applications to promote this custom. This is called 'Dane'. This concept of Dane was explored through the research questions, identifying the positive and negative aspects of this custom in terms of the institutionalized children and their human rights (Ariyadasa 2015b).

According to service providers, whatever the belief of the public, the positive aspect of Dane is that it eases the ongoing maintenance cost of a children's home. The number of people gathering to undertake an almsgiving varies from a few family members to a larger community group. Thus, it provides institutionalized children with a chance to mix with the public. Six policy makers out of nine considered the chance of mixing with the public as a result of Dane as a positive aspect. These policy makers believe that by keeping a children's home with easy access to the public, it protects the children from abuse. They believe that the public can observe the children's well-being and report to officials if they find any misbehaviour of staff within the homes. This is based on the assumption that those who observe Dane do so for altruistic reasons. Furthermore, the policy makers suggest that by keeping a contact list of the public donors, staff can record potential personal donors and possible routes for future support for socializing the children from their children's homes. However, the large numbers of people that can participate in Dane are often regarded as a nuisance for the daily timetable of the home. Three policymakers point out that Dane is a huge process (Figure 6.18). It consumes vital time that can be utilized for the future prospects of the charges of the home in many other aspects. After the meal donation, children have to sing songs and dance as a sign of gratitude for the generous thoughts of the public. Often, while

members of the public are present, children have to sacrifice their evening rest, recreational activities, school homework and important extra classes.

Figure 6.18 people have gathered and started cooking for 300 children and the staff members (nearly 40 outsiders have joined to taken care of the lunch for the children).

Another negative aspect of this tradition according to policy makers and policy officers is that the public sees these institutionalized children as helpless and hopeless. They have recognised that the public have naturally become donors to these institutions and provide facilities in terms of materials (food, clothes, books, stationery etc.) to satisfy children's physical needs rather than satisfying their psychological needs such as recognition, respect, belonging, achievements and confidence. Therefore, policy makers urge that care should be taken when organizing a Dane. There is a real danger that children may come to believe that this is their fate – to be fed and supported by others and they have to live with it. This makes them more vulnerable as it does not encourage them to develop their own potential and hold a positive attitude to confront the challenges in their future (Ariyadasa 2015b, 2015c).

Six service providers of the thirty interviewed point out that when organizing a Dane, the public tends to look for children's homes that have fewer facilities and more desperate children so they, the donors, earn more merits. This attitude is highly contentious. When the staff of a children's home maximise infrastructure and keep their charges happy by utilizing funds properly and promptly, it adversely affects public donations. Well-managed children's homes from the general public's perspective need little further support. Their decision for Dane is mainly based on the infrastructure facilities at homes and the appearance of the children. These attitudes of the public inevitably lead the managers of some children's homes to misuse public funds without utilizing them within the homes. Paradoxically, the public unwittingly encourages managers to display much less than regular/perfect homes and to keep the children in desperate conditions simply to attract

more funding. This unfortunate paradox of relative and absolute need is well illustrated by the following two case studies.

6.7.4 Paradox of relative and absolute need

Case study 1: One manager of an 'A' graded[77] children's home explained this paradox by using his example of 'two different beggars' as follows:

> "Suppose you are travelling in a bus with a friend. At one station, two female beggars get into the bus and start begging simultaneously. One woman is looking dirty and unkempt while holding an infant with a running nose and unattended wounds. The other woman is wearing relatively clean clothes and her baby is hygienically attended. To which beggar would you offer some money? Isn't that the terrible looking beggar with the child likely to get your attention? Wouldn't that be the reaction of most of the other passengers as well? After the women left the bus, wouldn't you comment with your friend justifying your action and that of the others, saying that there is no need to offer money to a cleanly dressed woman with a healthy looking baby? His argument is obvious as the other woman is the one that appears in every manner to deserve support from the public. We accept the truth as what we see it, but the reality could be a totally different story."

When asked why he thought that the reality could be a different story, the manager justified his argument with:

> "The woman may not wear clean clothes because clean clothes look odd for a beggar. She does not attend the running nose or the wounds of the baby, because these characteristics influence the passengers to offer money to the one they perceive as needing most. In reality, she should be able to wear clean and tidy clothes from her earnings as a beggar and of course attend her baby, but she does not do so. She may be uneducated but she is well versed in the peoples' attitudes. She knows that clean clothes or healthy looking babies either reduce her earnings or bring no income at all. That is why we hardly see well-dressed beggars on the streets. Torn or deliberately dirty and/or dusty, rotten clothes are beggars uniform. Miserable faces and unattended wounds are their ornaments. Disabilities are their unveiled blessings" (manager's narrative).

In this description, the manager views the issue of relative and absolute need through the common eye and explains the current situation of the general public's attitude towards the children's homes. The public's attitude is that children's homes are usually poorly managed and difficult to run. Furthermore, the public have very rarely experienced thriving, well-educated, properly behaved and well-nourished children in institutional care. They presume that institutionalized children are orphans, abandoned and destitute as categorised by DPCCS (2010b). Thus, the public is reluctant to contribute to children's homes that are well managed and where the residential children demonstrate similar life styles to those children living in natural birth environments (Ariyadasa 2015b, 2015c).

Case study 2: One service provider explains his experience as follows:

> "When I decided to take the risk of managing and running an orphanage, I was quite sure about the Dane from public donors. Especially the meal donations, because I knew about

[77] At the 2010 grading standards competition, this home was graded 'A' by the provincial DPCCS of the North Western Province.

> a few children's homes where you cannot easily reserve a date for a meal donation. The meals for most of the year have been reserved in those children's homes. Therefore, I relied upon public donations for meal costs even before I started my orphanage. I thought, once started, within two to three years, I would not need to prepare many meals in my children's home and I could reduce the number of cooks from two to one. I was totally mistaken. It has been six years since the inception of my home, but I have not been able to cut down even 25% of the meal cost from the public funding."

According to this manager, the public's attitude towards the children's homes is an issue that has to be addressed immediately. He explains the reasons why he thinks meal donations are lacking in his children's home as follows:

> "I constructed the children's home from the generous funding of an overseas organization. It consists of most of the key infrastructure facilities that a children's home must have. We have sufficient staff members and a manageable number of children. It is situated in a rural village and the children go to the village school. Our children wear relatively good clothes and eat relatively good meals compared with the children from the village. That is one reason why we receive only a few meal donations from the village where the children's home is situated. The other reason is a very crucial one. It is known that the donors who come from distant areas rarely continue their donations. When they see the infrastructure and the satisfied faces of the institutionalized children, they think that our children's home is a well-off one and needs no constant support. We need their financial and material support to keep the ongoing functioning of the home as good as it is now. Many, who promised regular donations, withdraw them and transfer them to other children's home, where they find less facilities and miserable faces of charges. Public does not understand that some managements of other children's homes pretend that they lack facilities and use children to display the varying needs of the home. Although I am still struggling with financing strategies and process for my children's home, I cannot misuse children in my care to attract public funding" (manager's narrative).

The manager in case study 1 tries to compare the life of a beggar with the characteristics of a children's home. It is expressed pertinent point as both the beggar and children's home depend upon public donations. The manager in case study 2 tries to explain that the good appearance of a children's home and a well-kept children paradoxically cause the public to think that no funds are needed.

6.7.5 Synthesis of the issues of dignity

Policy makers and service providers describe that the custom of Dane has both positive and negative aspects. Policy makers are keen to identify negative aspects as they assume that Dane could be interpreted as teaching children to think in terms of welfare and dependency rather than thinking about their own rights, responsibilities and abilities. However, service providers find Dane as positive in some aspects, particularly as it eases the running cost of the children's homes.

Socio-economic and cultural perspectives of Sri Lankan society have influenced the management of children's homes and the way the human rights of institutionalized children have been integrated in practice. Thus, institutionalized children are affected as a result of a range of socio-economic factors. It has been a difficult task to erase the attitude of society that these vulnerable children ought not to be treated as 'welfare cases'; they have rights. While acknowledging the thoughts and

deeds of the public as donors, governance practices of homes should be adapted to minimize the negative impacts on the rights of children and their needs.

Since many children's homes in Sri Lanka are funded by donations from the public, there is an urgent need for open debate to convince the public donors of the relative and absolute reality of how their funds should be utilized by children's homes. Furthermore, service providers should encourage and provide access for the public to participate (to some degree) in management to maximise the public awareness of how their funds are being utilised. They should be convinced that their continuous support assists not only the initial generation of facilities but also to keep these facilities functioning.

The public should assist social welfare organisations that run children's homes with no personal agenda other than as a societal responsibility to support institutionalized children. This helps the children to achieve their full potential with upward mobility, and to integrate into society as effective, productive and fully rounded citizens where they can also contribute positively to the social and economic development of Sri Lanka.

6.8 Synthesis: a framework to address children's rights during their institutionalization

The following theory informed practical framework (Table 6.2) has been conceptualized as a tool to address human rights issues in care institutions. It is specifically designed to protect the human rights of institutionalized children. However, with slight amendments to the same framework, it could be used to avoid unnecessary institutionalization of children (see Chapter 5). Furthermore, by implementing a monitoring process to attend to similar issues after the reintegration of children, subsequent re-institutionalization can also be avoided (see Chapter 7).

This framework allows for existing policy and practice mechanisms to be challenged, with a view to human rights outcomes that might involve de-institutionalisation and children's reintegration with families and communities – these are considered more likely to enhance capabilities and aspirations of children in Sri Lanka.

The framework is applied to developing systemic responses to the needs of children and young people in Sri Lanka so that pathways to realizing their life chances and quality of life can be accomplished through applying the capabilities approach to achieve functioning. The recovery measures of the theoretical framework suggests the recovery measures for building capacities to re-establish the relevant loss of capabilities of the child concerned. The good governance practices identified in this study have been introduced throughout chapters 5, 6, and 7, which will enable theory informed practical action with regard to building capacities for the achievement of capabilities in terms of children's rights perspectives.

Table 6.2 Theory informed practical framework to address the human rights issues of institutionalized children.

Core theme	Relevant UN Guideline[78]	Sub themes	Relevant loss of Capability[79]	Recovery measures	Relevant Good Governance practice[80] and/or the systemic strategy
Reintegration: The significance of reintegration as a remedy to redress the many human rights issues encountered by institutionalized children. I.e. the core human right identified in this PAR is the child's right to "reintegration". Thus, the core issue of the institutionalized children can be interpreted as the denial of many human rights caused by "institutionalization" of children.	3/4/5/7/9/10/11/12/13/14/15/16/17/18//20/23 27/32/33/34/35/37/39-48/49-52/53-56/57-68/69-75/80-82/83/88/96/97/98/99/101-104/105-117/118-122/123-127/137-139/153-154/155-156/157-161/162-167	Some children have been institutionalized when there are possibilities to prevent their institutionalization.	Basic human right: Control over one's environment / freedom of speech / freedom of religion / to be treated as a dignified human being. Ability to enjoy oneself Ability to take part in the life of the community.	Pursue policies to address the root causes of child's abandonment, relinquishment and separation from his/her family.	5.3.1 5.3.2 5.5 7.1 7.2 7.4
		Children stay in institutional care environments for too long and are denied their right to a family unit. Children lack love, affection and self-esteem needs.	Basic right / Control over one's environment.	Introduction of an efficient and effective reintegration process enabling children's proper re-unification / socialization / adoption / foster care / kinship care / *Kafala* of Islamic law.	7.4
		Children are shy and not confident.	Ability to appear in public without shame.	Enable access for activities such as Boys' Scout / Girls Guide, Red Cross and similar club activities.	6.5.2.1
		Children lack chances to interact with other people outside the children's home environment.	Quality social interactions.	Promote possibilities to contact and associate family members / relatives and friends. Arrange activities in the society outside the children's home and promote participation in cultural and religious festivals in the best interests of the child.	6.5.2.3
		Unable to access basic human needs: Sufficient clothing, balanced diet, adequate	Standard of living: Ability to own possessions (moveable and	Promote accessibility for basic goods and services that are fundamental for	6.7.3 6.7.4

[78] UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (United Nations 2010).
[79] Sen's 'Basic needs perspective' (Sen 1990), Nussbaum's 'Aristotelian view on human functioning'/'Capabilities Theory of Justice' (Nussbaum, 1998, 2000, 2011) and Stiglitz et al.'s 'Notion of subjective and objective well-being' (Stiglitz et al., 2008).
[80] To avoid repetition and to maximize the understanding of the good governance practice and/or the systemic strategy, the chapter reference of the relevant practice is mentioned in this column.

		schooling equipment.	immoveable), Ability to purchase goods and services beyond basic ones.	enhancing life chances and improving quality of life.	
		Children are not included in their decision-making processes.	Basic human right (freedom of speech).	Include children in the placement committee meetings & involve them actively when making decisions on their behalves.	7.1 7.2
		Children have no or too much participation and/or forced participation for religious practices and traditions.	Basic human right (freedom of religion).	Provision of adequate/appropriate facilities for religious observances in the best interests of the child.	6.6.4
		Subject to varying discriminations/bullying among peers and by teachers and caregivers on race, religion and language.	Basic human right (to be treated as a dignified human being).	Provision of counselling and awareness programs for peers and teachers in schools and caregivers in the home regarding "treating institutionalized children with dignity".	6.7
Health: Institutionalized children are subjected to a variety of health issues that require urgent attention.	16/34:c/83/84/91/128/ 129/130:b/136	Death of children due to avoidable accidents (morbidities).	Ability to live to the end of a normal human life (Not dying prematurely).	Avoid foreseeable accidents and illnesses and take immediate actions to avoid overcrowding in children's home. Provide sufficient staffing.	6.2.2 6.2.3
		Overly frequent illnesses. Prolonged illnesses. Skin diseases. Dental problems Unhygienic environment: Residents' toilets and wastewater drains are not cleaned properly / Mosquito nets are not provided or not cleaned / mended properly.	Ability to live in good health.	Provide: Access to regular medical checkups, dental service and medication in a timely manner. Adequate clothing. Efficient cleaning service for personal well-being. Adequate air circulation and sunlight into the home. Avoid congestion.	6.2 6.4
		Children's do not receive a balanced diet (Qualitatively and/or quantitatively) in the best interests of the child.	Ability to be well nourished.	Provision & maintaining a balance diet according to different age groups and cultural, ethnical and religious backgrounds. Close supervision on quantity and quality diet. Provision of clean water.	6.7.3
Safety: There is an urgent need to address the safety issues of	89/90/91/92/93/95/96/ 100/128-130/136/167	Institutional violence: Between children Between children and staff	Ability to secure against institutional violence / violent assault.	Provision of adequate / qualified / trained staff enabling a safe environment free from institutional	6.1

institutionalized children.				violence. (E.g. Requirement of Police Clearance Certificates and very good set of reference before employing)	
		Sexual assault: By staff. By peers and adult children.	Ability to be secure against sexual assault.	Assessment of police clearance certificates and 'Grama Niladari'[81] certificates when employing staff to enable a safe environment that is free of sexual assault. Appropriate grouping of children in terms of age. Mindfulness to the cause of institutionalization when grouping children. Careful supervision of children's behaviors while respecting their privacy.	
		No arrangements for programs to develop the economic security of children in institutional care.	Economic security.	Establishment of a "future savings" scheme maximizing economic security. Provision of training on safe money handling during institutionalization.	7.3.2
		Loss / damage important documents such as Birth Certificates, reports on medical / vaccination history, achievement certificates and photographs.	Ability to enter a new school or to transfer from one school to another. Ability to attend appropriate medical treatment and vaccinations with report system. Ability to attend sports activities and examinations, Ability to find a timely and a proper job.	Save documents electronically enabling the availability for future access as required. (E.g. Potential for a centralized database that could be accessed via the web. This would be the government's responsibility to set up and maintain and a requirement of homes to add relevant data to) Prepare a checklist for important documents and take immediate actions to replace the lost / unavailable documents. Take immediate actions to get certificates of "probable age"[82] in the absence of birth certificates.	7.1 7.2 7.4

[81] The Village Headman (The representative of the Assistant Government Agent (AGA) of a Divisional Secretariat).

[82] Children without birth certificates should be produced before a nearest Government Doctor through the Probation Officer in charge of the division and certificates of probable age be

				Store the documents in a secure place with photocopies. Enable the children to maintain a folder of their personal documents / certificates. Promote the child's sense of self-identity by enabling a life storybook. This could include pictures, personal objects and mementoes regarding each step of the child's life.	
Formal education: Inadequate formal education.	11/16/36/85/128-130/135	Unable to read and write. Being bullied by teachers and peers at school. No proper schooling. Insufficient support for school homework. Minimal chances for receiving extra classes to support weak subjects.	Ability to imagine, to think and to reason. Ability to read, write and communicate. Ability to enjoy recreational activities. Ability to engage in sports and cultural activities.	Conduct awareness programs for teachers and children at schools. Avoid social, cultural, material and documentation barriers that hinder children's access to formal education. Provision of a recognized school in a timely manner. Provision of extra classes where needed. Close monitoring of school attendance. Conducting a reward system for progress and achievements. Provide adequate and appropriate materials for sports and recreational activities.	6.3 6.4
Non-formal Education: Inadequate non-formal education.	11/85/86/128-130	Minimal opportunities for extracurricular activities such as: Sports, music and arts. Cultural activities.	Ability to enjoy oneself Ability to take part in the life of the community	Provide: Opportunities to attend extracurricular activities in the best interests of the child. Access for sports, music and arts. Access to engage in cultural activities. Opportunities to participate in the life of the community.	6.3.3 6.5

obtained (DPCCS 1991).

Vocational training: Inadequate / inappropriate vocational training.	85/135	Minimal chances to engage in vocational training during institutionalization. Inadequate facilities. Outdated training. Insufficient and / or unqualified staff. .	Good study- life balance to develop valued activities outside schooling. Nurturing skills that enable to find and keep a job at an adequate level.	Provision of up-to-date facilities for varying vocational trainings in the best interests of the child. Provision of qualified / trained / adequate staff for conducting vocational training. Nurture skills that enable a child to find and keep a job at an adequate level.	6.5

6.9 Summary

Many institutionalized children are poorly integrated into national life. They are marginalized and powerless, and their low educational levels severely restrict their participation in social, economic and political processes. As discussed in Chapter 6.3, while addressing the discrimination issues between rural and urban dwellers in education, policy makers should strive for the equalization of education and the elimination of discrimination in education between children from institutional care settings and children from public.

This chapter discusses many strategies of how children's rights could be protected during their institutionalization using several good governance practices from children's homes. They are: receiving the support from university students and the retired educators informally to assist formal education of children (Chapter 6.3.3); implementation of 'ApiHappy' project to enhance educational achievements and good conduct (Chapter 6.4.2); idea of medication pigeonhole for securing health (Chapter 6.2.3); lessons on eco-friendly projects using renewable resources (Chapter 6.5.2.1); the 'lunch packet concept' for '5R' implication (Chapter 6.5.2.2); 'Greenbird project' (Chapter 6.5.2.3); and practical education example for multicultural care settings (Chapter 6.6.4). These are a few examples for new cognitive and evaluation models (Paulston 1972), which are at variance with the models adopted in governmental programs. Thus, in line with Paulston argument, taking VCHs as non-formal sector of society, the above listed projects can be regarded as popular education moments that belong to people's education[83] (cited in McKay & Romm 1992).

Romm (2002) in her paper 'A Trusting Constructivist Approach to Systemic Inquiry' outlines what she calls a 'trusting constructivist' with the view that, as Banthy puts it: 'what we know about the world becomes projected onto the world'. That is "our theoretical constructions and ways of thinking in relation to the world cannot be considered separately from the impacts that they might have on the unfolding of possibilities" Romm (2002, p. 455). The potentials of the listed projects that the managers and the caregivers strive with the aim of enhancing the life chances of their children recognize their involvement in the development of children's lives. They can reconsider with policy makers the status of their own constructions as to whether they generate fulfilling effects to children. According to Romm a trusting constructivist view suggests that people cannot stop from offering their own constructions in process of inquiry. She emphasises that "They need to recognize the choices that they are making as they create constructions, so that they can account for these in relation to alternatives in social discourse, in an endeavour to earn others' trust" (Romm 2002, p. 455).

[83] According to McKay and Romm (1992, p. 1) Peoples education is a broad concept which can include popular education. It implies that education will have popular input and be made available to everyone.

This demonstrates that application of social constructivism in institutional care settings not only bring higher achievements to development and education but also can address number of issues and support to protect children’s rights.

CHAPTER 7 FACILITATION OF EXIT STRATEGIES FOR CHILDREN IN CARE

7.1 Introduction

An effective exit strategy is critical to an institutionalized child. This strategy informs the process of reintegration, allowing an efficient return into family care and society. Previous chapters identified that during institutionalization, children's rights and their needs have not been properly addressed. This study has found that the most appropriate way to promote human rights is to properly reintegrate institutionalized children. United Nations (2010) also emphasises that the major right of an institutionalized child is to have them find a permanent family based alternative care opportunity through an efficient and an effective reintegration process. However, as argued by Ariyadasa and McIntyre-Mills (2014b), the reintegration mechanism of institutionalized children is inefficient and ineffective. Failure of the reintegration process results in long-term institutionalization, denying many human rights. These rights include the right to a family based permanent care, right to a religion, freedom of speech, quality social interactions and bodily integrity. Reintegration is the proper strategy to address these human rights issues. To promote human rights of children in institutional care, an efficient and an effective reintegration process should be implemented. Thus, the question; "How can we prepare children and promote their reintegration?" will be addressed in this chapter.

7.1.1 Determination of the most appropriate alternative form of care

UN Guidelines paragraph 57 states:

> "Decision-making on alternative care in the best interests of the child should take place through a judicial, administrative or other adequate and recognized procedure, with legal safeguards, including where appropriate, legal representation on behalf of children in any legal proceedings. It should be based on rigorous assessment, planning and review, through established structures and mechanisms, and should be carried out on a case-by-case basis, by suitably qualified professionals in a multidisciplinary team, wherever possible. It should involve full consultation at all stages with the child, according to his/her evolving capacities, and with his/her parents or legal guardians…" (United Nations 2010, p. 11).

All nine commissioners expressed the view that the best way to improve the life chances of institutionalized children is to reintegrate them with their natural birth environments or local/foreign adoption. Their general opinion was that a caring environment similar to a family could not be expected in an institution. However, they identified that in most cases, many institutionalized children's health and safety needs, formal and informal education facilities and vocational training aspects are better attended to in many children's homes than by their parents. This has been the major reason why policy officers decide to institutionalize children. Thus, to achieve a successful reintegration outcome, advocating for health, safety and educational aspects of the concerned

child is vital. That is, the policy officers should verify that the children receive adequate health care, reasonable security and proper education after they are reintegrated.

All the commissioners except one conceded that investigation or supervision of health, safety or educational needs of children after their reintegration is not practiced in their provinces. The following narrative of a manager from a children's home describes such reality.

> "As this information is to help improve the standards of homes, I would like to honestly say that I would like to see improvement in the area of the social welfare department considering the needs of children before the imposition of standards. Some children are not ready to leave a children's home at the age of 18 and I feel that this should not be a hard and fast rule but that they should consider each child's case. After years of working with children, we are not ready to just release them into situations that we know they are not ready for. For example, recently we were told by the Social Welfare Department to send a girl to her home because she was then 19 years old. She had come to us with her younger sister because of the abusive environment in her family after losing their mother to the tsunami. We did not want to send her home because we felt it was unsafe for her and she was not mature enough to go home. However, eventually we had no choice but to release her. Within 5 months, she was pregnant and then needed to get married. Her younger sister is still with us. She is 17 years old. Will the same thing happen to her?" (manager's narrative).

This manager gives us evidence where policy officers have misinterpreted policy guidelines in actual practice. UN Guidelines paragraph 52 states:

> "Once decided, the reintegration of the child in his/her family should be designed as a gradual and supervised process, accompanied by follow-up and support measures that take account of the child's age, needs and evolving capacities, as well as the cause of the separation" (United Nations 2010, p. 10).

The manager's argument is that just because a child turns 18, the child's family environment does not automatically switch to a safe environment. As a service provider, the appeal is that the officials should be very cautious when expediting their decisions and the decision should be in the best interests of the child, under conditions that promote the child's full and harmonious development in line with UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010).

Six of the nine commissioners stated that a number of families have been supported materially and financially to renovate their houses or to encourage self-empowerment with the financial grants from UNICEF[84] at the time of family reunification. They perceived that on most occasions, this assistance was made only once and there was no monitoring of their implementation. Eighteen of the thirty service providers[85] who had experiences receiving grants argued that this assistance is worthless without such monitoring. They further stated that these children going into families with no continuous financial support become more vulnerable because they are reintegrated without monitoring the sustainability of the re-unifying procedure.

[84] UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.
[85] Service providers: Managers of children's homes.

A probation officer narrates her saddest experience about an institutionalized child who has been deprived of maternal care owing to mother's migration for work abroad.

> "During a six months training course, I spent two weeks in a children's home in Pamunuwa to conduct a case study. For my case study observation, I selected a 12-year-old boy. At the end of my two weeks when I was about to leave, this particular boy snuggled to me and was crying loudly. I tried to appease him and ask what he wanted from me. "Please bring me my mother, I want nothing other than that" he wept and screamed. I heard the boy's yell crying for his mother's warmth, even from a great distance when I was departing the home. The child's mother had chosen continuously to travel and work abroad. I am sad about the mother's insensitivity towards her child's grief" (PO's response).

This narrative demonstrates that placing the child in a VCH, as an alternative has not served in his/her best interest. The general impression is that residential institutions – and often probation and child care officers – perceive themselves as the best welfare and protection option for children; the result of this understandable position is that not much is done to facilitate the reunification of children with their families, reintegration with the community, and/or adoption to a suitable family (Roccella 2007). This attitude discourages the ability of parents to leave children within their natural birth environments when they leave for work abroad. This is in breach of the most fundamental principle of the UN Guidelines, which is that "efforts should primarily be directed to enabling the child to remain in or return to the care of his/her parents, or when appropriate, other close family members" (United Nations 2010).

7.1.2 Processes determining alternative arrangements for currently institutionalized children

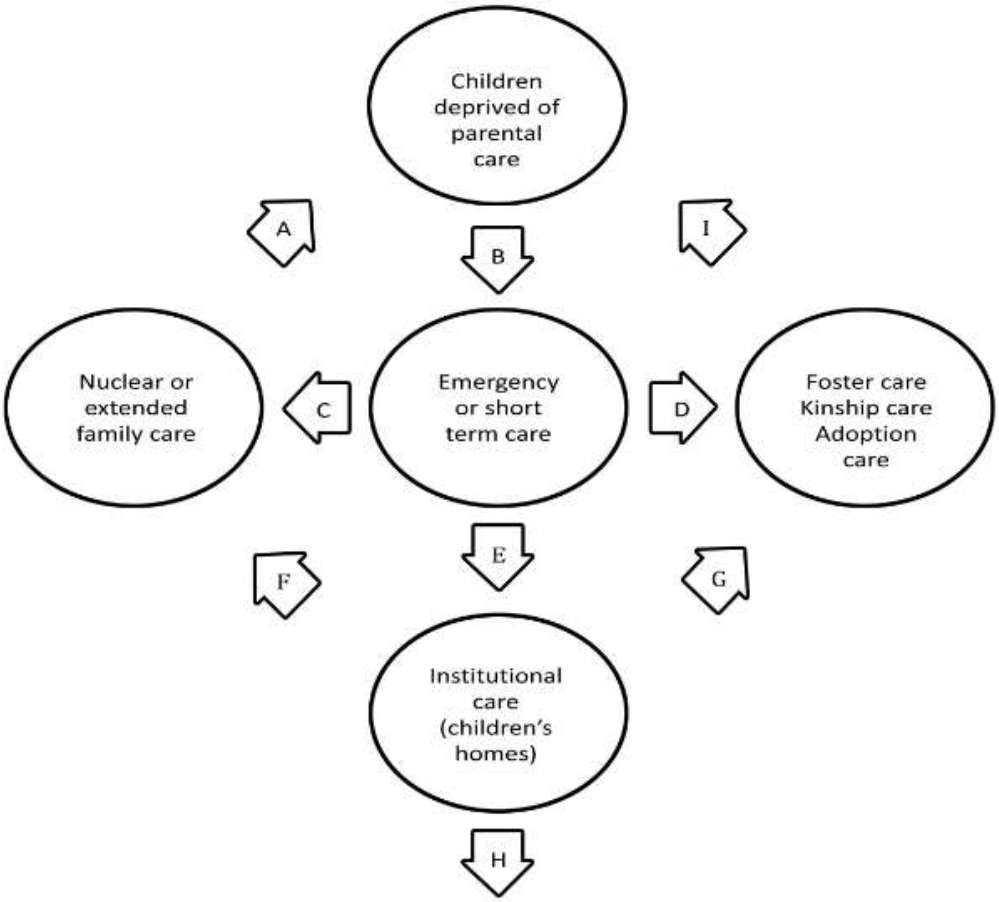


Figure 7.1 Conceptualization of opinions of policy makers and service providers highlighting the existing policy and practice.

Processes:

A. Decision making
B. Send for emergency or short term care
C. Return to natural birth environment
D. Identify other permanent care opportunities
E. Institutionalization
F. Reintegration - return to natural birth environment
G. Reintegration - identify other permanent care opportunities
H. Long term institutionalization
I. Decision making

For example, consider a girl who lives within a nuclear or extended family and whose mother is about to migrate for work abroad. In the short term, the girl suddenly becomes deprived of maternal care when her mother migrates for work abroad. Government intervention is required to find alternative care and should involve the following processes:

- Identify that the child has been or is at risk of being deprived of parental care (Figure 7.1: Process A).

- Try to keep the child within her nuclear or extended family environment, taking into consideration the next best alternative care options. According to UN Guidelines (paragraph 3, 9a, 9b, 44), relative/kinship care or foster care can also be considered (Figure 7.1: process B-C or process B-D)[86].
- Send her to a children's home for the purpose of emergency/short-term care until a suitable permanent care opportunity can be found (Figure 7.1: process B-E), after which an appropriate permanent care opportunity in her best interest should be found in line with UN Guidelines paragraph 54 & 123 (Figure 7.1: processes F or G).
- Follow up on the placement to ensure that her rights have been reinstated and avoid unnecessary institutionalization (UN Guidelines, paragraph 62 & 132).

However, in most cases the practical outcome in such circumstances in Sri Lanka would be as follows:

- The girl would immediately be considered as destitute and institutionalized into a children's home (Figure 7.1: Process B-E). This avoids processes B-C or B-D. In the existing system, there is no mechanism to advocate for relative/kinship care or foster care before institutionalizing the child. Therefore, orphaned, abandoned and destitute children are institutionalized as a measure to reinstate their denied rights.
- Reintegration is encouraged at placement[87] committee meetings, but in practice, the girl's period of institutionalization would be extended every six months. Thus, instead of the processes E-F or E-G (in the best interest of the child), the girl would suffer long-term institutionalization (Figure 7.1: process E-H). Subsequently, the girl is subjected to institutionalization until the age of 18. Or;
- The girl undergoes multiple re-entries into institutional care (Figure 7.1: Process F-A-B-E or G-I-B-E). That is, the girl returns home when mother comes back from overseas and if mother happens to return overseas work, the girl again becomes deprived of maternal care and as a result re-enters to institutional care.
- During institutionalization, the reintegration[88] process is implemented as a measure to reinstate the child's denied rights. However, as there is no mechanism to monitor the well-being of the reintegrated child, there is a tendency to further deny her rights through multiple re-entries into institutional care.

[86] Hyphen between two English letters (e.g. B-C, B-D) indicates the relevant care arrangement that exist between the letters.
[87] Placement: "Placement means to review the position of children in the home from time to time and to plan activities oriented toward their future well-being" (Roccella 2007, p. 63).
[88] Reintegration: Reintegration is carried out in three measures. They are: re-unification with the natural birth environment, socialization or other permanent alternative care.

To provide for pathways that are in the best interest of such children, it is vital to address the human rights issues at every level, i.e. before institutionalization, during institutionalization and after reintegration.

7.1.3 Child's right to an effective reintegration process

This section first focuses on the child's right to reintegration within a family-like alternative care opportunity. UN guidelines[89] indicate:

> "The family being the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth, well-being and protection of children, efforts should primarily be directed to enabling the child to remain in or return to the care of his/her parents, or when appropriate, other close family members…" (United Nations 2010, p. 2).

The General Standards in clause 6.1 states, "Entrust every child back to his/her parents or guardians if they can be found and where special difficulties are not encountered" (DPCCS 1991). Thus, in both UN and Sri Lankan policy guidelines, the reintegration of institutionalized children has been recognised as the major child-right to be protected by the institutions that are responsible for children in care. DPCCS (2010b) indicates that 92 % of all institutionalized children have at least a single parent. That is, these children have a natural birth environment to be reintegrated within, but they spend an unnecessarily lengthy period remaining institutionalized. 'Natural birth environment' may be nowhere near as good for the child – e.g. drug dependent parents etc. However, reasonable portion of this 92% represents children from poverty backgrounds where there is a possibility to reunify them by supporting their families in a timely manner. Therefore, the major issue facing the governance of children's homes in Sri Lanka has been identified as the inefficient and ineffective nature of the reintegration process of children.

This emphasizes the fact that when addressing the human right issues of VCHs, much effort should be emphasised in the reintegration aspects of institutionalized children by keeping the period of institutionalization to a minimum. That is, when a child is institutionalized, the process of a reintegration care plan should also be initiated simultaneously. The discussion below critically reviews the existing reintegration process of the institutionalized children.

7.1.4 Existing structure for reintegrating institutionalized children

UN Guidelines paragraph 4 states:

> "Every child and young person should live in a supportive, protective and caring environment that promotes his/her full potential. Children with inadequate or no parental care are at special risk of being denied such a nurturing environment" (United Nations 2010, p. 2).

For many reasons such as economic insecurity, domestic violence and changes to family configurations, a child's family dynamics based on supportive, protective and caring environments

[89] UN Guidelines paragraph 3 (United Nations 2010)

have begun to deteriorate. Often, poverty and violence have become the prime causes for a child being placed in an institutional care[90] environment. When the family returns to normal, the child can be sent back. Therefore, if there is a home for the institutionalized child, the staff of those children's homes and the officials concerned should try to reintegrate the child in their family as soon as possible.

The existing mechanism to reintegrate institutionalized children is the Placement Committee Meeting[91] (PCM). According to the 'General Standards[92] for Promoting the Quality of Services in Voluntary Children's Homes', a placement committee should consist of alternative caregivers and the family, the duty of which is to consider the reintegration procedure of institutionalized children in a home. However, General Standards have not included the 'institutionalized child' as a member of the placement committee. It is questionable[93] why the DPCCS has not included this most important party (the child) as a committee member. Policy guidelines for the procedure of conducting PCMs according to a provincial commissioner of DPCCS may be outlined as follows:

> "DPCCS, in conjunction with the service provider, should decide a date for the PCM. Caretakers, under the guidance of the service provider, should send letters to guardians of the institutionalized children informing them of the date, time and venue of the placement meeting and stress the importance of participation. For those guardians who have telephones, reminder calls should be made to maximise the likelihood of attendance at the meeting. On the day of the meeting, the policy officer should chair the meeting. Based on the child's personal file and the minutes of the last meeting, each child's situation should be discussed with the guardian. The guardian should be given a chance to express their opinions with regard to re-unification of their child. They should express their capabilities and limitations, excuses and justifications. The caretaker should produce a comprehensive report on children regarding their progress. This should include the child's behaviour in and out of the home; their attitude towards the children's home, school and family; and their progress in education, sports and extracurricular activities; along with social and health issues. The policy officers should note all of these and decide when, where and how the children can be involved in their own reintegration process. Finally, taking into consideration the facts and productivity/outcomes of the discussion, policy officer/s should advise guardians and the service providers of future proceedings regarding reintegration or extension of the child's institutionalization period" (Commissioner's interview).

This PAR has shown that there is a major gap between the policy guidelines stated here by the commissioner with regard to PCMs and those operations in actual practice. PCMs are supposed to be the structured mechanism for promoting re-unification and social inclusion of children. The reviewed literature in chapter 2.7 demonstrates that the reintegration process of institutionalized

[90] Institutional care: In this PAR, institutional care is mostly referred to as voluntary children's homes.
[91] PCM: The committee meeting that is held with the intention of reviewing the position of children in the home from time to time and to plan activities oriented toward their future well-being'' (Roccella 2007, p. 63).
[92] General Standards: Department of Probation and Child Care, Fixation of General Standards for Promoting the Quality of Services in Voluntary Children's Homes, S3/Gon/15, 15th October 1991—reported in Annex IV of Roccella (2007, p. 57).
[93] Sri Lanka ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations 1989) in 1991 (IDLO 2007, p. 2) and the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children is an outcome of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly. The UN encourages States to take the Guidelines into account and to bring them to the attention of the relevant executive, legislative and judiciary bodies of government. UN Guidelines has identified 'the child' as an important member of the team that decide whether the reintegration of the child in the family is possible and in the best interests of the child (United Nations 2010, paragraph 49).

children is ineffective and that advocacy is needed to achieve outcomes that support the well-being of children. If placement meetings are irregular or not held at all, the reintegration process becomes unstructured and ineffective. Institutionalisation tends to be long term, which frequently has a negative impact on children's life chances, and little emphasis has been made in current governance processes to reintegrate the children and young people within the wider community. Nor have any approaches been stated in the existing General Standards set by DPCCS. This theoretical gap has undoubtedly been a reason for the failure of the practical aspect of the reintegration process in the existing system.

Evidence of this sort highlights the fact that the right of a child to be reintegrated into family based permanent care has not been properly addressed as determined by the UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010) or the General Standards (DPCCS 1991). Therefore, it is evident that there is a major gap between these policy guidelines and actual practice.

The empirical findings and literature fused in this study stress the importance of reviewing and revising the existing procedure of reintegration for institutionalized children. Inadequate follow-up practices, guardians' poor attendance to the PCMs, unjustifiable extension of child's period of institutionalisation and adverse effects of the reintegration process are broadly discussed in the next section with the support of wide literature and in-depth interviews of children's homes' managers.

7.1.4.1 Discussion 1: Evidence for Inefficient and ineffective nature of reintegration process: Based on literature

In the Sri Lankan context, placement committees should meet at least twice a year, with the participation of POs and they should decide about the admission of new children as well as the reunification of children with their guardians (DPCCS 1991). The function and responsibilities of the placement committee are specified in detail in the General Standards. This document states that children should not remain in institutions for more than 3 years, and that every possibility should be explored to provide permanent alternative care options for the child. However in actual practice:

> "30% of voluntary homes declare they do not hold PCMs. For around 5,000 children there seems to be no formalized mechanism to review their situation and facilitate exit from the institutions. Moreover, of the 335 homes that declare to organize such meetings, 45 do not keep written records of the decisions taken regarding the placement of children" (Roccella 2007).

Jayathilake and Amarasuriya (2005) emphasise that the DPCCS is responsible for the assessment of children's welfare with a long-standing official policy (Circular 12/76 of 1976) that emphasises the importance of keeping children in their families and communities. The policy and mandates that probation officers not admit a child to care unless all alternatives have been explored fully and requires that chief probation officers monitor this. Save the Children (2005) in its report 'Home Truths: Human Rights in Institutional Care in Sri Lanka' states that there are progressive policies in

place but implementation is a problem, and bureaucratic incentives to use institutional care: alternatives are complicated, difficult to arrange and not always well advertised.

Roccella (2007) reports that measures prescribed by the current regulations are not in place despite the interaction of the homes with the DPCCS. Contact with POs was reported to be regular in 389 homes of the 488 – of which 96 do not have PCMs. Thus, PCMs can be described as rare and ineffective in actuality. Thus, the principal aim of regular conducting of PCMs, which is supposed to manage incoming and outgoing children, is ineffective. This situation is in line with the following example of Beer (1979, p. 21):

> "There is a man on his hand and knees in the middle of the night, grovelling in the ground under a lamp post. A policeman asks him what he thinks he is doing. 'I am looking for a lost ring'. 'Where did you lose it?' 'Over there' says the man, pointing ten yards away into the dark bushes. 'Then why are you hunting for it here? Then he says, because this is where the light is."

The committee of the placement meeting can be considered to consist of a number of experienced and intellectually lit lampposts[94]. These lampposts are the members of the committee. The members that represent the placement committee commit their time, energy, finance and intellectual capabilities in various ways to provide an answer to the issue of reintegration of institutionalized children. However, the issues related to the reintegration process are in the 'dark bushes', unanswered. It still follows the same strategy in the next meeting after 6 months and never changes with its impractical, unproductive and inefficient results of the reintegration procedure. The committee meets again while the purpose of the gathering is - as it is - hidden in the dark bushes. Therefore, it can be argued that the engagement in the PCMs has not efficiently contributed to gain effective outcomes to the reintegration process. However, the committee has to gather and hold these placement meetings regardless of their achievements. It is because, PCMs symbolize and manifest the loyalty of policy makers to government policies, policy officers' faithfulness to their work, service providers commitments to their social service, and caretakers' devotion to child care. This symbolism does not bring result for the reintegration process.

This Discussion 1, based on literature has identified the un-systemic nature of the PCM's structure and shown that children in institutional care spend unnecessarily long periods in the home when there has been a possibility for their reintegration.

7.1.4.2 Discussion 2: Based on three significant interview narratives

The following three significant narratives[95] provide evidence of the gap between the policy guidelines and actual practice concerning PCMs. A manager of a boys' children's home speaks on his experiences as follows:

[94] Authors identify policy makers and policy officers (POs & CRPOs) as intellectually lit lamp posts because, 100 % of the commissioners are university graduates and members of the Sri Lanka Administrative Service, and over 90 % of the POs & CRPOs are graduates who possess social science degrees and/or diplomas (Source: PAR 2012/2013).

[95] During this PAR, 30 managers were interviewed from different children's homes to gain insights on policy and

> "We hold PCMs twice a year. We inform all the guardians of the children of the date and time. Of course, they are supposed to play a major role in the reintegration process of their children. At the meeting, the probation officer first marks the attendance of the guardians who are present. If a guardian is absent for any reason, the child's institutionalization is extended for another six months. Just imagine how unfair this decision is for the child. The guardian may not have been able to attend the meeting for many simple reasons. The letter informing the guardian was not delivered in time or the address had been incorrect. Furthermore, the guardian may have been ill or may not have been able to get leave from work. However, there is no follow up or investigation as to why they did not attend nor is there the option of meeting them on another day. How can we justify the decision for extension of institutionalization is reasonable just because of the guardians' absence from the PCM? Why should the child sacrifice another 6 months of his/her valuable life being institutionalized?" (manager's narrative).

These comments and the complaints of the manager are of concern when viewed in light of the UN Guidelines[96]. This manager's argument is that the child's return to parental care is extended unnecessarily, simply due to guardians' absence from the PCM. This is a major defect within the system of the reintegration process. Clearly, there should be a timely follow up process between PCMs regardless of the guardian being absent, in order to return the child to parental care within the shortest possible time.

A manager of another children's home replies as follows, regarding the engagement, efficiency and effectiveness of PCMs in his home:

> "I have 36 children in my home. More than 25 children have both or single parents. Although we hold PCMs regularly, not even 25 % of the guardians attend. Usually, around ten guardians attend a meeting. We start the meeting around 10 am and runs until 4 pm. That is roughly 5 h discussion time. Therefore, when there are 10 guardians, the time allocated for a child is roughly half an hour. Since there has not been a proper follow up since the last meeting, it takes more than 15 min to study the case of the child again. Some policy officers know the background but have not kept any progress reports, so they make similar decisions to what they had voiced at the previous meeting. Often, important decisions are at a standstill. Which means the effectiveness of the reintegration of the child in most cases is 'zero'. Ultimately, the child's period of institutionalization is extended for another six months without any proper evaluations being done. Sometimes we have to spend hours discussing same matters of the same child. It affects all the other children because it reduces their time for reintegration analysis. A pitiful total of five hours is divided among the number of attendees regardless of the seriousness of each case. Most of all cases remain undiscussed and unresolved due to lack of time available for a discussion. I have never known the PCM to have sufficient time available to attend to each child sufficiently. I am reluctant to say but the holding of a PCM is just a symbol to mark that we have engaged in the reintegration process as it is expected in the regulations, but the effectiveness is close to nil'' (manager's narrative).

The comments of this manager confirm that their children's home conducts PCMs regularly but they are almost entirely ineffective. He claims that the parents' attendance at placement meetings is very low and most cases remain unresolved. His statement is at odds with paragraphs 49 and 50 of the UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010) where they expect good coordination and efficient task

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governance perspectives in terms of institutionalized children and their rights. The results of these interviews demonstrate managers' lived experiences with regard to the reintegration of their children in children's homes.

[96] UN Guidelines paragraph 14: "Removal of a child from the care of the family should be seen as a measure of last resort and should whenever possible be temporary and for the shortest possible duration…" (United Nations 2010).

allocation among committee members to achieve a successful reintegration in the best interests of the child. Another manager's experience unfolds as follows:

> "I have taken part in over 20 PCMs during the last 15 years as the service provider of my children's home. PCMs have always been regularly held in my home that is two meetings per year. However, I have never experienced reviewing or a follow up of the committee decisions on reintegration of institutionalized children between two consecutive committee meetings. Therefore, most of the decisions remain unattended until the next meeting. In the next meeting, we waste time over former issues. Furthermore, we are in danger of disregarding new issues that may have arisen from poor/no decision making in the past. This inefficiency accumulates problems within the reintegration process which adversely affects the removal decisions" (manager's interview).

This manager points out the shortcomings of the follow-up process of the existing reintegration procedure. These shortcomings relate directly to paragraphs 51 and 52 of the UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010) that stress the significance of the supervised reintegration process accompanied by follow up and support measures.

This work, derived from three in-depth interviews indicates the critical importance of guardian attendance to PCMs and a timely follow-up process between PCMs. Furthermore, it emphasises the significance of good coordination and efficient task allocation among committee members to achieve a successful reintegration in the best interest of the child.

7.1.4.3 Discussion 3: Based on questionnaire responses

According to the provincial commissioners of the DPCCSs, at the end of PCM, each child should be given one of the following decisions in terms of their further institutionalization or reintegration possibilities.

1. **The child has the potential for reintegration.**

The child's reintegration options can be categorized as:

- Potential for reunification: The child has a family and thus they can be reunified.
- Potential for socialization: The child has achieved the age of 18 and thus they can be socialized.
- Potential for other appropriate and permanent solutions[97]: Adoption or kafala of Islamic law.

2. **The child is recommended / approved for reintegration.**

In practical terms, this means that should some steps be taken, the child can be recommended for reintegration during the 6 months period under following options prior to the next PCM.

- Re-unification: The child has a family and thus s/he can be reunified should his/her capabilities[98] are achieved (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills, 2014a).

[97] Other permanent solution: adoption and Kafala of Islamic law (United Nations, 2010, p. 2).
[98] Capabilities: The child's missing capacities such as health, safety, education etc. that could have caused the child's institutionalization. These missing capacities have to be transformed to capabilities before the child is reintegrated.

- Socialization: The child has achieved the age of 18 and thus s/he can be socialized should other circumstances[99] have been satisfied.
- Adoption or kafala of Islamic law: The child has no family or the parents have given written consent

3. The child's institutionalization period is extended.

This means that the child cannot be reintegrated and therefore the period of his/her institutionalization is extended by 6 months until the next PCM.

To explore the effectiveness of the reintegration process, we need to evaluate the results of a particular PCM itself and the actions taken between two consecutive PCMs. The higher the proportion represented by the actually reintegrated number of institutionalized children, the higher the effectiveness of the reintegration process is. However, the 'Actually reintegrated number of institutionalized children' is relative to the number of children who have the 'Potential for reintegration' and the number of children who have been 'Recommended for reintegration'. Thus, the PCM should produce statistics to generate tangible values for potential and recommended number of institutionalized children for reintegration. None of the children's homes visited during this study had generated statistics for evaluating the effectiveness of the reintegration process, nor had the DPCCS instructed children's homes to evaluate the PCM's results. In-depth analysis of the personal records and analysis of the statistics of the reintegration efforts indicate that the existing reintegration process is unreasonably ineffective

The three interview narratives and the questionnaire responses confirm the critical importance of reviewing and revising the prevailing PCM structure, which exists as the sole system for the reintegration of institutionalized children. A systemic review of the prevailing structure of the PCM should instigate a critical systemic approach to an effective reintegration pathway.

7.2 Monitoring the reintegration process: application of Ashby's law of requisite variety and the principle of subsidiarity

7.2.1 Introduction

UN Guidelines paragraphs 109 states:

> "Comprehensive and up-to-date records should be maintained regarding the administration of alternative care services, including detailed files on all children in their care, staff employed and financial transactions" (United Nations 2010, p. 16).

This guideline is in line with the first law of the cybernetics where Ashby (1956) emphasises that the degree of success of an organisation is proportional to the amount of information available. This is further highlighted by UN Guidelines paragraph 110 as follows:

[99] Other circumstances: To socialize a child who has reached the age of 18, s/he should be capable of spending a reasonably satisfactory life after reintegration. The capabilities such as finding a suitable livelihood, adequate shelter, safety etc. fall into the category of other circumstance when an institutionalized child is concerned.

> "The records on children in care should be complete, up to date, confidential and secure, and should include information on their admission and departure and the form, content and details of the care placement of each child, together with any appropriate identity documents and other personal information. Information on the child's family should be included in the child's file as well as in the reports based on regular evaluations. This record should follow the child throughout the alternative care period and be consulted by duly authorized professionals responsible for his/her care" (United Nations 2010, p. 17).

All these guidelines emphasise the need for collecting and recording every information about the child and the significance of an accurate information system to evaluate the child's reintegrate possibilities.

7.2.2 Increased variety of information to facilitate the reintegration process

A major reason for the ineffectiveness of the reintegration process is the lack of information available on institutionalized children. To implement a successful reintegration process in line with the Ashby's Law of Requisite Variety and the UN Guidelines paragraphs 109 and 110, it is important to gain a comprehensive understanding of the child's background and the behaviour. It includes family dynamics; the reasons for institutionalization; the child's medical history; hobbies, interests, skills and educational levels. As discussed in Chapter 2, the degree of success of the reintegration process is proportional to the amount of information available on an institutionalized child That is, the more information available on the child, the greater the capacity for a successful reintegration process. Thus, this section discusses an "information data entry system" for a successful follow up of the reintegration process by applying the Ashby's Law of Requisite Variety.

In the current system, at the time of an institutionalization of a child, the PO fills out a legal document with as much information about the child as possible. However, this study has identified that several information are lacking in the conventional document. This deficiency undermines the efficiency and effectiveness of the reintegration process.

Ashby (1956) emphasises that the larger the variety of actions available to control a system, the larger the variety of perturbations it is able to compensate for. Thus, the following data have been identified as relevant additions to the conventional document.

- Figure 7.2: Check list of important documents (E.g. Birth certificate, copy of marriage/divorced/death certificate of parents, school leaving certificate and any other document/certificate that could help in tracing family pedigree to assist promoting child's life chances).
- Figure 7.3: (supported by figures 4 and 5): Parents' current status of living (E.g. Divorced or Widowed parents: Proof of documents/evidence whether they have remarried or live with a new partner, etc.).
- Figure 7.4: Detailed relationship of the next of kin of the child (E.G. Aunt/uncle/ cousins: Proof of documents/evidence for such relationships).
- Figure 7.7: Checklist for the identification of reasons for institutionalization of children.

The lack of these pieces of information undermines attempts to reintegrate the child with their family. It also avoids opportunities for an early reintegration. Whilst not insisting on these documents initially makes the institutionalization process simple and quick, the reintegration process becomes complex and delayed. Having the appropriate documents could streamline decision-making. This type of mechanism is highly contentious and contravenes both the UN Guidelines and General Standards that discourage lengthy institutionalization. Furthermore, this creates difficult delay for parents. This PAR proposes an information system that eases the tracking process by identifying the best possible reintegration outcome. A record of documents with a checklist of soft/hard copies (Figure 7.2) guarantees the child's identity. An information sheet (Figure 7.3) is designed to identify the type of guardianship of the child. The charts in Figure 7.4, Figure 7.5 and Figure 7.6 assist the tracing the absolute relationship of the guardian to the institutionalized child. The checklist of reasons (Figure 7.7) for the institutionalization helps to identify strategies and find a pathway for a successful reintegration process.

Ref.	Record of documents	✓ Check	Soft copy (PDF)
a.	Personal documents		
	i. Birth certificate		
	ii. National Identity card		
	iii. Passport		
	iv. School leaving certificate		
	v. Health certificate		
	vi. Medical reports		
	vii.		
	viii.		
b.	School records		
	i. School leaving certificate		
	ii. Previous schools attended		
	iii. Present school		
c.	Institutional records		
	i. Previous homes		
	ii. Present home		
d.	Contact details		
	i. Permanent address and contact numbers		
	ii. Present address and contact numbers		
	iii. Guardian's address and contact numbers		
	iv. Relative's addresses and contact numbers		
	v. Friend's addresses and contact numbers		
e.	Tracking records		
	i. Child's photographs		
	ii. Family members photographs		
	iii. Newspaper articles		
f.	Legal documents		
	i. Police records		
	ii. Court statements		
	iii.		
	iv.		
g.	Achievement certificates		
	i. School progress report		
	ii. Sports certificates		
	iii. Academic certificates		
	iv. others		
h.	Others		
	i.		
	ii.		
	iii.		
	iv.		

Figure 7.2 The list of documents.[100]

[100] This is a checklist of documents that are collected with the intention of collecting as much information about the child as possible. It is recommended that a hard copy be kept at both DPCCS and the children's home. The child should also be given copies and trained to protect his personal documents. The relevant PO in charge of the child should be responsible for keeping an electronic copy of every document including a copy, which is accessible to the placement committee. The privacy of the child should be maintained by introducing passwords.

1.0 Situation when both parents are available (father and mother as guardians)

Ref. No.	*Family status - I*	*Legal status - I*	*Family status - II*	*Legal status - II*	*Tick "√"*
1.1	Father & Mother	Married	Live together	-	
1.2	Father & Mother	Unmarried	Live together	-	
1.3	Father	Divorced father	Separate	Single	
1.4	Father	Divorced father	With a partner	Married	
1.5	Father	Divorced father	With a partner	Unmarried	
1.6	Mother	Divorced mother	Separate	Single	
1.7	Mother	Divorced mother	With a partner	Married	
1.8	Mother	Divorced mother	With a partner	Unmarried	
1.9	Father	Un-divorced father	Separate	Single	
1.10	Father	Un-divorced father	With a partner	Married	
1.11	Father	Un-divorced father	With a partner	Unmarried	
1.12	Mother	Un-divorced mother	Separate	Single	
1.13	Mother	Un-divorced mother	With a partner	Married	
1.14	Mother	Un-divorced mother	With a partner	Unmarried	

2.0 Situation when only single parent is available (father or mother as a guardian)

Ref. No.	*Family status - I*	*Legal status - I*	*Family status - II*	*Legal status - II*	*Tick "√"*
2.1	Father	Single	Widower		
2.2	Father	Married	with a partner		
2.3	Father	Unmarried	with a partner		
2.4	Mother	Single	Widow		
2.5	Mother	Married	with a partner		
2.6	Mother	Unmarried	with a partner		

3.0 Situation when there are no parents (kinship as guardians)

Ref. No.	*Family status - I*	*status - I*	*Family status - II*	*Legal status - II*	*Tick "√"*
3.1	Grand parents	Both	Paternal		
3.2	Grand parent	Grand father	Paternal		
3.3	Grand parent	Grand mother	Paternal		
3.4	Grand parents	Both	Maternal		
3.5	Grand parent	Grand father	Maternal		
3.6	Grand parent	Grand mother	Maternal		
3.7	Uncle and aunty	Both	Paternal		
3.8	Uncle or aunty	Uncle	Paternal		
3.9	Uncle or aunty	Aunty	Paternal		
3.10	Uncle and aunty	Both	Maternal		
3.11	Uncle or aunty	Uncle	Maternal		
3.12	Uncle or aunty	Aunty	Maternal		
3.13	Brother	Married	Own		
3.14	Brother	Unmarried	Own		
3.15	Sister	Married	Own		
3.16	Sister	Unmarried	Own		
3.17	Brother	Married	Cousin		
3.18	Brother	Unmarried	Cousin		
3.19	Sister	Married	Cousin		
3.20	Sister	Unmarried	Cousin		

4.0 Situation when there is a non-relative as guardians

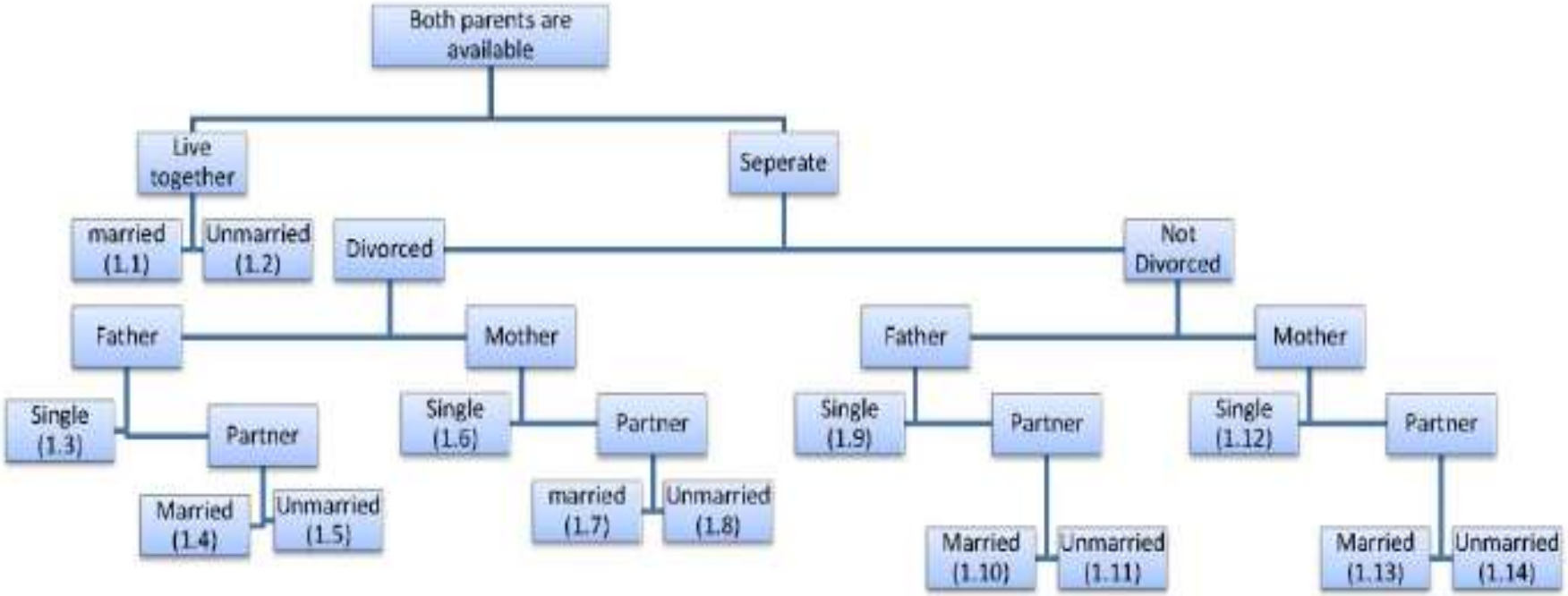
Ref. No.	*Type*	*Status - I*	*Family status - II*	*Legal status - II*	*Tick "√"*
4.1					

5.0 Situation when there are no guardians at all

Ref. No.	*Type*	*Tick "√"*
5.1	Orphan	

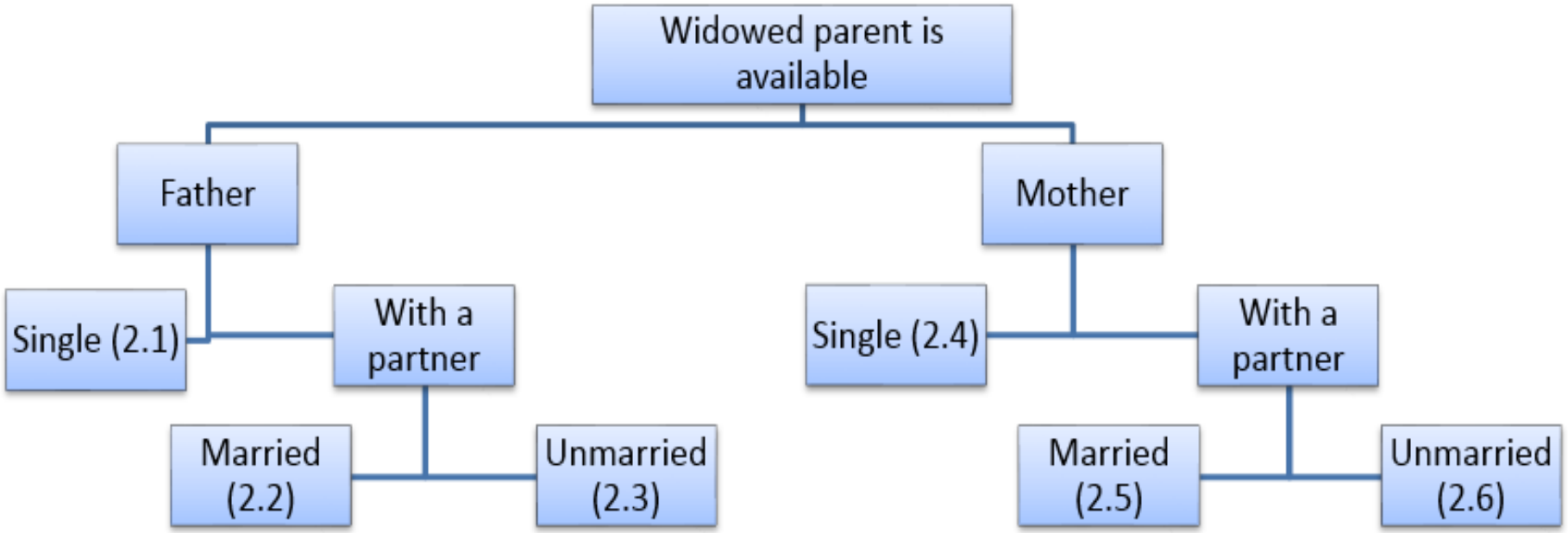
Figure 7.3 Information sheet to identify the type of guardianship of the child.[101]

[101] The available information in the documents and from the discussions held among committee members, the placement committee could track and identify the family, social and legal background of the child's family. To accelerate the process, this information sheet is supported by three documents to identify the background of children who have both parents (Fig.7.4), a single parent (Fig. 7.5) and kin (Fig. 7.6) as guardians.



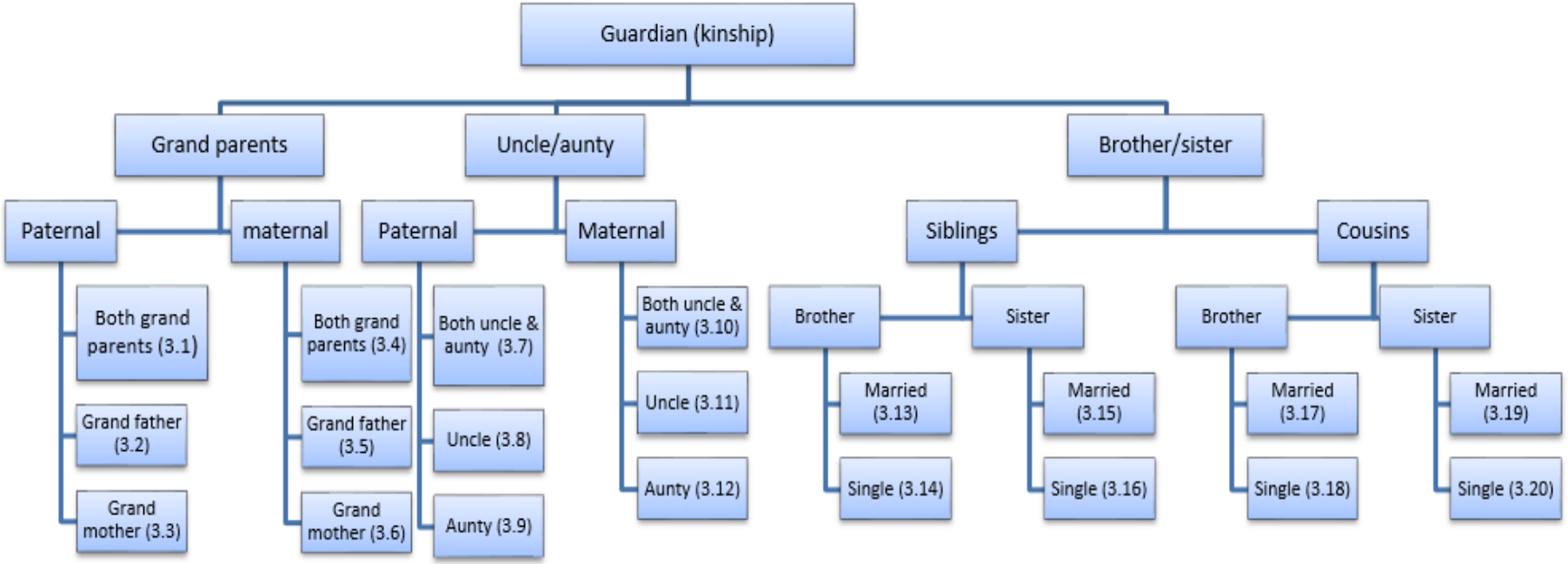
1.1 Married parents live together	1.3 Separate divorced father unmarried (single)	1.9 Separate un-divorced father unmarried (single)
1.2 Unmarried parents live together	1.4 Separate divorced father married to a partner	1.10 Separate un-divorced father married to a partner
	1.5 Separate divorced father & unmarried partner	1.11 Separate un-divorced father & unmarried partner
	1.6 Separate divorced mother unmarried (single)	1.12 Separate un-divorced mother unmarried (single)
	1.7 Separate divorced mother married to a partner	1.13 Separate un-divorced mother married to a partner
	1.8 Separate divorced mother & unmarried partner	1.14 Separate un-divorced mother & unmarried

Figure 7.4 Identifying the legal and social background of parents of an institutionalized child (When both parents are available).



2.1. Widowed father who is single
2.2. Widowed father who is married to a partner
2.3 Widowed father who is unmarried but lives with a partner
2.4. Widowed mother who is single
2.5. Widowed mother who is married to a partner
2.6 Widowed mother who is unmarried but lives with a partner

Figure 7.5 Identifying the legal and social background of a widowed parent of an institutionalized child.



3.1 Father's grand parents	3.7 Father's side uncle and aunty	3.13 Married brother
3.2 Father's grand father	3.8 Father's side uncle	3.14 Unmarried (single) brother
3.3 Father's grand mother	3.9 Father's side aunty	3.15 Married sister
3.4 Mother's grand parents	3.10 Mother's side uncle and aunty	3.16 Unmarried (single) sister
3.5 Mother's grand father	3.11 Mother's side uncle	3.17 Married cousin brother
3.6 Mother's grand mother	3.12 Mother's side aunty	3.18 Unmarried (single) cousin brother
		3.19 Married cousin sister
		3.20 Unmarried (single) cousin sister

Figure 7.6 Identifying the legal and social background of guardians of an institutionalized child (When kinship guardians are available).

Ref.	Factors that contribute to the child's entry into care	✓ Check
a.	Domestic troubles	
	i. Neglect and cruelty	
	ii. Drug addicted parents	
	iii. Domestic violence	
	iv. Insecurity	
	v. Institutionalized parents	
	vi. Bed ridden parents	
	vii. Parents dead	
	viii. Other (specify .....)	
b.	Child labour	
	i. Outside home	
	ii. Domestic	
	iii. Slavery	
	iv. Other (specify .....)	
c.	Victims of natural disasters	
	i. Elephant attack	
	ii. Earth slides	
	iii. Tsunami	
	iv. Floods	
	v. Tropical storms	
	vi. Other (specify .....)	
d.	Street children	
	i. Child beggars	
	ii. Homeless	
	iii. Stranded	
	iv. Other (specify .....)	
e.	Juvenile Delinquents	
	i. Acts of terrorism	
	ii. Sale and use of drugs	
	iii. Theft / Looting / Burglaries	
	iv. Prostitution and straying	
	v. Offenders of physical injuries	
	vi. Other (specify .....)	
f.	Disabled children	
	i. Psychological	
	ii. Physical	
	iii. Neurological	
	iv. Other (specify .....)	
g.	Abuse and harassments	
	i. Physical	
	ii. Sexual	
	iii. Emotional	
	iv. Other (specify .....)	
h.	Children affected by acts of terrorism	
	i. Civil war	
	ii. Shock / Threat	
	iii. Child soldier	
	iv. Other (specify .....)	
i.	Incarceration	
	i. Father imprisoned	
	ii. Mother imprisoned	
	iii. Both parent imprisoned	
j.	Migration	
	i. Father abroad	
	ii. Mother abroad	
	iii. Both parent abroad	

Figure 7.7 Reasons for institutionalization of children.[102]

[102] Factors that have contributed to institutionalizing a child are important information when making placement decisions for the child. This document provides a comprehensive checklist to identify the reasons behind institutionalization. Source: Based on primary data of this study influenced by pro forma for children in stable placement draft no. 9/23/8/05 in South Australia.

This preliminary information should be ready for discussion at the PCM. As indicated on the right side of the Figure 7.8, the information in the conventional document (duly filled pro forma file) will assist the process along with the documents recognized in this study. Figure 7.8 demonstrates the process that by entering the type of guardianship as specified in Figure 7.3, the family background of the child could be identified. By entering the reason/s for institutionalization as specified in Figure 7.7, the social background of the child can be identified. Following this, the challenge of the placement committee is to identify the best reintegration pathway for the child.

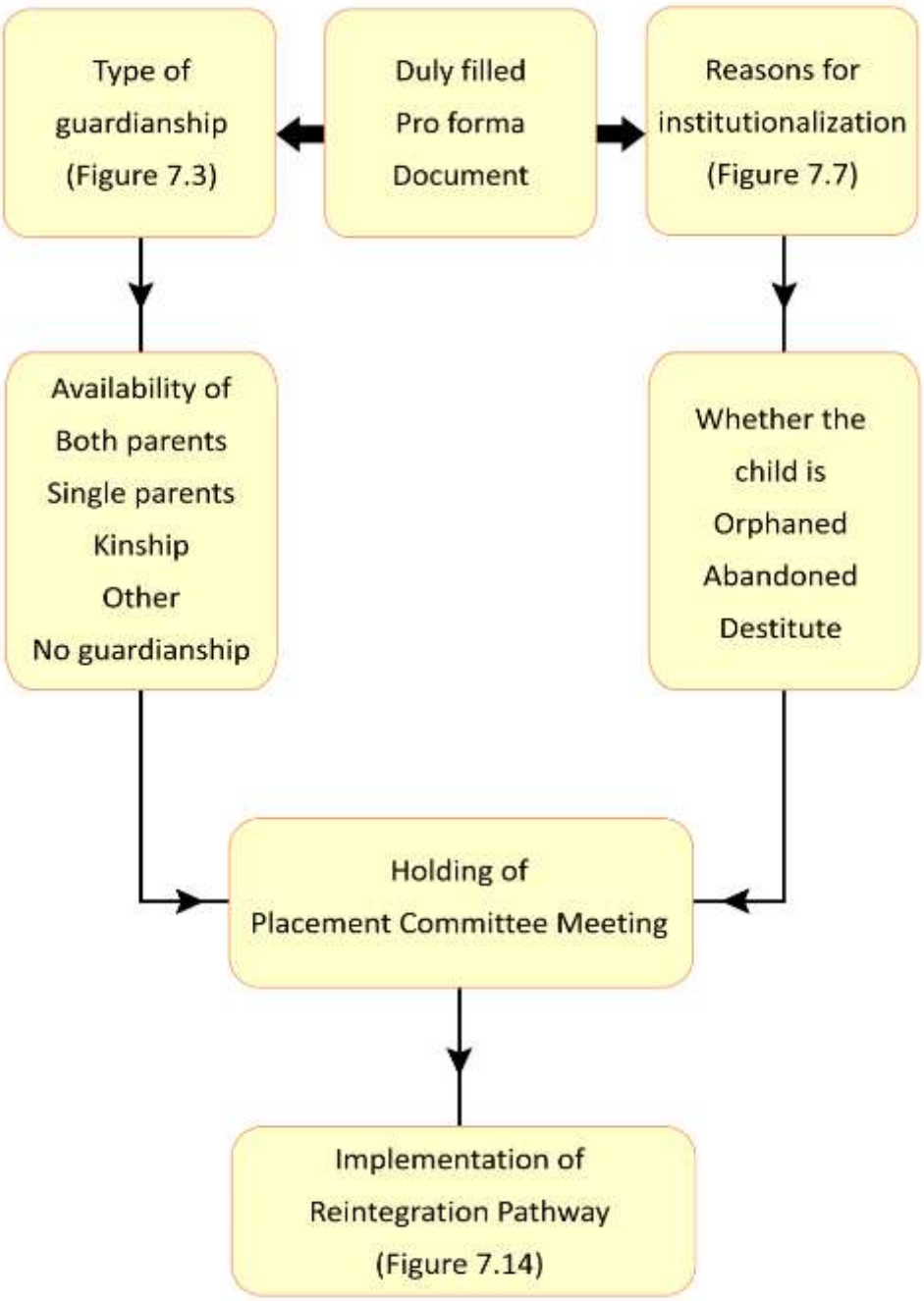


Figure 7.8 Process to streamline reintegration of the child.

7.2.3 Involving those on the "receiving end" in the decision making process

The Principle of Subsidiarity, meaning that those who are at the receiving end of the decision should be party to the decision making process (McIntyre-Mills 2003a). In an institutional care setting the major decision, making process is the Placement Committee Meeting (PCM), which discusses children's reintegration opportunities. Thus in this section, I discuss how important it is to involve institutionalized children and their guardians in the decision making process as they represent the receiving end.

In chapter 5, it was identified that for an institutionalized child to find an appropriate reintegration opportunity, his/her human rights issues need to be addressed. The proposed theoretical framework outlines ways to address a number of human rights issues that were identified in this study. It is based on discussions made with policy makers and service providers with regard to the human rights issues and enhancing life chances of institutionalized children. It is also based on parents/guardians' enthusiasm, willingness and capabilities for reintegrating their child.

In line with UN Guidelines, the solutions are implemented by entrusting duties among decision makers and involving children and guardians. The follow up process conducted regularly between PCMs to evaluate the progress of the duties entrusted to the committee members is significant, because it improves the efficiency of reintegrating a child. Thus, the following documents become significant to accomplish a meaningful effective reintegration process.

- Theoretical framework (see Table 6.2).
- Duty allocation chart for committee members in addressing the human rights issues of the child (Figure 7.9).
- Reports on the progress between PCMs (Figure 7.10).

	Committee member	Task
1.	Policy maker	
	i. National Probation Commissioner	
	ii. Provincial Probation Commissioner	
2.	Policy officer	
	i. Probation Officer	
	ii. Child Rights Promotion Officer	
3.	Service provider	
	i. Manager	
	ii. Care taker (Matron / warden)	
4.	Guardian	
5.	Child	

Figure 7.9 Duty allocation list.[103]

[103] Duty allocation list provide space for every member of the committee to note down the particular task/responsibility with respect to the child's reintegration. It is made transparent to each member so that it becomes an every ones business and a shared responsibility to endeavour child's reintegration.

	Committee member	Duty	Monthly progress						SUMMARY
			1	2	3	4	5	6	
1.	Policy maker								
	i. National Probation Commissioner	1 2 3							
	ii. Provincial Probation Commissioner	1 2 3							
2.	Policy officer								
	i. Probation Officer	1 2 3							
	ii. Child Rights Promotion Officer	1 2 3							
3.	Service provider								
	i. Manager	1 2 3							
	ii. Care taker (Matron / warden)	1 2 3							
4.	Guardian	1 2 3							
5.	Child	1 2 3							

Figure 7.10 Progress report.[104]

[104] Progress report provides space for members to write down the progress of the relevant task that has been assigned to the committee member. The sooner one's task has been completed, it is very important to communicate to a central position. It could be the relevant PO in charge of the children's home, the manager or the concerned child. Once central person is known that all the tasks have been achieved, relevant authorities should be communicated for an efficient reintegration without delaying the decision to be taken at the next PCM in line with the UN guideline.

7.3 Standardization of reintegration across VCHs

7.3.1 Introduction: Grading Criteria with focus on reintegration related criteria

UN Guidelines paragraph 55 states:

> "States should ensure that all entities and individuals engaged in the provision of alternative care for children receive due authorization to do so from a competent authority and are subject to regular monitoring and review by the latter in keeping with the present Guidelines. To this end, these authorities should develop appropriate criteria for assessing the professional and ethical fitness of care providers and for their accreditation, monitoring and supervision" (United Nations 2010, 10).

This guideline recognizes the significance of standardising children's homes based on grading criteria. In 2010, the Department of Probation and Child Care Services introduced Grading Criteria in the evaluation process of voluntary children's homes in terms of their governance practices. Critically, there were four criteria (of the twelve), which were constructed around the need for successful reintegration of institutionalised children. These criteria are as follows:

1. How is the maintenance of the documentation process implemented in the children's home?
2. What are the steps that have been taken to strengthen the bonds between the child and the parent/guardian?
3. What are the steps that have been taken for the well-being of the children who have exceeded 18 years of age?
4. How many children have been reintegrated?

Policy makers are universally in favour of these criteria according to knowledge gained form interviewing them. They find Grading Criteria to be a useful measure to enhance the good governance practices of children's homes. One commissioner of a provincial DPCCS states:

> "Many homes rendered their cooperation to the competition. They were very enthusiastic. Some managers had changed their attitudes in a way to comply with the Grading Criteria which brought many positive outcomes in terms of the enhancement of quality of life aspects of children".

When posed the question "how have they changed their attitudes positively?" the commissioner responded that:

> "Before the introduction of Grading Criteria, some managers had been hesitant to permit the parents or other family members to visit their homes. They had thought that it was really a nuisance/annoyance for the management when their family members visit children. These attitudes of the managers had been adversely affected the family bonds between the child and their family members. The clause No. 4 in the Grading Criteria which asks; 'What are the steps that have been taken to strengthen the bonds between the child and the parent/guardian?' has been influenced to change these attitudes and some managers have thoughtfully made structural changes to their homes. One of those

> changes in one home was that a room exclusively allocated for parents to stay during their visits to home. They also had made arrangements to provide meals for these family members during their visits. One home had reserved some money in their budget to support parents financially to cover their travelling expenses when visiting their child. These strategies came into being with the introduction of this competition for standardizing children's homes. The most precious outcome is that the other homes started to benefit from the disclosure of these good practices" (commissioner's interview).

It is quite clear that this commissioner believes the grading criteria, particularly those relating to reintegration, are of paramount importance. Thus, each of the criteria relating to reintegration strategies will be discussed in turn.

7.3.2 Documentation levels

Documentation is a critical factor in a successful reintegration process as discussed in section 7.2.2. Maintaining a high standard of documentation is important for all VCHs to allow much better informed decisions to be made about the reintegration of children from within institutions. As has been discussed, well-kept records of a variety of types of information are central to better decisions and ultimately functioning of the system.

7.3.3 Strengthening bonds between child and family

The UN Guidelines paragraph 51 states:

> "Regular and appropriate contact between the child and his/her family specifically for the purpose of reintegration should be developed, supported and monitored by the competent body" (United Nations 2010).

The following case study demonstrates a good governance practice of a children's home where the manager strives to enhance the bond between the child and the family. This practice of the manager is in line with the grading criterion, "What are the steps that have been taken to strengthen the bonds between the child and the parent/guardian?"

> "Although we, the home management, are unable to send the girls to their homes without the permission of the authorities, we always try our best to create opportunities for the family members to meet with their child. We invite the family members, on days, such as the school sports day, prize giving day and concert day. When the family members attend these events, they are made aware of their child's progress. Gradually, the family members are prompted to to consider how the child may be reintegrated into the family. The children are also encouraged knowing that their performances are witnessed by their family members. Some parents hesitate to attend these events, as they are unable to return home on the same day due to time factors and other travelling commitments such as financial problems. Considering their circumstances, we help them both financially and logistically providing them with food and accommodation and encouraging them to witness their child's performance. This system has helped us greatly to develop stronger bonds between the child and the relative" (manager's narrative).

These kinds of strategies will provide strong foundations for the eventual reintegration of the child with family. Such foundations are critical for the long-term success of the reunification.

7.3.4 Treatment of children after reaching 18 years of age

An important criterion is represented by the question, “What are the steps that have been taken for the well-being of the children who have exceeded 18 years of age?” The following case study demonstrates a good governance practice in line with this criterion.

> “A practical way of showing love and affection to children by their parents is by maintaining a kind of savings system for the child’s future. Parents who save something to secure the future show love of their children. We have opened bank savings accounts for every girl in our home. Money is added to their accounts monthly by our home. In addition, we encourage family members (those who have them) to deposit some money into their accounts. This system has given parents a chance to think of their children in a different way. They have begun to understand that there are many responsibilities to be fulfilled while being looked after in the orphanage and just visiting them itself, does not equate to real care for their children. Only a few parents regularly continue depositing money to the girls’ accounts. Money donated for the ‘Future savings project’ by donors is divided equally and placed into the girls’ accounts. Bank officials visit the home once a month and collect money for deposits and later send us a report after depositing money in the accounts of our girls. We display this FSP report on the home’s notice board enabling anyone to see the progress of the project, which influences the public support towards FSP. We deposit money in the accounts of these children until they become 18 when the savings will contribute towards their reintegration” (manager’s narrative).

This strategy of the manager not only strengthens the bond between the child and the parents but also assists to socialise the child. Having savings in this manner reduces the financial burden and stress on the parents. This is particularly relevant to 18-year-old children as they are likely to have greater requirements for financial resources.

7.3.5 Number of successful reintegration and the factors affecting this

This research overviews the Grading Criteria while focusing special attention on the fifth criterion, which relates to the reintegration efforts of voluntary children’s homes. The empirical findings and literature stress the importance of reviewing and revising the criterion, which awards points based on the number of reintegrated children. This is because, it was found that the number of reintegrated children in different homes is affected by a range of different variables and factors such as the number of children in a home, reasons behind their institutionalization, composition (age and gender), and demography (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014a, 2014b). The integration of a criterion and awarding points for the number of reintegrated children by every children’s home when standardizing children’s homes is an indication that the DPCCS has sensed the significance of reintegration of institutionalized children. However, this research has identified that institutionalized children in Sri Lanka are denied their rights, often because their reintegration process is ineffective. This critical finding provided impetus to review and revise the criteria in the context of the General Standards and the UN Guidelines.

This criterion refers to the General Standards 6.1 to 6.4 and 6.6 to 6.8. They comprise the major methods for reintegration, i.e. re-unification, socialization, foster care /adoption care and other permanent care opportunities (finding employment, providing vocational training and giving them in

marriage). The number of reintegrated children in a home is relative to many factors other than the service providers' hard work alone. Policy officers' involvements and their efforts, and parents /guardians' enthusiasm also affect the number of reintegration. Thus, this criterion is critically, constructively and analytically discussed in this chapter. While having good responses to most of the criteria in the standardization strategy, criterion 5 was heavily criticised by the children's homes' managers. This criterion offers points for the number of children who have been reintegrated within a particular period. The managers' appraisal of this criterion comprise the following arguments.

Argument 1: Isn't the number of reintegrated children relative to the number of children that is housed in a children's home?

Children's homes care for children in a range of numbers. In the Sri Lankan context, it varies from 10 - 400 children. The average number of children housed in a home is 40-50. The manager's argument above can be justified with his statement below.

> "Take an example of children's homes A and B that cater care for 20 and 100 children respectively. Home A reintegrates 10 children in a year with an enormous effort. In the same year, home B reintegrates 20 children. Comparatively, home B has reintegrated twice the number of children than home A and therefore, according to the Grading Criteria, home B receives reasonably higher points than home A. However, when calculate against the total number of children that each home houses, the percentage values of the reintegrated number of children in home A is 50% and home B is only 20%. Therefore, in my opinion, points should be based on the percentage values of the reintegrated number of children and home A should receive more points than home B" (manager's narrative).

Thus, this manager emphasises that should points be awarded for the reintegrated number of children in different institutional care settings, the proportion of children who are reintegrated is the key figure rather than the absolute number. The following argument by a different manager proposes a different calculation based on children's reintegration probability.

Argument 2: Doesn't the child's reason for institutionalization in the first place have an effect on their reintegration?

This manager says that there are two categories of institutionalized children in a home. They are those who cannot be reintegrated and those who have the potential to be reintegrated. S/he describes this scenario to demonstrate his point:

> "Take an example of homes A and B that care for 20 children each. Suppose that all the other factors except for children's entry into care remains controlled. Home A has; two children who have been institutionalized due to their family whereabouts are unknown, 1 child due to sexual abuse (incest) and two orphans who are more than 14 years of age. These five children's reintegration falls into the category of 'who cannot be reintegrated within a specific period of time'. That is: Re-unifying a child into a sexually abusing environment is a child right violation. Children whose family whereabouts are unknown and who cannot find permanent other alternative care until their parents / family are located. Moreover, orphans can only be given for adoption if they are below the age of 14. Thus, these five children cannot be reintegrated with the children's home's effort alone, but is dependent upon time and the efforts of policy makers. Therefore, should the

> reintegration be considered at all, it can only be directed to the remaining 15 children who have the potential to be reintegrated" (manager's narrative).

This manager's argument is that in the case of home B, suppose all 20 children have the potential for reintegration. If home A and B both reintegrate 5 children each, according to the Grading Criteria both homes get similar points because they have both reintegrated similar numbers. Even if the proportions are calculated against the total number of children, these two homes receive equal results as they house 20 children each. However, the problem with this calculation is that they have neglected the 5 children in home A, who cannot be reintegrated with the children's home effort alone. Thus, the actual number of reintegration should have been calculated against the number of children who have the potential for reintegration. That is; in home A, it is 5 out of 15 children and in home B, 5 out of 20. Thus, the percentage of the actual number of reintegrated children in homes A and B are 33% and 25% respectively.

The argument made by the second manager is advancement to the proposal made by the first where he stresses that the factors behind the reason for institutionalization should be considered when calculating the reintegrated number of children.

A third manager provides an argument based on gender.

Argument 3: Aren't the boys' reintegration chances much higher than those of the girls?

This manager runs a girls' home. He strongly argues that boys' reintegration possibility is much higher than the girls' are. He brings several points to justify his argument on following grounds.

> "Boys have much more potential to find employment than the girls. The existing job opportunities for boys are much higher. Forces, Construction sites, restaurants, service stations and lottery agencies tend to hire more boys than girls at the age of 15. Girls have opportunities in the clothing manufacture industry but lack of skills restrain them being employed. Furthermore, the safety factor for girls has to be considered much more consciously than boys, even if the girls have employment opportunities. Trying to reintegrate more girls to achieve more points may adversely affect the physical, emotional and sexual safety of the girls. Thus, despite the fact that in legal term, these both genders can be socialized when they have become 15; boys tend to find work at a much faster rate than the girls do. The higher number of reintegration in boys' children's homes does not simply imply that the staffs of these children's homes have put much effort in reintegration than the girls' homes. Therefore, girls' homes and boys' homes should be served as two different categories when points are awarded for the number of reintegrated children for the purpose of standardizing children's homes." (manager's narrative 2012)

This manager comments that girls have opportunities in the clothing manufacture industry but lack of skills restrain them being employed. Jayasooriyya (2008, p. 39) identifies this situation as "the girl child and the disabled child are the least empowered". Roccella (2007) also found that girls tend to undergo longer-term institutionalization than boys do. Thus, this manager emphasises that when evaluating the reintegration efforts of children's homes, boys' and girls' homes should be separately considered.

In addition to the arguments from the managers, several other aspects directly impact the number of reintegrated children in a home. The Placement Committee composition and PCM's proceedings too have important aspects to be considered as direct impacts for the number of reintegrated children from a home.

Thus, these managers' arguments are that the number of reintegrated children in a home is a variable that is dependent upon not only by the efforts of the children's homes' management teams but also by many other factors. Thus, there is a necessity to consider these factors and standardise the results should comparison be made among homes. Most importantly, the critical result is not a comparison with other homes, but a comparison of the same home at succeeding points in time to evaluate improvement. Maybe the "winner" is the one with greatest improvement rather than simply the highest score. One could have a nagging thought that some homes may then "choose" the children they take on, and avoid those who are less likely to be reintegrated – i.e. female, abused etc. However the existing regulation that children cannot be institutionalized by children's home staff that the enrolment process is managed only by the relevant provincial DPCCS, avoids such unjust. It would be a pity and ironic if the ratings system itself resulted in a negligence of the most vulnerable children. This brings to our attention the importance of the implementation of a detailed Reintegration Evaluation System enabling the measurement (assessment) of the effectiveness of the reintegration process.

7.4 Discussion: Implementation of a Reintegration Evaluation System

This chapter introduces a Reintegration Evaluation System to promote the criterion 5 of the Grading Standards. This employs systemic evaluation for the efficiency of the reintegration process in a home, which can also be used as a measure to compare and contrast the effectiveness of the processes among children's homes.

7.4.1 Reintegration Evaluation Statistics

To evaluate the efficiency and the effectiveness of the reintegration process, we require information from the children's home and the statistics (results) of the PCMs. However, Roccella (2007) and Save the Children (2005) state that many children's homes do not hold PCMs and many do not keep records on PCMs. These failures have been the major reasons for the unsuccessful results of the reintegration process leading children towards unnecessary long-term institutionalization. To have a successful outcome it is important not only to keep records of the PCMs, but also to analyse the PCMs' records/results. Thus, implementation of an RES becomes critical. The following is a list of reintegration evaluation variables proposed by this PAR that would be helpful for the implementation of RES.

7.4.1.1 Reintegration evaluation variables

Symbol Variable

a. No. of institutionalized children
b. No. of children who have no parents / no guardians
c. No. of children who have guardians
d. No. of children who have a single parent
e. No. of children who have both parents
f. No. of notified guardians for PCM (potential attendance)
g. No. of parents' attendance to PCM
h. No. of children that cannot be reintegrated[105]
i. No. of children recommended for reunification
j. No. of children recommended for socialization
k. No. of children recommended for adoption
l. No. of children reunified
m. No. of children socialized
n. No. of children adopted
o. No. of children transferred to other children's homes
p. No. of children newly enrolled

7.4.1.2 Derived variables

q. No. of Potential Reintegration (a-h)
r. No. of Recommended Reintegration (i+j+k)
s. No. of Actual Reintegration (l+m+n)
t. Gap between potential and recommended reintegration (q-r)
u. Gap between potential and actual reintegration (q-s)
v. Gap between recommended and actual reintegration (r-s)
w. Proportion of children potentially reintegratable (q/a)
x. Proportion of children recommended for reintegration (r/q)
y. Proportion of children actual reintegrated (s/r)
z. Proportion of guardians attending to PCMs (g/f)

To explore the efficiency and the effectiveness of the reintegration process of the placement committees, I collected data for the above variables 'a-p' from PCM records of 5 children's homes representing all four different grading standards[106].These a-p data were utilized to generate statistics for variables q-z using an Excel Spreadsheet. Data for variables 'b-e' (family background records) were obtained from the children's personal files. Of the five homes from where the data were obtained, 'A' and 'B' graded children's homes had well managed records. 'C' and 'D' graded homes were disorganized with respect to keeping the PCMs' records and thus the data were retrieved after an immense effort. One 'D' graded home had kept no records and therefore no data were obtained. It was evident that these low graded homes occupy less staff members and they were mainly engaged in cooking, washings and cleanings. Their attention to maintaining the children's personal files and keeping PCMs' records were minimal or nil.

Table 7.1 demonstrates the range of statistics collected from one children's home over five years from 2008 to 2013. It is an 'A' graded children's home in the North Western Province. The data include children's family background records (A), PCM records (B) and reintegration results (C). These *auto Generated Reintegration Evaluation Statistics* (D) assisted evaluation of the existing

[105] This variable is a judgement call and cannot be left to the home – they will overestimate it to make figures look better. Alternatively, strict guidelines on what makes a child non-reunitable need to be provided.
[106]To maintain the credibility of the results, the sample was selected representing all standard categories based on the grading standards granted by DPCCS at the children's home standardization competition held nationwide in 2010.

reintegration process, which is based on PCMs. They have been calculated based on data in A, B and C categories. The average proportion values (w, x, y and z) have been calculated in terms of the four major variables[107] in every home.

[107] Four major variables: Potential reintegration, recommended reintegration, actual reintegration and parents / guardians' attendance to PCMs (variables w, x, y and z in Table 7).

Table 7.1 Placement Committee Meetings' Records and Auto-Generated Reintegration Evaluation Statistics.

Variables		Reintegration process evaluation statistics												
		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012			2013	Average
		Apr 3	Dec 12	Jun 22	Dec 10	Jun 28	Dec 10	Apr 8	Jun 24	Nov 8	Jun 19	Dec 21	Jun 16	
a	No. of institutionalized children	20	16	20	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	20	
A	Children's family background records													
b	Children who have no parents/no guardians	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3
c	Children who have guardians	3	3	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
d	Children who have a single parent	6	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
e	Children who have both parents	8	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	6
B	Placement committee meetings' records													
f	No. of notified guardians for PCM (potential attendance)	17	13	16	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	16	15
g	No. of. Parents attendance to PCM	10	8	8	6	4	5	7	5	7	10	8	6	7
h	No. of children that cannot be reintegrated	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
i	No. of children recommended for reunification	4	4	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
j	No. of children recommended for socialization	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
k	No. of children recommended for adoption	0	1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
C	Reintegration process records (between PCMs)													
l	No. of children reunified	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
m	No. of children socialized	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
n	No. of children adopted	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
o	No. of children transferred to other children's homes	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
p	No. of children newly enrolled	0	5	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1

Table 7.1: Continued…

Symbol	Variables	Reintegration process evaluation statistics												Average
		2008		2009		2010		2011		2012			2013	
		Apr 3	Dec 12	Jun 22	Dec 10	Jun 28	Dec 10	Apr 8	Jun 24	Nov 8	Jun 19	Dec 21	Jun 16	
D	Auto generated reintegration evaluation statistics													
q	No. of Potential Reintegration (a–h)	18	14	17	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	17	16
r	No. of recommended reintegration (i+j+k)	4	6	7	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5
s	No. of actual reintegration (l+m+n)	0	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1
t	Gap between potential and recommended reintegration (q–r)	14	8	10	10	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	13	11
u	Gap between potential and actual reintegration (q–s)	18	13	15	15	14	15	15	15	13	15	15	17	15
v	Gap between recommended and actual reintegration (r–s)	4	5	5	5	3	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	4
w	% of potential reintegration (q/a %)	90	88	85	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	85	85
x	% of recommended reintegration (r/q %)	22	43	41	33	27	27	27	27	27	27	27	24	29
y	% of actual reintegration (s/r %)	0	17	29	0	25	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	10
z	% of guardians attendance to PCMs (g/f %)	59	62	50	40	27	33	47	33	47	67	53	38	46

Source: survey results from the PAR carried out in the North Western Province in 2012/2013 by the author.

The five children's homes were compared with regard to their reintegration statistics (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2 Average percentage data evaluated from the PCM statistics of five children's homes.[108]

Statistics	Children's homes of varying standards					Average %
	Top		Medium		Weak	
	A1	A2	B	C	D	
% of potential no. of reintegration	85	76	85	63	81	78%
% of recommended no. of reintegration	29	18	79	41	42	42%
% of actual no. of reintegration	10	37	9	31	20	21%
% of guardians' attendance to PCMs	46	36	43	16	23	33%

There has been an average of 78 % potential no. of reintegration during the years from 2008 to 2013. However, the average of actual no. of reintegration during the same 5 years has been only 21 %. This indicates the gap between potential and actual no. of reintegration of 57 %. This demonstrates that over half of the institutionalized children have not been reintegrated when there has been a potential to do so. When there has been a 78 % potentiality to reintegrate, only 42 % have been recommended for reintegration. The gap between potential and recommended no. of reintegration is 36 %. Furthermore, when 42 % of the children have been recommended for reintegration, actual reintegrated number is 21 %. This demonstrates that 21 % of the children in institutional care spend time unnecessarily in the home when there has been a possibility for their reintegration.

Percentage of the actual number of reintegrated children in home A1 and home C are 10% and 31% respectively (Table 7.2). Although A1 home is categorized as a top graded home, its actual percentage of reintegrated children is lower than all other homes. Home C, which has 31% actual reintegration, has been categorized as a medium graded children's home when its reintegration success is much higher than the most of the other homes. This demonstrates the significance of the RES introduced in this study. It can be used not only when promoting the systemic evaluation for the efficiency of the reintegration process in a home, but also as a measure to compare and contrast the effectiveness of the reintegration processes within and among children's homes.

The number of reintegrated children from a children's home is a result of the mutual effort of both policy makers and service providers. Furthermore, it depends upon various internal factors such as the number of children in a home, cause of child's institutionalization, gender factor, efficient and effective nature of PCMs, and is influenced by several other external factors. The external factors can be identified as social and cultural issues, demographic patterns in terms of different provinces, composition of children's homes with respect to different ethnicities and religions. Thus, when awarding points by means of comparing two or more children's homes and selecting the best of them, both internal and external factors have to be considered. To avoid complexity, comparisons

[108] Average percentages were calculated across the years surveyed for potential, recommended and actual no. of reintegrated children and compared between all five homes (e.g. column A1 demonstrates the time-averaged results of variables w, x, y and z retrieved from Table 1 for the first 'Grade A' home. A1 & A2 represent top graded homes, B & C are medium and D represents a low (weak) graded home.

of homes among provinces should be eliminated. The Reintegration Evaluation System that has been introduced in this study delivers indicators to enhance the effectiveness of placement committee meetings' internally. Assuming that the external factors are consistent within a province, this RES can be used for a provincial wise comparison and selecting the best. It also provides ingredients to address the issue of prolong institutionalization of children, which has been identified as one of the major human right issues within institutional care environments in Sri Lanka.

Parents' or guardians' attendance to the PCMs, significantly affects the reintegration of the child concerned. If the parent/guardian is not in attendance, the child's period of institutionalization is extended for another period of 6 months or until the next PCM. Follow up between PCMs are rarely carried out. All five children's homes maintain a very low percentage of the guardians' attendance to the PCMs ranging from 46% to 16% (Table 7.2). This indicates that, as a whole, the guardians' participation to PCMs is very low. While the A and B grades demonstrate higher percentage values of attendance (46, 36 and 43 %), the C and D grade homes demonstrate reasonably low proportions (16 and 23 %). The reason for this difference has been identified as follows:

There is an obvious reason for the difference noted in proportional attendance by parents. Of the 12 criteria[109] to grade children's homes, criterion number 4 asks, "What are the steps that have been taken to strengthen the bonds between the children and parents / guardians?" This criterion has encouraged staff to keep close contacts with children's families because, apart from strengthening the bonds between children and guardians, the home benefits by achieving higher grading. Furthermore, this environment has stimulated more parents to attend PCMs. Therefore, children's homes that achieved higher grades usually have kept in better contact with the guardians than the low grade achievers. The scenario was similar with regard to keeping and maintenance of children's personal files and PCM records. Criterion 12 asks, "How is the maintenance of the documentation process implemented in the children's home?" Managers from A and B graded homes had answered that they received higher grades because they had kept their records properly which in return motivated them to continue to maintain the records regularly.

7.4.2 Practical pathway for an effective reintegration process

Drawing on UN Guideline paragraphs that are related to reintegration of institutionalized children, the following proposals can be made for successful governance of the reintegration process of children in institutional care.

- Hold PCMs including the institutionalized child as a committee member of the decision making process.

[109] This is called the Grading Criteria for the Standardization of Voluntary Children's Homes in Sri Lanka (DPCCS, 2010).

- The child should be involved in the decision making process of their own reintegration procedure as a member of the committee and every home should hold PCMs regularly with the participation of all members. The PCM's decisions should be reviewed and revised in the best interests of the child and the progress should be recorded regularly until reintegration occurs.
- Plan and design the systemic reintegration process valuing and incorporating ideologies, thoughts and decisions of all members of the placement committee[110].
- Identify the family/social background of the institutionalized child.
- Evaluate "reasons for child's entry into care" to identify the child's "original cause of removal" from the family.
- Thoroughly analyse the child's original cause of removal to identify the deprived capabilities of the child (Ariyadasa & McIntyre-Mills 2014a).
- Investigate for the new issues that restrict the reintegration efforts.
- Discuss the methods to address the limitations for the plan to reintegrate the child.
- Allocate tasks among the committee members to create/enhance capabilities[111] of the child.
- If a member is absent from a PCM, they should be well informed about the committee decisions and quickly adopt the findings including performance of their allocated duties and responsibilities towards the children concerned.
- Carry out tasks efficiently between consecutive PCMs.
- If a parent/guardian is absent from a PCM, they should be called upon as soon as possible to discuss and review decisions over matters concerning the reintegration of the child. It should not be a cause for halting progress.
- Evaluate and record the progress until all the capabilities have been adequately achieved.
- Each member of the committee should keep their progress reports relevant to individual children and each home should record reintegration statistics[112] of the PCM as a self-evaluation tool to gauge the efficiency and effectiveness of the reintegration process in its own setting.
- Reintegrate the child once all the capabilities have been achieved (i.e. once the original causes of removal from the family have been resolved, and the new issues have been addressed).

To address the issues of the existing reintegration process and to implement these guidelines, it is vital to maintain a flow of information among the child, the family and the officials. For this to occur, the management process of the relevant information should be up to date, properly stored and securely accessed. Otherwise, it creates a gap between these proposed guidelines and their

[110] Placement committee: The child, the family, and the alternative caregiver (UN Guidelines 2010, p. 10).
[111] Capabilities: Nussbaum lists the ten fundamental capabilities as; health, safety, bodily integrity, education, standard of living, quality of social interactions, productive valued activities, environment, play and basic rights (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 33-34).
[112] Reintegration statistics: a-z variables that are indicated in Table 1.

operation in actual practice. Therefore, for an efficient and effective reintegration process, a technologically developed information management system is worthy of consideration in line with the UN Guidelines paragraph 58 as follows:

> "Assessment should be carried out expeditiously, thoroughly and carefully. It should take into account the child's immediate safety and well-being, as well as his/her longer-term care and development, and should cover the child's personal and developmental characteristics, ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious background, family and social environment, medical history and any special needs" (United Nations 2010, p. 11).

7.4.3 Implementation of a pathway to reintegration: Influenced by the Retrak[113] Model and the Policy Process as a Cycle

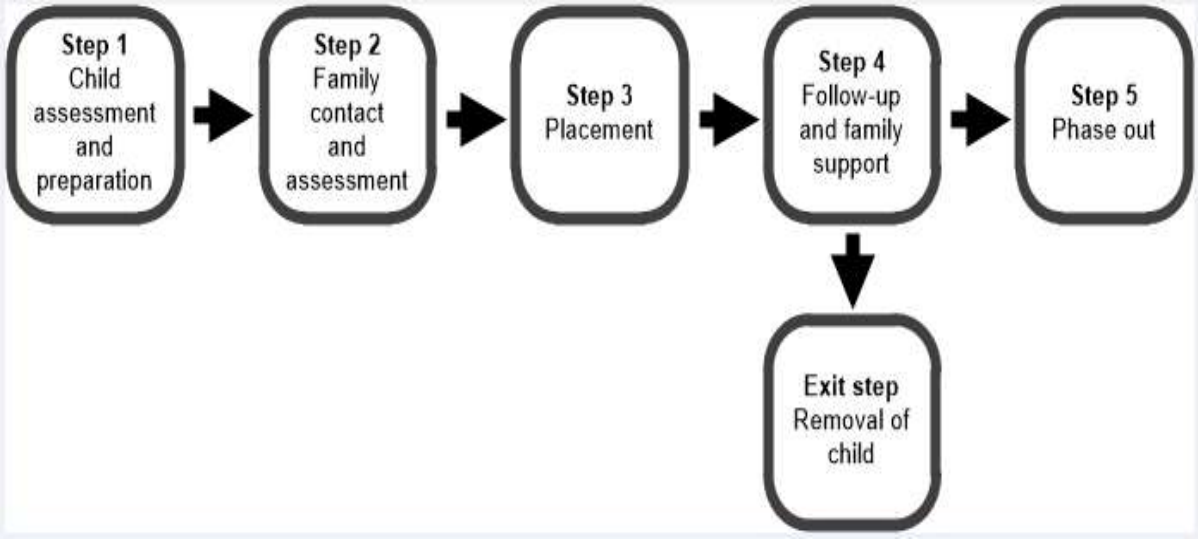


Figure 7.11 Key steps of the process of family reintegration (Retrak 2013)

'Retrak', a UK based charity organisation which strives to reintegrate street children provides a model that is influential when reintegrating Sri Lankan children in care institution. Retrak aims to successfully return street children to safe homes in families and communities, where each child feels a sense of belonging through a secure attachment to caring adults (Retrak 2013). Retrak's guiding principles below provide an overarching framework for the family reintegration activities based on the UN Guidelines, which reflect the UNCRC.

- Family reintegration is the first priority[114]
- Any intervention is child centred, so that it involves the child, is tailored to her/his needs and is in her/his best interests[115]
- It is essential to (re)build positive attachments between the child and her/his care-givers[116]
- Involving the wider community can assure greater support for the child and family[117]

[113] Retrak is a faith-based UK charity. Vision of Retrak: Our vision is a world where no child is forced to live on street. Mission of Retrak: Retrak works to transform highly vulnerable children's lives, preserve families, empower communities and give each of them a voice. We put children at the very heart of everything we do and will be fearless and tenacious in defending and promoting their rights (source: https://www.retrak.org/).
[114] UN Guidelines paragraph 3 (United Nations 2010).
[115] UN Guidelines paragraph 6 (United Nations 2010).
[116] UN Guidelines paragraphs 48, 49, 50, 51 (United Nations 2010).

All these guiding principles have been found essential and significant when reintegrating children in care institutions in Sri Lanka. This is because that street children represent larger proportion of orphaned, abandoned and destitute children that DPCCS categorises as needy children for institutional care. Only difference is that in the Sri Lankan context, children become institutionalized before stepping on to streets or soon after. The family reintegration process that Retrak proposes is broken down to five key steps each of which has a definite aim and outcome and often multiple activities within (Figure 7.11). A more detailed diagram (Figure 7.12) is presented on the following page (Retrak 2013).

[117] UN Guidelines paragraph 156, 157 (United Nations 2010).

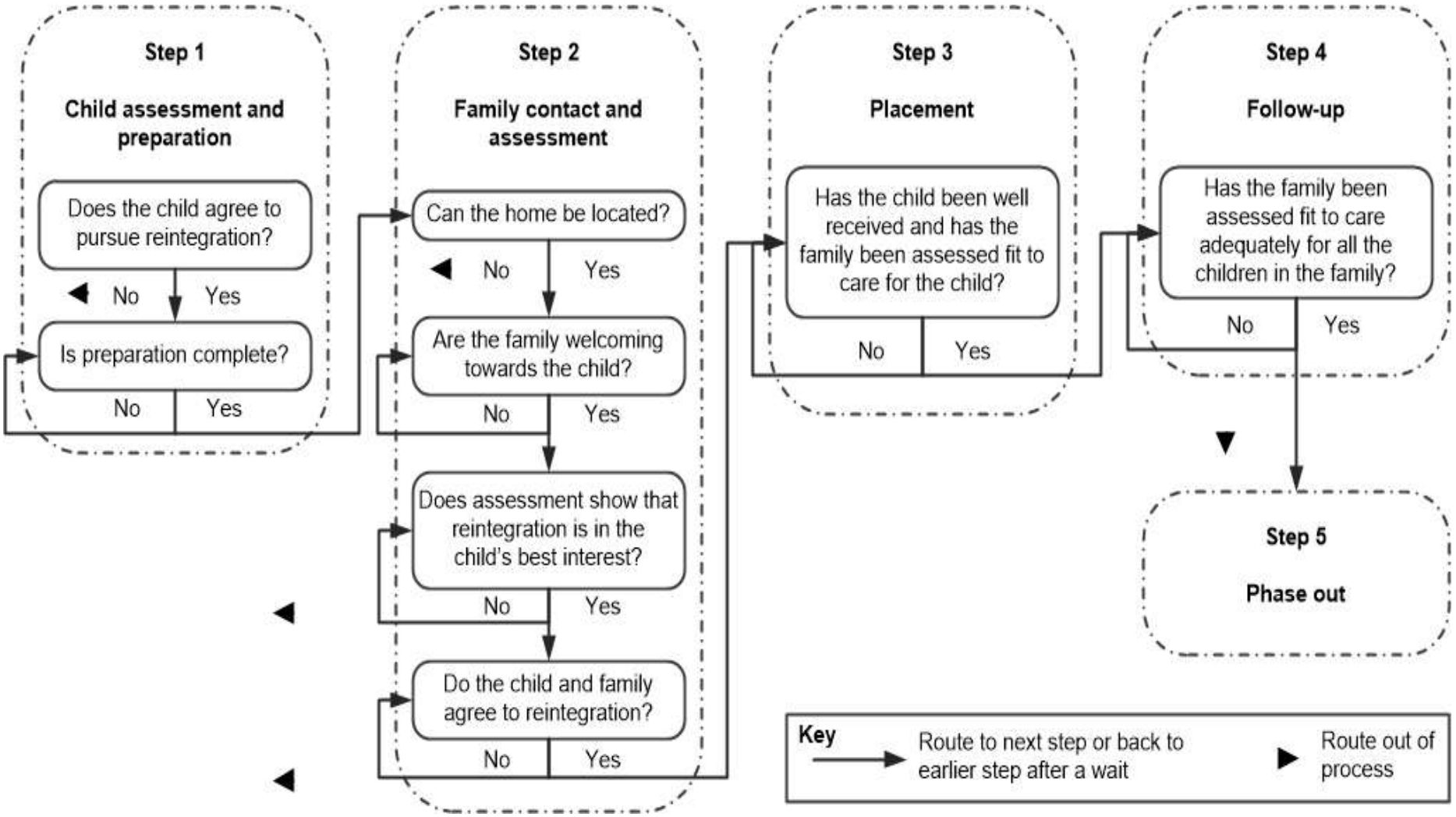


Figure 7.12 Family reintegration procedure (Retrak 2013, p. 12).

According to Retrak, family reintegration procedure (Figure 7.12) is a simplified overview of the steps and key decisions involved in enabling a child and family to be reintegrated. Step 1 is the child assessment and preparation. In Step 2, family contact and assessment is made. Placement is carried out at Step 3. Step 4 provides follow up and family strengthening. At the Phase out step (Step 5) it ensures that an independent family is able to continue caring for their children without Retrak support. These steps highlight the significance of Integrating Retrak Modal as a tool in the reintegration process of Sri Lankan children at care institution.

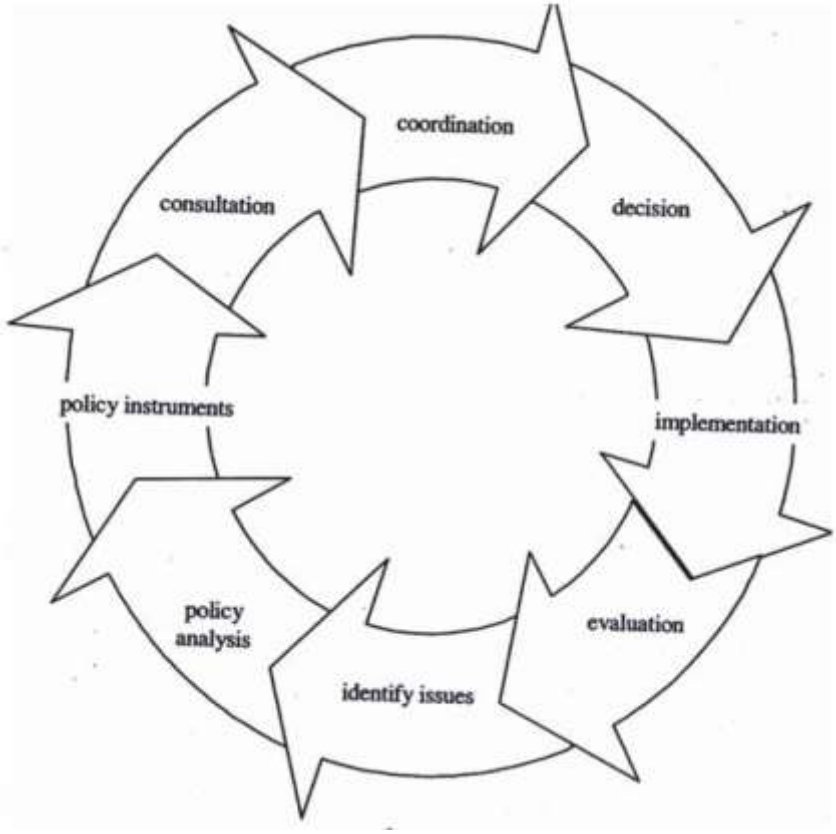


Figure 7.13 The policy process as a cycle (Bridgman and Davis, 2000, p. 27).

Policy process as a cycle (Figure 7.13) is also a tool kit, not a theory (Bridgman & Davis 2000, p. 102). Colebatch (2005) says that the policy cycle is presented as a way for practitioners to make sense of the policy process. Thus, it is important to examine the policy process as a cycle in terms of implementing a successful reintegration pathway for the institutionalized children.

Evaluation of documents for identifying issues that prevent a child's reintegration is the beginning of the policy cycle. Analysis of policies at the placement committee meeting with the use of policy instruments provides the basement for consultation to allocate tasks among placement committee to enable child's reintegration. The coordination among the committee in carrying out the tasks that lead to make the decision for reintegrating a child, thus implementing the ideal reintegration option; re-unification, socialization or adoption care. The relevance of the Retrak Model and the Policy process as a cycle in terms of the implementation of a pathway to reintegrating an institutionalized child in Sri Lanka is indicated in the diagram below (Figure 7.14).

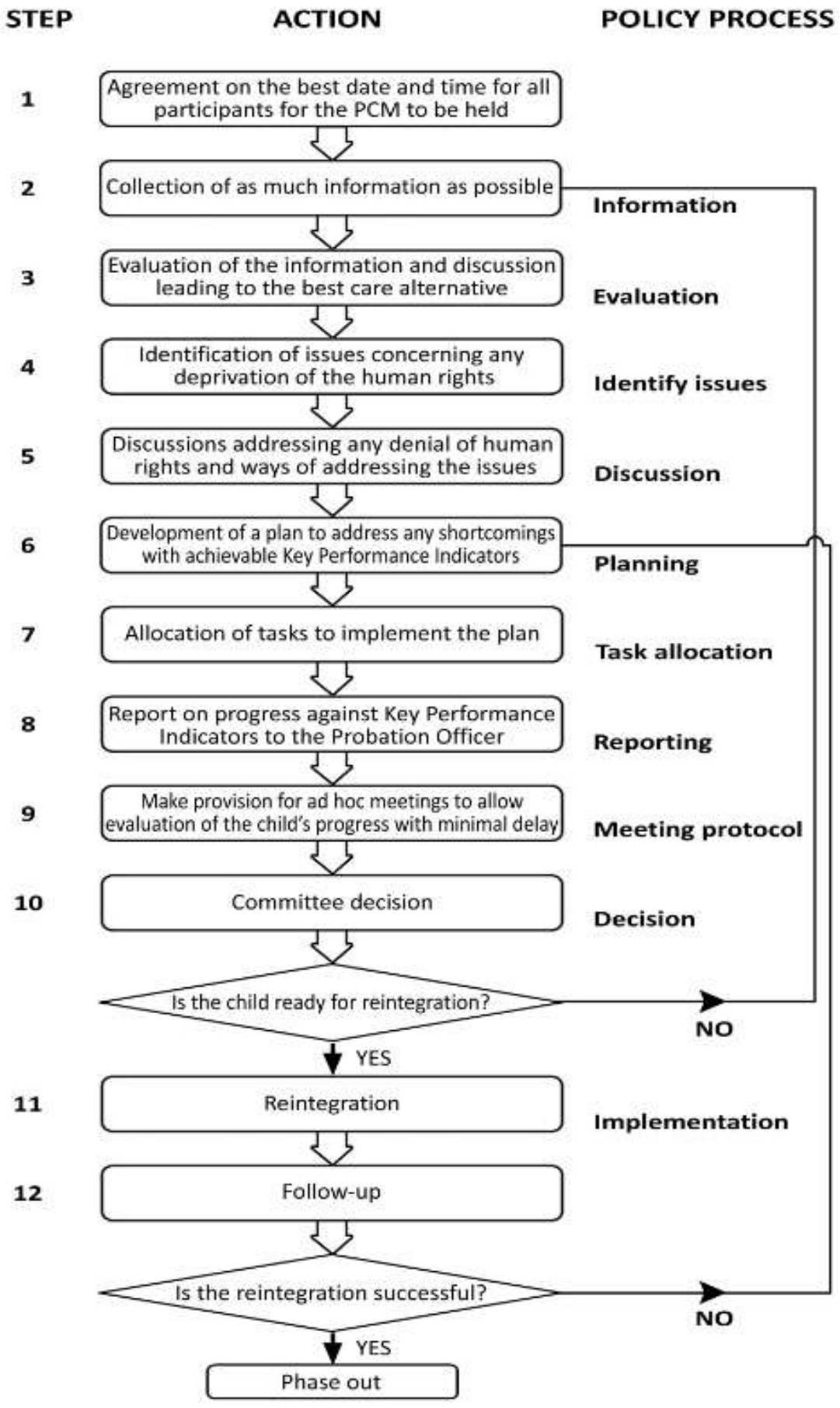


Figure 7.14 Pathway to reintegration incorporating the Retrak Model and the Policy process as a cycle.

STEP 1: Agreement on date and time

The typical method of deciding a date and time for the placement committee meeting (PCM) is that the service provider (Manager of the children's home) contacts the probation officer (PO). A convenient day and time for the PO is chosen for the PCM. There is no tradition to ask the parents about their convenient dates or their ability to be present on the selected date. A letter is sent notifying the parents but the attendance percentage of parents is very low (see Table 7.2). Although the parents are affected by the decisions of the policy makers, this is an example where decision makers have ignored the right of the parents. Thus, in line with the principle of subsidiarity, this study proposes that when deciding a date and time for the PCM, POs should involve the parents and make sure that priority is given to them.

STEP 2: Collection of information

This study showed that it is important to collect as much information about the child and their environment as possible to minimise the risk of wrong decisions about child's family background, health, education, etc. This should involve discussions with the child, parents, relatives, friends and/or neighbours. In line with "Ashby's rule of requisite variety" the degree of success of the findings are proportional to the amount of information available about the child.

STEP 3: Evaluation of information

When deciding the best alternative care opportunity for the child, it is important to have discussions with the parents/guardians whilst evaluating the available information. Parents should be asked about their ability to take the child back home and the child should be asked what they want. User centric approach discussed in 5.3.1 is helpful when deciding the best alternative care opportunity.

STEP 4: Identifying issues

The available information and the discussions with parents help to identify the issues of any deprivation of the fundamental human needs of the child. The application of Max-Neef's human scale development matrix assists in identifying the loss of fundamental human needs and how to satisfy those needs (Table 5.2).

STEP 5: Discussions on remedial actions

Once the issues have been identified, the committee should then discuss ways to address the denial human rights of the child. The Capabilities Approach assists first in identifying the human right issues and then in recognising the appropriate capabilities needed to achieve the appropriate outcomes.

STEP 6: Planning

When developing a plan to address human rights issues, it becomes important that the placement committee, with the help of the professionals in the field, should develop Key Performance

Indicators (KPI). The application of the theoretical framework that has been developed in this study helps in this regard, as it contains recovery measures. These recovery measures in line with the good governance practices that are outlined in the framework provide a guideline to apply and address the issues.

STEP 7: Task allocation

The allocation of tasks among committee members should be carried out with regard to the social, cultural, economic, political and environmental factors of the child. All the tasks should be documented and allocated among committee members. Time needed for completing a task should be recorded and followed-up as per the KPI.

STEP 8: Reporting

It is important to select the most appropriate committee member to whom progress should be reported. The application of critical systems heuristics in this study indicates that PO is usually recognised as the person to receive the report on progress against planned outcomes (see 6.1). This reporting should be on an ongoing basis.

STEP 9: Meetings protocol:

In the present context in care institutions, there is no tradition to hold ad hoc PCMs to allow evaluation of the child's progress to minimise delay to their reintegration). The tradition is that the child has to remain institutionalised until the next PCM is held even when the necessary requirements have been fulfilled for the child. The period becomes prolonged if for some reason the guardian cannot attend the meeting or the meeting is postponed or not held. The UN proposal is to hold PCM once every 3 months (United Nations 2010). Despite being a signatory for the UN Guidelines, in the Sri Lankan context, PCM is held once every 6 months (DPCCS 1991). This study proposes that if there is a necessity, ad hoc meetings may be held to address the issues case by case. This will address the issues in more practicable, efficient and a punctual manner and avoid delays, rather than leaving those to be solved in a single day.

STEP 10: Committee decision

When each member of the PCM has completed his or her duties, the decision can be taken as whether the child can be reintegrated or not. If the child cannot be reintegrated, the process needs to be iterated, and the reason why the child cannot be reintegrated, steps 2 to 10, should be re-evaluated until the reintegration possible. This process is similar to the policy process as a cycle.

STEP 11: Reintegration

If the decision is that the child can be reintegrated, this should take place as soon as possible. The type of reintegration can be reunification with child's parents, kinship care, adoption care or socialization into their societies if the child has reached 18 years of age.

STEP 12: Follow-up process

After the reintegration, a follow-up should be carried out for a certain period of time to make sure that the child has integrated well. This study proposes a continuous follow up during the first three months and thereafter annually until the child becomes age 18. During this follow-up period, the decision has to be taken as whether the reintegration has been successful. If the answer is 'NO', the process needs to be re-iterated (Steps 6 - 10). If the child and the care environment interact well with each other during the follow-up period, the committee can phase out from the process. The method of phase out is described well in the Retrak model, which can be taken as a model to follow in the Sri Lankan context.

7.4.4 Transformation of institutionalization into reintegration

This research identifies the significance of children's homes as facilities for emergency or temporary care for children who are at risk. No matter how temporary the period is, the research emphasises the need for protecting the human rights of children during institutionalization. While addressing the needs for health and safety; formal and non-formal educations and vocational training, this study finds that preparing the child for reintegration into society is of the utmost important. This indicates the significance of children's homes as ''reintegration centres" rather than care institutions. The "Reintegration pathway model" that has been introduced through this study supports the transformation action of care institutions into "reintegration centres". It is the responsibility of policy makers and service providers to work cooperatively in achieving the "transformation of institutionalization into reintegration" in the best interests of the child in terms of their needs and rights.

CHAPTER 8 CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to address the life chances of children living in voluntary children's homes by means of a critical systemic study. It focused on ways to improve the policy and governance context of these homes by drawing on the a priori guidelines for best practice outlined in the UN guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children. It assessed a large sample of children's homes in Sri Lanka in order to assess governance standards and to make suggestions as to how the entry into children's homes could be diverted or the performance of these homes could be improved (Chapter 3.6). Although the aim originally was that the PAR would effect changes along the way, it turned out that the research as such as was not able to accomplish this, but it was able to "make suggestion" for action. The thesis also suggests practices for improved governance that supports pathways to address the complex needs of the service users, namely the children and their parents. The policy approach and governance practice however places children at the centre of policy decisions.

A case is made that, whenever appropriate (and safe for children and young people), attempts should be made to prevent children separating from their families so that children can be reconnected with their families. This should be done through the provision of multilevel, multiagency governance supports to assist families in poverty as a result of social, economic or environmental challenges. Thus far, the research points only to possibilities. The following analysis sums up the internal and external challenges that would be necessary to achieve these goals.

Many well-wishers tend to set up or fund boys' homes rather than girls' homes. The result has been that girls' homes are overcrowded when boys' homes have vacant beds. My decision to start a girls' home rather than a boys' home was to help to redress the lack of care facilities for girls (Chapter 3.4.3). Furthermore, girls have become more vulnerable than boys when mothers migrate for work overseas (Chapter 5.2.2). The laws pertaining to migration for work overseas too are gender based and discriminative for women (5.3.3). NGOs' confront many more difficulties when running girls' homes in terms of the security aspects. For example, they have to provide high walls and locked gates with security personal to secure their girls from possible risks outside. It has been found that finding a job for a girl in order to socialize her at the age of 18 is much more difficult than for a boy (Chapter 7.1.4.2). The reality is that job opportunities are lower for girls than for boys (Government of Sri Lanka 2016). These examples demonstrate that among the orphaned, abandoned and destitute population who have been taken into care and those who are already a marginalized group in society, girls are found to be more vulnerable and marginalized.

This thesis does not try to separate the issues of the institutionalized girls from boys but it does recognize the rights and needs must be addressed in terms of gender sensitivity – although the institutionalized child population has been taken as one group with the goal of enhancing their life chances. Irrespective of their gender, these children are vulnerable to social, cultural, economic,

political and environmental issues. However, when finding ways to address these issues, it was evident that gender needs to be taken into consideration for accurate solutions. When calculating the number of reintegrated children the argument that boys have more chances to find jobs and boys tend to leave children's home at an earlier age was a powerful one and led to the decision that the grading standards of children's home should be gender based (Chapter 7.1.4). Thus, it has been identified that the theoretical lens that placed much emphasize on children and women's rights are ideal when addressing the human rights of institutionalized children. Girls and women, such as mothers and matrons, represent the majority of the affected stakeholders of children's homes. Nussbaum's a priori list of fundamental capabilities has been helpful as a theoretical lens to evaluate the findings in terms of UN a priori guidelines and identifies axial themes, the key human right issues at care institutions. Max-Neef's Human Scale Development Matrix has been influential in recognizing relevant satisfiers (Being, Having, Doing and Interacting) when addressing the fundamental human needs that have given birth to the human rights issues that underpinning institutional care (Chapter 5.4). These issues have been discussed in three stages.

- How do we prevent institutionalization?
- How do we protect children's rights during institutionalization?
- How do we promote reintegration?

A user centric approach (McIntyre-Mills 2008) was useful for identifying ways to place the service users' needs at the forefront of policy and governance decisions to enable service providers to narrow the gap between users and providers by addressing the systemic challenges facing the voiceless. It is acknowledged that the voices of the child need much more attention in Sri Lankan children's homes.

Ulrich (1996) twelve boundary questions on critical systems heuristics have been applied to identify the key service users and service providers as well as the principal decision makers within institutional care environments. UN Guidelines provides the guide throughout the research as a priori approach to governance and to address the human rights issues in children's homes.

Different 'Institutions' that influence protecting of the human rights of children have been identified as the household of children, the community and the private sector around them, and the state where they belong to. Thus when addressing the human rights issues of children's homes, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of these four institutions have been discussed. Kabeer (1991, 2003) has broadly discussed these four institutions namely: state, market, community and family. She has developed the social relations approach (SRA) which is a set of key concepts on gender and development planning framework used widely by state and development workers nowadays. This thesis applies SRA to analyze strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the four institutions when preventing institutionalization, protecting human rights during institutionalization and promoting reintegration of children.

8.1 Preventing the need for admission into a VCH within Kabeer's four institutions (household, community, market and State) to maximize life chances

8.1.1 Household: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the household

The household or the family is the most fundamental unit of Sri Lankan culture. It is the institution that leaves the most durable impact on an individual during human development stages and it is the institution from which basic beliefs, morals and values are formed. Sri Lankan culture, which has been cultivated by strong norms and values of Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, considers the children as the bond between family members (Chapter 2.3.1). It reflects that children are the main component of a family and its permanence. Parents' attitudes influenced by religious teachings and powered by societal norms strive to keep the children within the family. Children's meals, their health and safety, their education and future ambitions, have become the main content of day-to-day conversations among households. Thus, children have always contributed towards family unity rather than separation. This culture has always helped to prevent the institutionalization of children.

The discussion on what reduces these strengths of households to keep the child/ren in the family to and prevent institutionalization needs attention. A family with mother, father and children which generates an income to meet the satisfiers of the fundamental human needs such as food and shelter with sufficient health care and safety (subsistence and protection needs as in Max-Neef's HSD matrix) form the layers of a basic household. Self-esteem, privacy, space and togetherness help to fulfill the need of affection. Education satisfies the need for understanding. Participation, leisure, creation, identity and freedom shape the household into a family (Chapter 5.4). A loss of one or more of these needs weakens the family bond. One of the consequences of such disconnection is the institutionalization of child/ren into a children's home.

Types of such disconnections that lead towards children's institutionalization are: separation of parents, safety issues due to domestic violence, poverty issues due to unemployment and parent's migration due to the adverse effects of poverty. Families have the opportunity to overcome some of these issues with the assistance of resources available around them. Participation in awareness programs using available counseling services before separation and for eliminating domestic violence are a few examples. The threat is that these awareness programs or the counseling services are lacking and not timely.

Poverty and the adverse effects of poverty are major issues that influence children's institutionalization. Any household has the opportunity to access government's supports such as free education and health services. Samurdhi payments for low-income families and low interest bank loans overcome these issues to some extent. However, the materialistic life style, which has received much prominence in the present day household, has influenced mothers' decision

towards work overseas as housemaids. As a result, parents end up seeking care alternative in institutions (Chapters 2.6.2 & 5.2.2).

The CRPOs' role in Divisional Secretariats provides an opportunity for households to avoid separating children from their families. CRPOs' knowledge from their educational background and experiences equip them to find strategies based on a posteriori approach to address household issues (Chapter 5.3.2). The major threats are a result of natural disasters as well as manmade disasters. The remedial actions for these threats will be discussed in community and state SWOT analysis sections.

8.1.2 Community: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the community

Sri Lankan community maintains strong bond among extended families. A child who has experienced loss of parents or temporary deprivation of parental care due to migration for work abroad is looked after by their extended families. Although data is lacking to confirm this argument, when considering the number of women working abroad and the number of children who have been institutionalized owing to their mother's migration, these numbers provide a reasonable picture. This study demonstrates that many children (especially girls) of migrant mothers are admitted to institutions due to safety and poor health reasons even though they still have their fathers at home (5.2.2). Institutionalized children's population due to migrant mothers is closer to 6000. This represents a major portion (30%) of the total. However, there are nearly one million migrant women working as housemaids (Gamburd 2010).Thus, institutionalized population is relatively a small percentage, which comes to only 0.6%. It is true that not all the migrant women are mothers or that all of them have children between 6 to18 (legal age that allows a child's institutionalization in a VCH). On the other hand, among the number of institutionalized, there are some siblings. Overall, it is evident that when comparing the number of mothers working abroad and the number of their children that are looked after in care institutions, majority are still cared for in their homes or by their relatives. It can be assumed that kinship care works well in Sri Lanka for children who have been deprived of parental care or who are at risk. This indicates that if properly guided, the community has an enormous strength for preventing institutionalization.

The weakness of the community as an institution to prevent institutionalization is their lack of awareness of the consequences of institutionalization. The availability of institutional care propels the community to use the facilities or to encourage individual people to utilize the facilities (Chapter 1.2.3). A community may have the ability to support children and their families with financial and material support. The threat is that communities tend to form charity and welfare organizations to build children's homes or to support such institutions that encourage institutional care of children. Yet, no organization has been established with the sole intention of supporting families to prevent their children from institutionalization.

In a society, there are several organizations such as Funeral support association, farmers' association, cooperatives, women empower organizations, etc. So far none of these associations have incorporated 'supporting to families in preventing children's institutionalization' as part of their scope of works. The major reason for this is that the concept of 'institutional care' has been embedded in the minds of people rather than the concept of supporting the household, preventing the breakdown of the family through protecting community services and providing employment or training opportunities to the families at risk of placing their children in institutional care.

8.1.3 Market (Private sector): strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the private sector

The private sector involvement or contribution to prevent institutionalization is minimal. Currently the private sector tends to support NGOs and welfare organizations that run children's homes. A change in this philosophy would be a strength to prevent children from becoming institutionalized. While there are voluntary children's homes visibly in the community with children from different backgrounds who are benefitting (or seemingly benefitting), private sector tends to support these institutions rather than individual families. Private sector organizations allocate a portion from their annual budget to donate to welfare organizations similar to children's homes and in turn, they receive tax-deductible receipts. Currently the threat is that nearly 100% of the private sector support goes to these kind of organizations that encourage institutionalization. When children's homes receive more financial and material support, they incorporate more facilities into these institutions. It becomes a pull factor (attractive) for parents to send their children to these homes (5.2.1). This challenges the general attitude that family life is better than the institutionalized life, because children from these institutions seem spending a more luxurious life than a child from a typical family. This is not to say that institutionalized children should not have the right to enjoy a better life than they had endured previously, but efforts should be made to strengthen families and communities by all sectors in society. The consequences of institutionalized life has demonstrated that there should not be any 'pull' towards children's homes or any undue encouragement for increasing care institutions (United Nations 2010).

The media from time to time promotes the needs and the rights of families to receive assistance. Divisional secretariats (DS) receive information through their grama niladari (village official) about the families who need support. The Child Rights Promotion Officer (CRPO) is the one who collects information about families whose children's rights have been denied. A good communication with DS by private sector organizations and a good network with CRPOs make it easier to identify families most in need of support. Private sector donations through a government official like CRPO can easily be acknowledged and the Divisional Secretary can issue a tax-deductible receipt for such donations. This kind of procedure with government mediation would not only help to limit institutionalization but could avoid the threat of unnecessary attraction to children's homes.

8.1.4 State: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the State

The state has the greatest strength to prevent or limit institutionalization. Being a signatory to the UNCRC, Sri Lanka is supposed to follow the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (United Nations 2010). The increasing number of children's homes (Chapter 1.4, Table 1.2), alone, is clear evidence that the Sri Lankan government has not yet put UN Guidelines[118] into practice. There are 313 Divisional Secretariats, 298 Probation Officers (PO) and 287 Child Rights Promotion Officers (CRPOs) in Sri Lanka (Government of Sri Lanka 2012). Roughly, there is one PO and a CRPO for each DS. This is an immense strength for the government to intervene to limit the number of children's homes. Devolution of powers to provincial councils have given POs the power to institutionalize children from their provinces under the recommendation of provincial commissioners of DPCCSs. Children's homes belong to the particular province in which they are situated. Thus, the POs believe that they have the right to enter or to limit children's institutionalization. The CRPOs work falls under the national government and is assigned to DSs. CRPOs also believe that they have the right to limit or to send children into institutions that are situated in their DSs, because the national government has enforced their work. There is an urgent need to address this controversy and specify the rolls of these two professionals. In my experience as a manager of a children's home, I have always felt and experienced the conflict between them. This kind of clash between government officials undermines the government's opportunity to limit children's institutionalization. The need for the CRPO and the PO to work cooperatively to limit the institutionalization should be documented. Guidelines should soon be structured for both parties in order to implement good governance practices.

The government runs a few welfare programs to support the wellbeing of low-income families that would indirectly support to the prevention of children from becoming institutionalized. Samurdhi payment for low-income families is one such program that could be extended with supports from the public, private and NGO sectors. However, the managers' interviews indicate that there are children from families who receive Samurdhi payments in many children's homes. When deciding to institutionalize children based on poverty, some officials have accepted the payment (Samurdhi) as a reason to institutionalize rather than to prevent. Thus, further research is requested to determine whether these poverty elimination projects have helped the prevention of de-institutionalization.

According to UN Guidelines, the poverty factor alone should not be a reason to separate a child from their family before searching all ways to support the family in overcoming poverty issues (United Nations 2010). This paradox needs clarification and decide as to what parameters needs consideration when institutionalizing a child or preventing a child from becoming institutionalized. In the light of this research, a decision about the parameters required when considering whether institutionalization is absolutely necessary for the wellbeing of the family and the community.

[118] Paragraphs 23 (United Nations 2010, p. 5).

8.2 Improving the standard of care in a VCH within Kabeer's four institutions (household, community, market and State) to maximize life chances

8.2.1 Household: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the household

This study identifies that the major reason for institutionalization is poverty or adverse effects of poverty on households. Once the child is institutionalized, there is a higher potential for parents or the families to improve or stabilize their financial strengths. For example, a single parent may not be able to find work or engage in work since they have to care for the wellbeing of their child/ren. If the child has been institutionalized for this reason, the parent now receives the opportunity to find work or attend work. During institutionalization, the parent has less pressure financially or materially. This enables parent/s to save some money on their children's behalf and prepare for their reintegration. Weakness for the household is that they take it for granted and make no future plans for their child's reintegration. The threat is that children end up in long-term care and become victims of the consequences.

The major weakness of the family is their sense of failure. They think that their child has been institutionalized owing to their inability to care for the basic rights of their child and therefore they do not have the right to question the quality of care. Thus, they are hesitant and afraid to raise their voices against service providers, because of the associated shame. Furthermore, the opportunities, convenience and economic benefits that these parents enjoy while having their children in care prevents them from making complaints against either policy officers or caregivers. When the physical living standard in the institution is comparatively better than the child's home, parents tend to advise their children to tolerate any issues reminding them of the consequences if they have to leave. This situation is highly threatening to the child's life chances. This can only be addressed by the intervention of three other institutions; community, private sector or the state.

8.2.2 Community: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the community

Children's homes are managed and run by NGOs or welfare organizations, which belong to the community. Thus when analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the community as an institution for protecting human rights of institutionalized children, it is essential to discuss the community in general and the children's home in particular.

The staff of the children's home have the leading role to protect the human rights of children. The weakness is that they are less qualified, under paid and insufficiently trained (Chapter 6.1.3.1). This obviously threatens the opportunity to enhance the life chances of children during their institutionalization.

UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010, p. 4) states that:

> "All decisions concerning alternative care should take full account of the desirability, in principle, of maintaining the child as close as possible to his/her habitual place of residence, in order to facilitate contact and potential reintegration with his/her family and to minimize disruption of his/her educational, cultural and social life".

Where children's homes are situated close to each child's birth environments, protection of children's rights is comparatively high. The weakness is that most of the care institutions are situated in cities away from the habitual places of residence. This reduces the opportunities for the community to keep close contact with the child/ren and vice versa. When sending a child into a children's home, the officials have to consider where the vacant beds are rather than complying with the above guideline. It is not uncommon that children end up in homes far away from their natural birth environments and become part of different communities. The threat is that many children spend a longer period in these care settings and very quickly adapt to the social, cultural and religious environment in which their children's home is situated. It becomes a challenge for them to adjust to their own birth environment when they are reintegrated.

Socio-economic and cultural perspectives of Sri Lankan society have influenced the management of children's homes and the way the human rights of institutionalized children have been integrated in practice. Thus, institutionalized children are affected as a result of a range of socio-economic factors. The tradition of Dane (alms giving) explained in Chapter 6 is an enormous strength for the community to protect the human rights of institutionalized children. It eases the running cost of the children's homes. Dane provides opportunities to enhance the health and security aspect for children, promote quality social interaction, increase the standard of living and support for children's education. The weakness of this community support is that Dane consumes considerable time from other pursuits. There is a danger that children may come to believe that this is their fate – to be fed and supported by others. The weak outcomes of Dane which could be interpreted as teaching children to think in terms of welfare and dependency rather than thinking about their own rights, responsibilities and abilities needs to be addressed (Chapter 6.7.2).

8.2.3 Private sector: strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the private sector

Most of the children's homes are managed using funds from the private sector. Private sector involves individuals, associations, NGOs and INGOs etc. Some individuals or private organizations fund children or children's homes directly. Others fund the welfare organizations or the NGOs/INGOs that manage children's homes. What manifests from all these is that the private sector involvement is significant for protecting the rights of children in institutional care.

Some individuals and private sector organizations are concerned about whether their funds are directed to children appropriately. Many homes have not taken steps to prevent this understandable concern of the public. As a result of visiting homes donors tend to donate directly towards the financial and material needs of an individual child. When the management allows this

to happen it causes many governance concerns. When children receive gifts frequently without control, they become unconscious of the value in things. When the private sector is not allowed to perform ‘Dane’ the management of the children’s home miss the opportunity of further support from that donor. To avoid this threat of losing the private sector trust and support, there is an urgent need for open debate to educate the public about how most appropriately to use the funds (chapter 6.7.4). Best practice would be to encourage and provide access for the public to be well informed and to participate in management. This could maximise the public awareness of how their funds are being used to benefit the home.

While acknowledging the thoughts and deeds of the private sector as donors, governance practices of homes should be adapted to minimize the negative impact on the rights of children and their needs. The ‘children’s owned locker system’ and ‘ApiHappy’ projects help to protect rights of children (Chapter 7.3.2). The programs that demonstrate the public and private funds are used effectively are helpful strategies to eliminate negative perceptions. The transparency of these projects further encourages private sector contribution.

Paradoxically, the contribution of a well-maintained children’s home and a well-nurtured children cause the donors to think that funds are no longer needed. They should be convinced that their continuous support assists not only the initial generation of facilities but also to their ongoing maintenance (Chapter 6.7.4).

8.2.4 State: strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the State

If effectively used, the present administration structure of DPCCS is a good strength for the state to protect the human rights of institutionalized children. The role of PO is significant. Every VCH has been appointed a PO for regular review of the quality of the current and future care arrangements. This includes the investigation into the ongoing activities, facilities, children’s rights, holding of PCMs, reintegration possibilities, education and discussions with parents etc.

According to POs, in addition, their roll involves dealing with receiving homes, remand homes, certified schools, the preparation of files for court hearings and attending, then responding to court orders and many other duties. It is clearly a weakness of the system to expect such an extended job descriptions for one person. In reality, the PO is unable to fulfil many of the important roles. POs are forced to prioritize their own job list. According to a PO, much time is spent on preparing court files on juvenile offenders and participating in court hearings. If the judge perceives shortcoming of the PO, the emotional consequences are unbearable and there is shame about expressing this. When POs spend much time on court hearings there is less time to visit the children’s home to which they have been assigned.

The threat of this situation in terms of protecting rights of children is enormous. Without regular and effective investigation on VCHs from the perspective of the state, it is impossible to expect high

quality of governance practices. There are a number of issues that cannot be addressed with the children's home's effort alone. Eventually, it becomes difficult to implement one most important guideline (United Nations 2010, p. 3), which states:

> "All decisions, initiatives and approaches should be made on a case-by-case basis, with a view notably, to ensuring the child's safety and security, and must be grounded in the best interests and rights of the child …"

Applying for probable date of birth, sending children's home during holidays, holding PCMs and conducting ad hoc meetings to optimize reintegration opportunities have serious impacts without the involvement of the relevant PO.

These drawbacks of the state structure for protecting the rights of children must soon be addressed. PO's job specification should be reviewed and revised to enable him satisfactorily to deal with child rights issues of VCHs. These homes cover a significant portion of the total population in alternative care institutions. The state should address the opportunity to implement UN Guidelines (United Nations 2010, p. 5) as soon as possible, as it indicates in the paragraph 25:

> "States are responsible for determining any need for, and requesting international cooperation in implementing the present guidelines. Such requests should be given due consideration and should receive a favorable response wherever possible and appropriate. The enhanced implementation of the present Guidelines should figure in development cooperation programs. When providing assistance to a State, foreign entities should abstain from any initiatives inconsistent with the Guidelines."

8.3 Facilitating reintegration efforts to maximise life chances of institutionalised children: a synthesis of the strengths weaknesses, opportunities and threats within Kabeer's four institutions

A child has the right to visit or be visited by their parents or family members while they are staying in a children's home. The effectiveness of this right is dependent on how efficiently the family uses this opportunity. Frequent visits to the children's home by the family members, optimize the opportunity to become familiar with the life in the care institution. They can sense whether there had been any abuse or threat to abuse. This study indicates that only a few children's homes have implemented programs or facilities that encourage families to visit their children. This fact adversely affects the bond between the child and the family and threatens family togetherness. However, the logistic support to parents during their visits to children's homes and the 'Future savings project' conducted by children's homes are worthy governance practices, which promote reintegration (Chapter 7.3.2).

Institutionalized children are not educated about their rights and are not given an opportunity to voice their views. This study indicates the significance of involving the children in the PCMs and giving them the opportunity to raise their voice (Chapter 7.2.2). Children can easily feel threatened by adult reactions to their 'complaints'; and this prevents their openness. Parents or the family members are also mostly unaware of their rights. This is a threat to the protection of child's rights.

This study shows that parents / guardians have a very low attendance rate at the placement committee meetings, which are held every six months (Chapter 7.4.1).

Children should have the opportunity and be able to participate fully in the life of the community, which is local to the children's home. CRPOs and the POs have the capacity as representatives of the state for facilitating access to the community resources and activities for children. The children's home staff should maximize access for their children to community resources and activities as if they are permanent residents in the community. This strengthens children's skills to re-establish in their habitual environment when they are reintegrated.

A manager's perception that during the socialization process, boys tend to receive more job opportunities than the girls (Chapter 7.3.3) can be resolved by the contribution of the private sector. The state can mediate in this regard for gender mainstreaming by holding awareness programs for private sector managerial staffs. The threat of underpayment of wages, gender based discrimination within the work place, exploitative and abusive living arrangements need to be addressed. The state should involve in formalizing regulations, promoting them and by continuous supervision.

A commissioner's perspective that community organizations and NGOs incline more towards building boys' homes when there are existing vacant beds, need urgent attention (Chapter 3.4.3). State should not allow extra facilities to be built when the UN Guidelines state "where large residential (institutions) care facilities remain alternatives should be developed in the context of an overall deinstitutionalization strategy". The strength and the willingness of the society should be acknowledged and encouraged to transform their desires towards gender mainstreaming and the process of reintegration.

The state has the strength to change the organizational culture that fails to recognize the significance of returning children to the household of their birth environments. The need for a care plan, which involves children and their parents as well as sharing information, is important. The care plan needs to be reviewed regularly with parents and families. The weakness is that the staff in children's homes lack training on preparing and maintaining care plans for children.

8.4 Final Remarks

The promotion of human rights in terms of the best interests of the child in care is a duty of all 'institutions' operating in Sri Lanka. Success of this endeavor demands every one of the institutions to contribute their strengths and opportunities. At the same time, there is a need to learn from their previous weaknesses and the threats that any mistake would be a risk for the life chances of children. It is unreasonable for the state to continue finding excuses like blaming colonization, terrorism or the civil war for having destroyed the traditional values, national unity and religious harmony. The state should strive to reestablish the values and norms among the communities with the mission that demonstrates "Children do not belong to care institutions and they belong to caring households". Where in difficult situations, communities should be equipped to take the leadership with the private sector and the state to support families in raising their children within their households.

The review of the existing governance practices in children's homes demonstrates the need for a reform in the existing guidelines (The General Standards and the Grading Criteria) with the right interpretation of international legal instruments such as the UNCRC and the UN Guidelines. This practice would lead not only to prevent institutionalization but also to facilitate deinstitutionalization. The 'User centric policy concept' (Chapter 5), 'the theory informed practical framework' (Chapter 6) and 'the reintegration pathway' (Chapter 7), that have been introduced through this study, guide the policy and governance dimensions of all four 'institutions': household, community, private sector and State, in achieving this goal. It also addresses women's employment opportunities as a way to prevent the institutionalization of children by highlighting the need to strengthen family and community supports by adapting and extending the capabilities approach through drawing on Kabeer's SRA approach and Max-Neef's Human Scale Development.

The findings and the recommendations of this study provide a strong basis for the design of admission, care and reintegration processes for voluntary children's homes. Furthermore, it provides directions to policy makers and researchers on policy and services relevant to the needs of young people and their families; information to service providers on practical implications for child protection and out of home care services, and guidance to those caregivers who are charged with the difficult and challenging responsibility of protecting children in children's homes. Thus, the thesis makes a specific contribution to praxis by addressing the policy barriers and governance challenges pertaining to the life chances of children.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Ethics Approval Notice

MODIFICATION (No.1) APPROVAL NOTICE

Project No.:	**5684**
Project Title:	Life chances of children and young people in institutional care in Sri Lanka: A critical review of policy and governance with reference to case studies
Principal Researcher:	Mr Loku Badaturuge Nevika Eshantha Ariyadasa
Email:	Loku0004@flinders.edu.au
Modification Approval Date:	22 June 2015
Ethics Approval Expiry Date:	**25 August 2016**

I am pleased to inform you that the extension of time / ethics approval expiry date request submitted for project 5684 on the 22 June 2015 has been reviewed and approved by the SBREC Chairperson.

Approved Modification	
Extension of ethics approval expiry date (ONLY)	X

RESPONSIBILITIES OF RESEARCHERS AND SUPERVISORS

1. **Participant Documentation**
   please note that it is the responsibility of researchers and supervisors, in the case of student projects, to ensure that:
   - all participant documents are checked for spelling, grammatical, numbering and formatting errors. The Committee does not accept any responsibility for the above mentioned errors.
   - the Flinders University logo is included on all participant documentation (e.g., letters of Introduction, information Sheets, consent forms, debriefing information and questionnaires – with the exception of purchased research tools) and the current Flinders University letterhead is included in the header of all letters of introduction. The Flinders University international logo/letterhead should be used and documentation should contain international dialling codes for all telephone and fax numbers listed for all research to be conducted overseas.
   - the SBREC contact details, listed below, are included in the footer of all letters of introduction and information sheets.

   This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project Number 'INSERT PROJECT No. here following approval'). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au

2. **Annual Progress / Final Reports**
   Please be reminded that in order to comply with the monitoring requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (March 2007)* an annual progress report must be submitted each year on **20 August** (approval anniversary date) for the duration of the ethics approval.

   If the project is completed *before* ethics approval has expired please ensure a final report is submitted immediately. If ethics approval for your project expires please submit either (1) a final report; or (2) an extension of time request and an annual report.

Student Projects

The SBREC recommends that current ethics approval is maintained until a student's thesis has been submitted, reviewed and approved. This is to protect the student in the event that reviewers recommend some changes that may include the collection of additional participant data.

Your next report is due on **20 August 2017** or on completion of the project, whichever is the earliest. The report template is available from the Managing Your Ethics Approval SBREC web page. *Please retain this notice for reference when completing annual progress or final reports.*

3. Modifications to Project

Modifications to the project must not proceed until approval has been obtained from the Ethics Committee. Such proposed changes / modifications include:

- Change of project title;
- Change to research team (e.g., additions, removals, principal researcher or supervisor change);
- Changes to research objectives;
- Changes to research protocol;
- Changes to participant recruitment methods;
- Changes / additions to source(s) of participants;
- Changes of procedures used to seek informed consent;
- Changes to reimbursements provided to participants;
- Changes / additions to information and/or documentation to be provided to potential participants;
- Changes to research tools (e.g., questionnaire, interview questions, focus group questions);
- Extensions of time.

To notify the Committee of any proposed modifications to the project please complete and submit the *Modification Request Form* which is available from the Managing Your Ethics Approval SBREC web page. Download the form from the website every time a new modification request is submitted to ensure that the most recent form is used. Please note that extension of time requests should be submitted prior to the Ethics Approval Expiry Date listed on this notice.

Change of Contact Details

Please ensure that you notify the Executive Officer if either your mailing or email address changes to ensure that correspondence relating to this project can be sent to you. A modification request is not required to change your contact details.

4. Adverse Events and/or Complaints

Researchers should advise the Executive Officer of the Ethics Committee on 08 8201-3116 or human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au immediately if:

- any complaints regarding the research are received;
- a serious or unexpected adverse event occurs that effects participants;
- an unforeseen event occurs that may affect the ethical acceptability of the project.

Kind regards
Andrea

Mrs Andrea Fiegert and Ms Rae Tyler

Ethics Officers and Executive Officer, Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee

Andrea - Telephone: +61 8 8201-3116 | Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday

Rae – Telephone: +61 8 8201-7938 | ½ day Wednesday, Thursday and Friday

Email: human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au

Web: Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (SBREC)

Appendix 2: Approval letter from the Minister of Social Welfare - NWP

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Gunadasa Dehigama
Provincial Minister
Organizer of SLFP - Kurunegala District
සමාජ සුභසාධන, පරිවාස හා ළමාරක්ෂක, වනිතා කටයුතු, ග්‍රාමීය කර්මාන්ත සංවර්ධන සහ ග්‍රාම සංවර්ධන අමාත්‍යාංශය - වයඹ පළාත.
சமூக நலன்புரி, சிறுவர் பாதுகாப்பு நன்னடத்தை, மகளிர் விவகாரமும், கிராமிய கைத்தொழில், கிராமிய ஆபிவிருத்தி அமைச்சு – வடமேல் மாகாணம்
Ministry of Social Welfare, Probation & Childcare, women's Affairs, Rural Industries Development and Rural Development - N. W. P.

මගේ අංකය: உமது இலக்கம் Your No.	මගේ අංකය: எமது இலக்கம் My No.	NWP/MSW/1	දිනය: திகதி Date	2012.05.30

Dr Janet McIntyre

Associate Professor

School of Social and Policy Studies

Flinders University

Adelaide, SA 5042

Australia

Dear Professor,

Granting permission to interview professionals and distribution of questionnaires amongprofessionals for a research study leading to a PhD Thesis conducted by Mr. EshanthaAriyadasa

I have known to Mr. EshanthaAriyadasa as a service provider and as a practitioner of a Voluntary Children's Home, since 2009. His Children Home was adjudged the Best Orphanage of the Province and graded "A" in year 2000.

I was very much pleased knowing that he has been awarded an Australia Awards Endeavour Scholarship and reading for his PhD in the School of Social and Policy Studies at Flinders University. Further, his decision to select the research theme, "Life chances of children and young people in alternative; critical review of policy and governance with references to case studies", is very much appreciated and his endeavour will definitely bring credits to our motherland and much benefits to the thousands of children in alternative care at orphanages.

2 වන මහල, පළාත් සභා සංකීර්ණය - කුරුණෑගල.
2 ம். மாடி, மாகாண சபை பணிமனைத் தொகுதி - குருனாகல்.
2 nd Floor, Provincial Council Office Complex, Kurunegala.
දුරකථන தொலைபேசி Telephone: කාර්යාලය காரியாலயம் Office: 037/2228847, 037/2227959
නිවස இல்லம் Residence: 037/2247610, 071/8247610
ෆැක්ස් பெக்ஸ் Fax: 037/2227959

I have no hesitation in granting him permission for the followings,

1. Interviewing following professionals
   1.1 Policy makers (Commissioner and relevant professionals of the Dept. of Probation and Child Care Services)
   1.2 Service Providers (Managers of NGOs and Welfare charity Organizations)

2. Distribution of questionnaires among following professionals
   2.1 Policy officers (Probation officers of Dept. of Probation and Child Care Services)
   2.2 Policy Practitioners (Matrons and Wardens of orphanages)

He can use this letter as a proof of recommendation when seeking appointments from relevant professionals for the interviewing process and when requesting contact numbers and addresses from relevant departments for the distribution of questionnaires among policy conveyors and practitioners.

I expect him to keep the confidentiality and anonymity of all the information provided to him by the professionals and use them only for the purpose of preparation of his Doctoral Thesis and other publications relevant to his study.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in this regard.

Yours Sincerely,

GUNADASA DEHIGAMA
PROVINCIAL MINISTER
Ministry of Social Welfare,
Probation & Childcare, Women's Affairs,
Rural Industries Development and
Rural Development - N.W.P

Hon. GunadasaDehigama

Minister for Social Welfare, Probation and Child Care Services,

Rural Industries Development, Rural Development and Women Affairs.

Copies:

1. Provincial Commissioner (Dept. of Probation and Child Care services)
2. Chairmen/Managers (Non-Government Organizations, NWP)
3. District Secretary (District Secretariat, Kurunegala)
4. Divisional Secretary (Divisional Secretariat, Weerambugedara)
5. Mr. EshanthaAriyadasa, 47 Aver avenue Daw Park SA 5041 Australia

Appendix 3: Recommendation letter from the Commissioner of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services - NWP

පරිවාස හා ළමාරක්ෂක සේවා දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව
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நன்னடத்தை, சிறுவர் பராமரிப்பு சேவைத் திணைக்களம்
வடமேல் மாகாணம் – குருணாகல்
Department of Probation & Childcare Services
North Western Province - Kurunegala.

Your No:

My No: NW/PCS/1/2/15

Date: 2012.05.30

Prof. Janet McIntyre

School of Social and Policy Studies

Flinders University, Adelaide, SA

Australia

Dear Professor,

Recommendation: PhD Research study undertaken by Mr. Eshantha Ariyadasa of Flinders University, Adelaide, South Australia.

It is my pleasant duty to thank Prof. Janet McIntyre for guiding Mr. Eshantha Ariyadasa for a research study titled "Life chances of children and young people in alternative care in Sri Lanka", which can be recognized as a very vital and imperative current topic to be discoursed.

The Department of Probation and Child Care Services, NWP is comprised of two Districts namely Kurunegala and Puttlam. These two Districts are headed by two Senior Probation Officers. North Western Province is divided into eight Probation Office Units and these units are employed by both Class I and Class II Probation officers. There is a management carder for eight Class I Probation Officers and twenty three Class II Probation Officers in the North Western Province. These probation officers are often charged with the most difficult task of collecting information of children and young people deprived of parental care and recommending them for alternative care at orphanages or other well-being. When improving quality of life and enhancing life chances of children under alternative care at orphanages, probation officers as policy officers play a major role in the implementation process of policies into practice. Therefore, I strongly recommend Eshantha's decision in selecting a sample group of probation officers for gathering information on policy and governance of orphanages, leading to his PhD thesis on life chances of children and young people in alternative care.

Telephone: Office 037/2224796 Provincial Commissioner 037/4932030 Fax 037/4932030 E-mail pccsnwpc@sltnet.lk
No. 02, Dambulla Road - Kurunegala.

I, as the Commissioner of the Department of Probation and Child care Services, NWP, without any hesitation would like to render my fullest cooperation to Mr. Eshantha Ariyadasa while his research study undertaken in Sri Lanka. I will soon make available the contact details and the addresses of the Probation Officers who can voluntarily participate the quantitative approach of Mr. Eshantha's research by responding to the questionnaire made available to them.

I wish him good luck with his research studies.

Yours Sincerely,

P. B. WICKRAMASINGHE
Provincial Commissioner
Department of Probation
and Childcare Services
(N. W. P.)
KURUNEGALA.

P. B. Wickramasinghe

Commissioner, Department of Probation and Child Care Services

North Western Province

Copy:

Mr. Eshantha Ariyadasa

47 Aver Avenue

Daw Park SA 5041

Australia

Appendix 4: Recommendation letter from the Director of the Department of Social Services - NWP

සමාජ සේවා දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව (වයඹ පළාත)
சமூக சேவைகள் திணைக்களம் (வடமேல்)
Department of Social Services (North Western Province)

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		2012.05.30.

Prof. Janet McIntyre,
School of Social and Policy Studies,
Flinders University, Australia,

Dear Professor,

Recommendation for a research study leading to the PhD Thesis conducted by Mr. EshanthaAriyadasa

I have no hesitation in recommending Mr. EshanthaAriyadasa to undertake his survey leading to a PhD Thesis in the context of policy and governance of institutions responsible for children in alternative care at orphanages in the North Western Province.

In Sri Lanka, Voluntary Children Orphanages are conducted and humanitarian services are provided by non-government organizations and welfare organizations. Therefore, interviewing the Managers of the above organizations can be regarded as an important measure when undergoing a research entitled "Life chances of children and young people in alternative care at orphanages in Sri Lanka". Evaluation of these professionals' experiences and the problems encountered by them when accomplishing the objectives of these organizations with references to the enhancement of quality of life of the children in alternative care will be vital when implementing guidelines to improve the life chances of the same.

Please advise Eshantha to meet me prior to the commencement of his research study. I can help him with the selection process of the list of NGOs that are responsible for the provision of humanitarian services to children in orphanages care.

I wish him all success with his research studies under your supervision.

Yours Sincerely,

Kamal Amarasinghe
Provincial Director
Department of Social Services (NWP)
Kurunegala

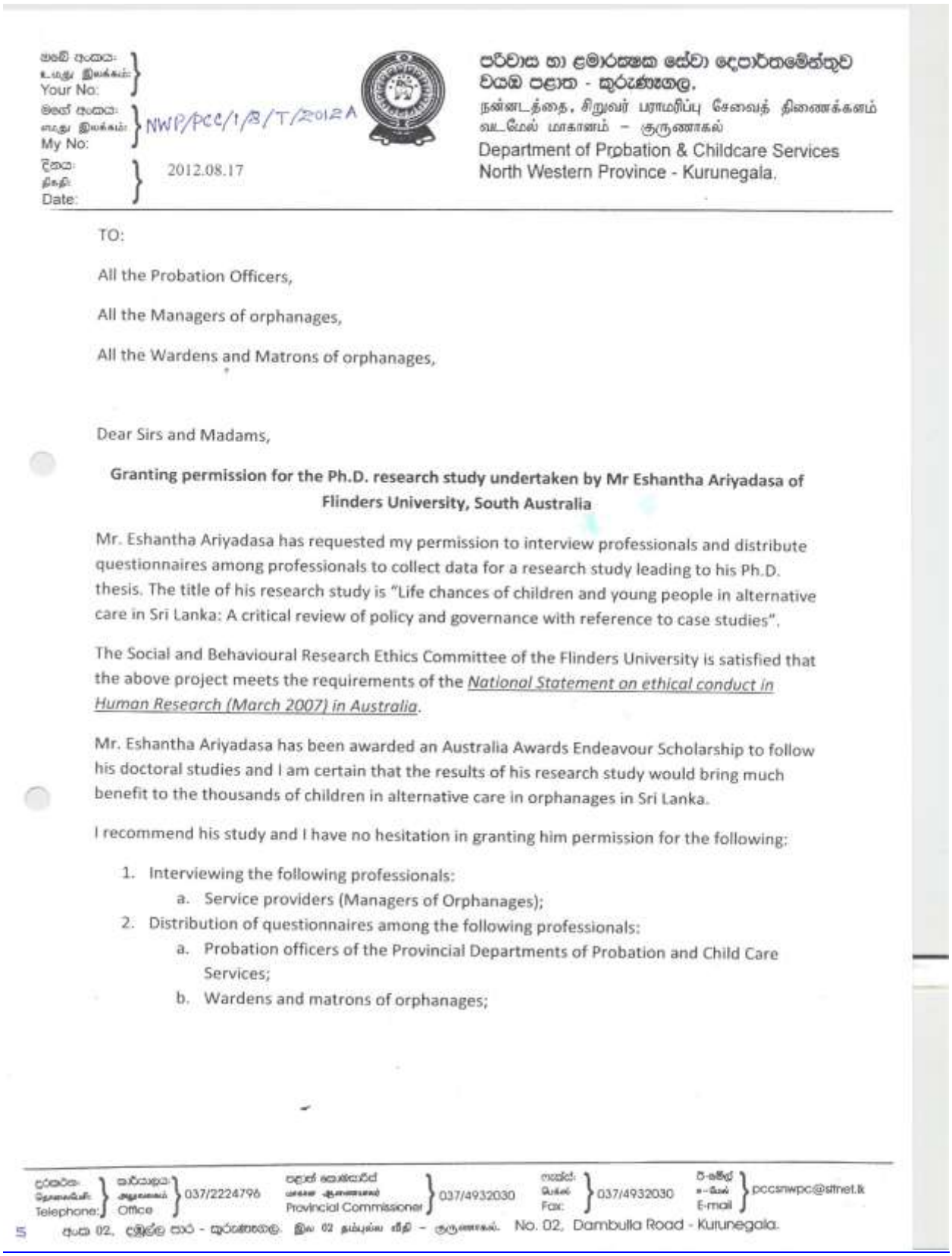
Kamal Amarasinghe,
Director,
Department of Social Services,
North Western Province.

Copy: Mr. EshanthaAriyadasa, 47 Aver AvenueDaw Park SA 5041 Australia

නව කළුත් පහ සංකීර්ණය, කුරුණෑගල.
புதிய மாகாண சபை கட்டிடத்தொகுதி, குருணாகல்.
New Office Complex, Kurunegala.

අධ්‍යක්ෂ / பணிப்பாளர் / Director	037 - 2224976	කාර්යාල / அலுவலகம் / Office	037 - 2223484	ෆැක්ස් / தொலை / Fax	037-2224976	විද්‍යුත් තැපෑල / மின் அஞ்சல் / E mail	socialservices@sltnet.lk

Appendix 5: Covering letter from the Commissioner of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services - NWP



පරිවාස හා ළමාරක්ෂක සේවා දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව
වයඹ පළාත - කුරුණෑගල.
நன்னடத்தை, சிறுவர் பராமரிப்பு சேவைத் திணைக்களம்
வடமேல் மாகாணம் – குருணாகல்
Department of Probation & Childcare Services
North Western Province - Kurunegala.

Your No:
My No: NWP/PCC/1/B/T/2012A
Date: 2012.08.17

TO:

All the Probation Officers,

All the Managers of orphanages,

All the Wardens and Matrons of orphanages,

Dear Sirs and Madams,

Granting permission for the Ph.D. research study undertaken by Mr Eshantha Ariyadasa of Flinders University, South Australia

Mr. Eshantha Ariyadasa has requested my permission to interview professionals and distribute questionnaires among professionals to collect data for a research study leading to his Ph.D. thesis. The title of his research study is "Life chances of children and young people in alternative care in Sri Lanka: A critical review of policy and governance with reference to case studies".

The Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee of the Flinders University is satisfied that the above project meets the requirements of the *National Statement on ethical conduct in Human Research (March 2007) in Australia*.

Mr. Eshantha Ariyadasa has been awarded an Australia Awards Endeavour Scholarship to follow his doctoral studies and I am certain that the results of his research study would bring much benefit to the thousands of children in alternative care in orphanages in Sri Lanka.

I recommend his study and I have no hesitation in granting him permission for the following:

1. Interviewing the following professionals:
    a. Service providers (Managers of Orphanages);
2. Distribution of questionnaires among the following professionals:
    a. Probation officers of the Provincial Departments of Probation and Child Care Services;
    b. Wardens and matrons of orphanages;

Telephone: Office 037/2224796 Provincial Commissioner 037/4932030 Fax: 037/4932030 E-mail pccsnwpc@sltnet.lk

No. 02, Dambulla Road - Kurunegala.

3. To access child orphanage records that include all known biographical data about the child, the parents' situation and any kinds of abuse that the child has been subjected to;
4. To access the grading results of the competitions held among orphanages.

I expect Mr. Eshantha Ariyadasa to maintain the anonymity of the professionals and confidentiality of all the information provided to him and to use them only for the purpose of preparation of his doctoral thesis and other publications relevant to his study.

Please be kind enough to provide your fullest cooperation for his research study.

Yours sincerely,

T.P. WICKRAMASINGHE
Provincial Commisioner
Department of Probation
and Childcare Services
KURUNEGALA.

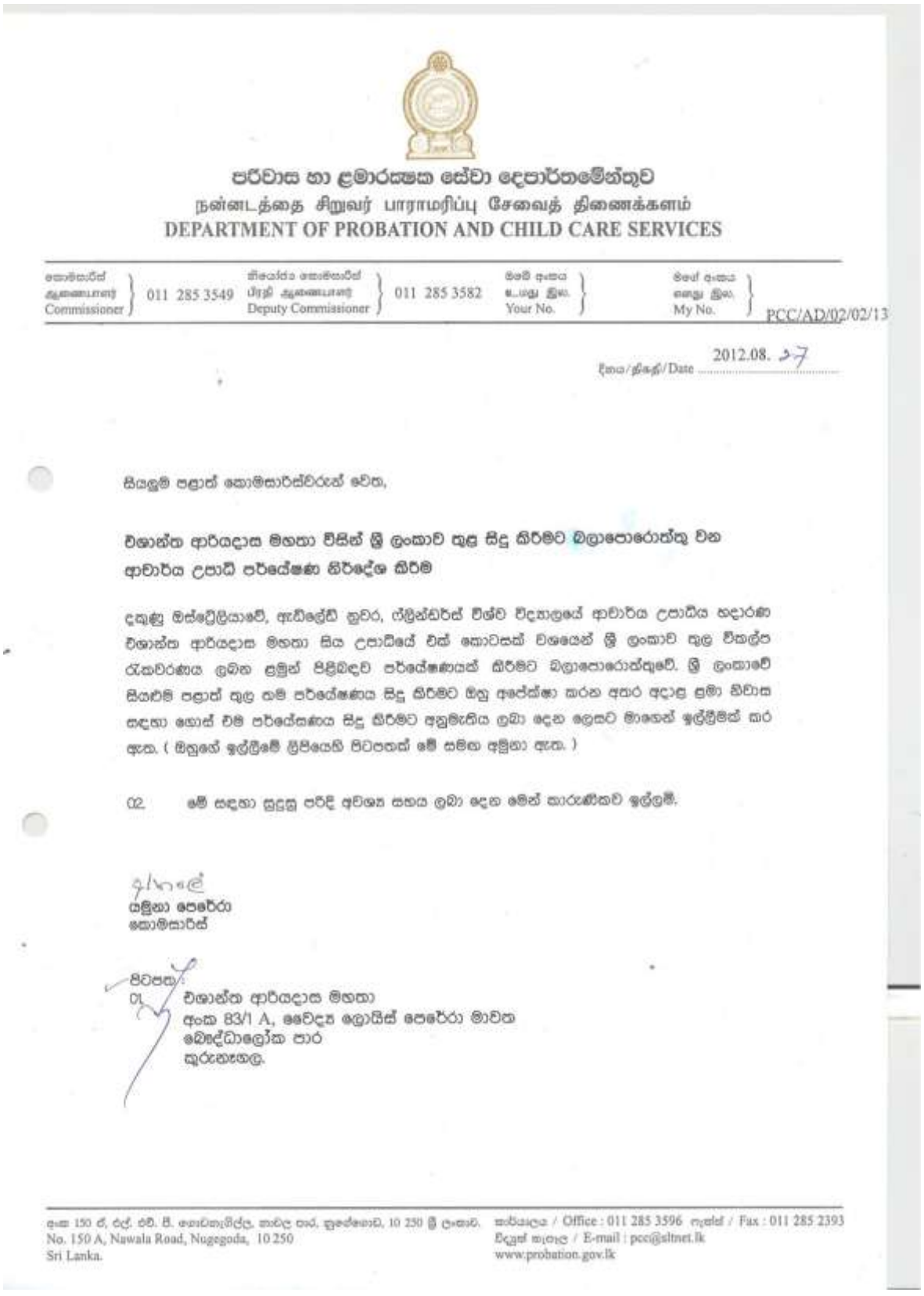
Commissioner

The Department of Probation and Child Care Services

Copies:

1. Prof. Janet McIntyre – School of Social and Policy Studies, Flinders University, SA
2. Provincial Minister of Social Services and Probation and Child Care
3. Eshantha Ariyadasa – (Researcher) Flinders University, South Australia

Appendix 6: Recommendation letter from the National Commissioner of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services



පරිවාස හා ළමාරක්ෂක සේවා දෙපාර්තමේන්තුව
நன்னடத்தை சிறுவர் பாராமரிப்பு சேவைத் திணைக்களம்
DEPARTMENT OF PROBATION AND CHILD CARE SERVICES

කොමිසාරිස් ஆணையாளர் Commissioner 011 285 3549 නියෝජ්‍ය කොමිසාරිස් பிரதி ஆணையாளர் Deputy Commissioner 011 285 3582 ඔබේ අංකය உமது இல. Your No. මගේ අංකය எமது இல. My No. PCC/AD/02/02/13

දිනය/திகதி/Date 2012.08. 27

සියලුම පළාත් කොමිසාරිස්වරුන් වෙත,

විශාන්ත ආරියදාස මහතා විසින් ශ්‍රී ලංකාව තුළ සිදු කිරීමට බලාපොරොත්තු වන ආචාර්ය උපාධි පර්යේෂණ නිර්දේශ කිරීම

දකුණු ඔස්ට්‍රේලියාවේ, ඇඩිලේඩ් නුවර, ෆ්ලින්ඩර්ස් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ ආචාර්ය උපාධිය හදාරණ විශාන්ත ආරියදාස මහතා සිය උපාධියේ එක් කොටසක් විශයෙන් ශ්‍රී ලංකාව තුළ විකල්ප රැකවරණය ලබන ළමුන් පිළිබඳව පර්යේෂණයක් කිරීමට බලාපොරොත්තුවේ. ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ සියළුම පළාත් තුළ තම පර්යේෂණය සිදු කිරීමට ඔහු අපේක්ෂා කරන අතර අදාළ ළමා නිවාස සඳහා ගොස් එම පර්යේෂණය සිදු කිරීමට අනුමැතිය ලබා දෙන ලෙසට මාගෙන් ඉල්ලීමක් කර ඇත. (ඔහුගේ ඉල්ලීමේ ප්‍රිපියෙහි පිටපතක් මේ සමඟ අමුණා ඇත.)

02. මේ සඳහා සුදුසු පරිදි අවශ්‍ය සහය ලබා දෙන මෙන් කාරුණිකව ඉල්ලමි.

යමුනා පෙරේරා
කොමිසාරිස්

පිටපත:
01. විශාන්ත ආරියදාස මහතා
අංක 83/1 A, වෛද්‍ය ලොයිස් පෙරේරා මාවත
බෞද්ධාලෝක පාර
කුරුනෑගල.

අංක 150 ඒ, නවල පාර, නුගේගොඩ, 10 250 ශ්‍රී ලංකාව.
No. 150 A, Nawala Road, Nugegoda, 10 250
Sri Lanka.
කාර්යාලය / Office : 011 285 3596 ෆැක්ස් / Fax : 011 285 2393
විද්‍යුත් තැපෑල / E-mail : pcc@sltnet.lk
www.probation.gov.lk

Appendix 7: Letter of Introduction

School of Social and Policy Studies
Room 386, Social Sciences South
GPO Box 2100
Adelaide SA 5001
Tel: +61 8 8201 2075
Fax: +61 8 8201 5111
janet.mcintyre@flinders.edu.au
www.ssn.flinders.edu.au/fippm
CRICOS Provider No. 00114A

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

Dear Sir / madam,

This letter is to introduce Mr. Eshantha Ariyadasa who is a PhD student in the School of Social and Policy Studies at Flinders University. He will produce his student card, which carries a photograph, as proof of identity.

He is undertaking research leading to the production of a thesis or other publications on the subject of "Life chances of children and young people in alternative care in Sri Lanka: A critical review of policy and governance with reference to case studies".

He would be most grateful if you would volunteer to assist in this project, by granting an interview which covers certain aspects of this topic. No more than thirty minutes on one occasion would be required.

Be assured that any information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and none of the participants will be individually identifiable in the resulting thesis, report or other publications. You are, of course, entirely free to discontinue your participation at any time or to decline to answer particular questions.

Since he intends to make a tape recording of the interview, he will seek your consent, on the attached form, to record the interview, to use the recording or a transcription in preparing the thesis, report or other publications, on condition that your name or identity is not revealed, and to make the recording available to other researchers on the same conditions. It may be necessary to make the recording available to secretarial assistants for transcription, in which case you may be assured that such persons will be advised of the requirement that your name or identity not be revealed and that the confidentiality of the material is respected and maintained.

Any enquiries you may have concerning this project should be directed to me at the address given above or by telephone on +61 8 8201 2075, by fax on +61 8 8201 5111, or by email (janetmcintyre@flinders.edu.au).

Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Yours sincerely

Dr Janet McIntyre
Associate Professor
Higher Degrees co-ordinator
School of Social and Policy Studies
Flinders University of South Australia

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project Number .....). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au.

inspiring achievement

Appendix 8: Letter of Introduction (Sinhala translation)

සමාජ සහ ප්‍රතිපත්ති අධ්‍යයන පීඨය
385, සමාජ විද්‍යා දකුණු ගොඩනැගිල්ල
GPO Box 2100
ඇඩිලේඩ්, දකුණු ඕස්ට්‍රේලියාව 5001
Tel : +61 8 8201 7975
Fax : +61 8 8201 5111
loku0004@flinders.edu.au

හඳුන්වාදීමේ ලිපිය

මහත්මයාණනි, මහත්මියණි,

ඕස්ට්‍රේලියාවේ, ෆ්ලින්ඩර්ස් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ, සමාජ හා ප්‍රතිපත්ති අධ්‍යයන පීඨයේ ආචාර්ය උපාධිය හදාරණ එහාන්ත ආරියදාස වන මා හඳුන්වා දෙනු පිණිස, මෙම ලිපිය ඔබ අතට පත් කරමි.

"ශ්‍රී ලංකාව තුල විකල්ප රැකවරණය ලබන ළමුන්ගේ ජීවන අවස්ථා පිළිබඳව, ප්‍රතිපත්ති සහ පාලන විධි මූලික කරගත් කරුණු අධ්‍යයනයක් සිදු කිරීම" තේමාව කරගත් මගේ ආචාර්ය උපාධි නිබන්දයට, ශ්‍රී ලංකාව තුල සිදු කරන පර්යේෂණයක් ද ඇතුලත්ය.

ඉහත නිබන්දයේ මාතෘකා කිහිපයකට අදාලව කරුණු රැස් කිරීම සඳහා ඔබගේ ස්වේච්ඡාමය දායකත්වය, සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණයකට සහභාගි වීමෙන් ලබා දෙන මෙන් කාරුණිකව ඉල්ලා සිටිමි.

ඔබ විසින් ලබා දෙන සියළුම විස්තරවල රහස්‍යභාවය ඉතා කැපවීමෙන් ආරක්ෂා කරන බවටත්, පුද්ගලික රහස්‍යභාවය රැකෙන පරිදි නිබන්දයට අදාල කරුණු ඇතුලත් කරන බවටත් පොරොන්දු වෙමි. ඕනෑම අවස්ථාවක දී, සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණයට සහභාගි වීම ප්‍රතික්ෂේප කිරීමේ අයිතිය හා යම් ප්‍රශ්නවලට පිලිතුරු දීම ප්‍රතික්ෂේප කිරීමේ අයිතිය ඔබට ඇති බවටත් දන්වා සිටිමි.

පසු අධ්‍යයනය සඳහා, ඔබගේ සම්මුඛ පරීක්ෂණය පැටිගත කිරීමේ අයිතිය මට ලබා දෙන මෙන්ද, භාවිතයෙන් පසු, එම සියළුම පැටි විනාශ කරන බවටත් පොරොන්දු වෙමි. පර්යේෂණ කණ්ඩායමේ වෙනත් අයෙකු එම පැටිගත කිරීම් භාවිතා කලද, ඒවායේ රහස්‍යභාවය සහ පුද්ගල රහස්‍යභාවය රැකෙන පරිදි භාවිතා කරන බවද වගකීමෙන් දන්වා සිටිමි. මෙම පර්යේෂණය පිළිබඳ ඕනෑම විස්තරයක් ඉහත ලිපිනයෙන් හෝ දුරකථන අංක +61 8 8201 7975, ෆැක්ස් +61 8 8201 5111 හෝ විද්‍යුත් ලිපින loku0004@flinders.edu.au මගින් අමතන මෙන් ගෞරවයෙන් ඉල්ලා සිටිමි.

ඔබේ අවධානයට සහ සහයෝගයට ඉතා ස්තුතිවන්ත වෙමි.

මෙයට විශ්වාසී වූ

.....
එහාන්ත ආරියදාස
පර්යේෂණ උසස් උපාධි (ආචාර්ය උපාධි අපේක්ෂක)
සමාජ හා ප්‍රතිපත්ති අධ්‍යයන පීඨය
ෆ්ලින්ඩර්ස් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලය
දකුණු ඕස්ට්‍රේලියාව

මෙම පර්යේෂණ ව්‍යාපෘතිය ෆ්ලින්ඩර්ස් විශ්ව විද්‍යාලයේ සමාජ හා හැසිරීම් පර්යේෂණ සදාචාර කමිටුව විසින් අනුමත කරනු ලැබ ඇත. (ව්‍යාපෘති අංකය .....). වැඩි විස්තර, දුරකථන අංක +61 8 8201 3116 ෆැක්ස් අංක +61 8 8201 2035 හෝ විද්‍යුත් ලිපින human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au අමතා විධායක නිලධාරි මෙතින් ලබා ගත හැකිය.

Appendix 9: Information sheet

Flinders UNIVERSITY
ADELAIDE • AUSTRALIA

School of Social and Policy Studies
Room 386, Social Sciences South
GPO Box 2100
Adelaide SA 5001
Australia

INFORMATION SHEET

Title: 'Life chances of children and young people in alternative care in Sri Lanka: A critical review of policy and governance with reference to case studies'.

Investigators:
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Description of the study:
This study is part of the project entitled 'Life chances of children and young people in Sri Lanka: A critical review of policy and governance with reference to case studies'. This project will investigate life chances of children and young people who are being cared in orphanages and develop policy implications for orphanages in Sri Lanka. This project is supported by Flinders University School of Social and Policy Studies.

Purpose of the study:
The purpose of my study is to discuss and suggest most suitable and viable method/s as alternative care for children who have been deprived parental care or who are at risk. The objective is to identify and inform the policies and practices that have to be reviewed and revised. This is in order to achieve better outcomes so that the children in alternative care in Sri Lanka are able to achieve the full potential of their life chances. Finally, my thesis will add knowledge to the existing policies and practices by producing a set of guidelines for institutions responsible for alternative care of children. This will aim to ensure that children in the Orphanages have the standard of care and life chances they deserve for them to reach their full potential and to integrate into our society as effective and productive citizens in the social and economic development of Sri Lanka.

What will I be asked to do?
You are invited to attend a one-to-one interview with me and/or my co-researcher or you will be requested to respond to a questionnaire. We will ask you a few questions about your involvement and contribution towards the protection of Child Rights of children in alternative care at orphanages. Further, you will be asked to exchange experience and knowledge of how existing policies and guidelines for alternative care of children have helped to increase their quality of life and to enhance their life chances. The interview will take about 30 minutes and will be recorded using a digital voice recorder to help with looking at the results. Once recorded, the interview will be transcribed and saved as a computer file and then deleted once the results have been finalised. Your participation is expected in fully voluntary basis.

What benefit will I gain from being involved in this study?
The sharing of your experiences and knowledge will add information towards the understanding and interpretation of new policies and guidelines into governance within the institutions responsible for alternative care of children. Although you gain no tangible benefits by participation to this research, you can be satisfied by knowing that your effort has been contributed to a worthy cause in the sphere of social well-being of children in alternative care.

Will I be identifiable by being involved in this study?
We do not need your name and therefore you will be anonymous in this venture. The interviewees can write their initials on the consent form instead writing their names or placing their signatures. Once the interview has been typed-up and saved as a file, the voice file will then be destroyed. Any identifying information will be removed and the typed-up file will be stored in my office computer at Flinders University and secured by a password that only the supervisors will have access to. Your comments will not at all be linked directly to you.

Are there any risks or discomforts if I am involved?
My co-researcher may be able to identify your contributions. The Tamil Language interpreter involved in the transcribing process will have access to your information even though he/she will not be directly attributed to you. The confidentiality of the information provided by you and the anonymity will be strictly safeguarded by all the research members at all times. Therefore, any risks or discomforts of your involvement are brought close to null.

How do I agree to participate?
Participation is fully voluntary. You may answer 'no comment' or refuse to answer any questions and you are free to withdraw from the participation at any time without effect or consequences. A consent form accompanies this information sheet. If you agree to participate the interview, please read and sign the form and hand it over to me prior to the interview.

How will I receive feedback?
Outcomes from the project will be summarised and given to you by the researcher, if you would like to see them.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and we hope that you will accept my invitation to be involved in this research.

.....

Eshantha Ariyadasa
Research Higher Degree PhD Candidate
School of Social and Policy Studies
Flinders University

This research project has been approved by the Flinders University Social and Behavioural Research Ethics Committee (Project number: 5684). For more information regarding ethical approval of the project the Executive Officer of the Committee can be contacted by telephone on 8201 3116, by fax on 8201 2035 or by email human.researchethics@flinders.edu.au

Appendix 10: Consent form for participation in research

Flinders
UNIVERSITY

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

(by interview)

"Life chances of children and young people in alternative care in Sri Lanka: A critical review of policy and governance with reference to case studies"

I .....

being over the age of 18 years hereby consent to participate as requested in the 'Letter of Introduction' and 'Information Sheet' for the research project on "Life chances of children and young people in alternative care in Sri Lanka: A critical review of policy and governance with reference to case studies".

1. I have read the information provided.
2. Details of procedures and any risks have been explained to my satisfaction.
3. I agree to audio recording of my information.
4. I am aware that I should retain a copy of the Information Sheet and Consent Form for future reference.
5. I understand that:
   - I may not directly benefit from taking part in this research.
   - I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and am free to decline to answer particular questions.
   - While the information gained in this study will be published as explained, I will not be identified, and individual information will remain confidential.
   - Whether I participate or not, or withdraw after participating, will have no effect on any treatment or service that is being provided to me.
   - Whether I participate or not, or withdraw after participating, will have no effect on my progress in my course of study, or results gained.
   - I may ask that the recording be stopped at any time, and that I may withdraw at any time from the session or the research without disadvantage.
6. I agree/do not agree* to the tape/transcript* being made available to other researchers who are not members of this research team, but who are judged by the research team to be doing related research, on condition that my identity is not revealed. ** delete as appropriate*

Participant's signature.....**Date**.....

I certify that I have explained the study to the volunteer and consider that she/he understands what is involved and freely consents to participation.

Researcher's name.....

Researcher's signature.....**Date**.....

E:\Thesis Documents\Post documents\4.1 Consent Form (English).doc
Updated 28 June 2006

Appendix 11: Consent form for participation in research (Sinhala translation)

පර්යේෂණ ව්‍යාපෘතිය සඳහා කැමැත්ත ප්‍රකාශ කිරීමේ පත්‍රය

(සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡාවක් මාර්ගයෙන්)

[ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ළමා නිවාස තුළ විකල්ප රැකවරණය ලබන ළමුන්ගේ ජීවන අවස්ථා උසස් කිරීම සඳහා කරුණු අධ්‍යයනය තුළින් ප්‍රතිපත්ති සහ පාළන විධි පිළිබඳ විවාරාත්මක සම්මර්ශනය]

..... වන මා, වයස අවුරුදු 18 ට වැඩි බවත්, ඉහත සඳහන් පර්යේෂණ ව්‍යාපෘතිය සඳහා හඳුන්වාදීමේ ලිපියේ සහ උපදෙස් පත්‍රිකාවේ කරුණු වලට අනුකූලව එකඟතාවය පළකරණ බවත් ප්‍රකාශ කරමි.

1. සපයා ඇති උපදෙස් කියවනු ලැබුවෙමි.
2. පර්යේෂණ ක්‍රමය සහ අවදානම් තත්වයන් පිළිබඳ සෑහීමට පත් වෙමි.
3. මගේ සාකච්ඡාව පටිගත කිරීම සඳහා කැමැත්ත ප්‍රකාශ කරමි.
4. උපදෙස් පත්‍රිකාවේ සහ කැමැත්ත ප්‍රකාශ කිරීමේ පත්‍රයේ පිටපත් අනාගත යොමුව සඳහා තබාගත යුතු බව දනිමි.
5. පහත කරුණු පිළිබඳ අවබෝධයක් ඇත .
    - මෙම පර්යේෂනයට සහභාගිවීමෙන් මා ලබන සෘජු ප්‍රතිලාභයක් නොමැත .
    - කිසිදු අවස්ථාවක සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡාව ප්‍රතික්ෂේප කිරීමටත්, යම් ප්‍රශ්න සඳහා පිළිතුරු දීමෙන් වැලකී සිටීමටත්, මට නිදහස තිබේ.
    - මාගෙන් ලබාගන්නා විස්තර, ප්‍රකාශයට පත්කලද, පුද්ගලිකත්වය ආරක්ෂා වන බවත්, පුද්ගලික රහස්‍ය භාවය ආරක්ෂා වන බවත් දනිමි.
    - මා සම්මුඛ සාකච්ඡාවට සහභාගී වූවද, නොවූවද, අතර මැදදී මහහැරියද, මාගේ සේවා තත්වයන්ට කිසිදු බලපෑමක් සිදු නොවන බවද දනිමි.
    - එමෙන්ම, මාගේ සේවා වපසරියට හෝ ප්‍රතිඵල සඳහා බලපෑමක් නොවන බවද දනිමි.
    - පටිගත කිරීම නවතාලීමේ අයිතිය ඔහෙම අවස්ථාවකදී ඇති බවද දනිමි.
6. මාගේ පටිගත තැටි/ ලියකියවිලි, පර්යේෂක කණ්ඩායම විසින්, පර්යේෂනය සඳහා වැදගත් යැයි සිතන වෙනත් පාර්ශවයකට බාරදීමට එකඟ වෙමි/ නොවෙමි.

සහභාගී වන්නාගේ අත්සන:..... **දිනය:**.....

පර්යේෂනයට අදාල කරුණු, මෙම පර්යේෂනයට ස්වේච්ඡාවෙන් සහභාගි වන ඉහත පාර්ශවයට පැහැදිල කල බවත්, ඔහු/ ඇය විසින් එම කරුණු පිළිබඳ අවබෝධයෙන්, මෙම පර්යේෂනයට සහභාගි වීම සඳහා කැමැත්ත පලකල බවටත් සහතික වෙමි.

පර්යේෂකයාගේ නම:.....

පර්යේෂකයාගේ අත්සන:..... **දිනය:**.....

1

Appendix 12: Interview question (Policy makers)

Proposed interview questions - Policy makers of the Department of Probation and Child Care Services (DPCCS)

Ref. Number .....

A. Structure of DPCS

1. What is the organisation structure of your DPCS?

B. Policy related questions

2. What are the policies and guidelines that are presently in practice in your Provincial Department with regards to governance of orphanages?

C. International Instruments

3. Have you considered any international instruments when making policies and guidelines for governance of orphanages in your province? If yes, what are they?

D. Grading of orphanages

4. What is your opinion regarding the grading of orphanages in your province?
5. Have you assessed and evaluated the results? If yes, what is the feedback?

E. Placement histories, re-unification

6. What are the main factors that contribute to the child's entry into care at orphanages in your province?

F. Re-unification and social inclusion

7. How do you contribute to re-integrate children with their birth families during their placement period and when they have reached their maturity at the age of 18?
8. Do you have an after care service conducted by the DPCS for children who have left orphanages at the maturity age? If yes, please explain,

G. Orphanage care and other alternative care

9. What are the advantages and drawbacks of orphanages as an alternative care for children deprived of parental care or who are at risk?
10. What are the other alternative care available and currently in practice in your province?

H. Support for orphanages

11. What kind of support / assistance do you provide for the orphanages to increase the quality of life of the children in orphanages?
12. What you think the children need while at the orphanage to improve their life chances and how is that supported by policy?

I. Service experiences

13. As a policy maker, what is your happiest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?
14. As a policy maker, what is your saddest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?

J. Suggestions

15. In policy wise, what are your suggestions for the improvement of quality of life and enhancement of the life chances of the children in orphanages?

Appendix 13: Interview question (Service providers)

Proposed interview questions – Service providers of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

Ref. Number .....

A. Policy related questions

1. What are the policies and guidelines that are currently in practice with regards to governance of your orphanage/s?
2. How are the policy applications undertaken at your orphanage
3. What policy changes do you feel might need to be undertaken
4. Is there a "Code of Conduct" imposed by your NGO, to be practiced in orphanage/s? If yes, please explain or attach a copy of the relevant paper.
5. What is the vision and mission of your NGO in related to orphanages?

B. Grading of orphanages

6. What is the grade of your orphanage/s in terms of the 2010 evaluation conducted by the Linear Department of Probation and Child Care Services?
7. Have you assessed and evaluated the results? If yes, what is the feedback?

C. Placement histories

8. How do you receive children for your orphanage/s?
9. Do you carry out a medical test before accepting the child into your orphanage/s? If yes, what are the medical check-ups?
10. Do you send children home during their school holidays if requested by their family members? If yes, what is the procedure that you undertake when sending them home? How do you monitor their life during the period away from the orphanage? How do you clarify that they have had no physical abuse, emotional abuse or sexual abuse during their stay away from the orphanage?

D. Re-unification and social inclusion

11. How do you contribute to re-integrate children with their birth families during their placement period and when the child has reached the maturity age (18) to leave the orphanage?
12. Do you have an after care service conducted by your NGO for children who have left orphanages at the maturity age? If yes, please explain,

E. Orphanage care and other alternative care

13. How do you identify (advantages and drawbacks) orphanages as an alternative care for children deprived of parental care or who are at risk?
14. Do you conduct or encourage local and foreign adoption care for children in your orphanage/s? If yes, how do you monitor the life of adopted children who were sent for adoption by your NGO?

F. Support from other sources

15. Do you receive grants from the central government and from the Provincial Department of Probation and Child Care Services to support your orphanage/s? If yes, what, how and when?

G. Funding and Maintenance

16. How do you fund the maintenance cost of the orphanage/s?
17. What is the approximate monthly expenditure of the orphanage/s?

H. Management Structure and staff of orphanage/s

18. What is the management structure of your NGO with regards to the management of orphanage/s?

I. Correlation with children in the orphanage

19. Do you conduct meetings with children in the orphanage/s? If yes, how often, the structure (individual, group, both individual & group) and for what purposes?
20. Do you have a youth advisory board affiliated to the orphanage? Do you conduct leadership programs? If yes, please explain.
21. What is the daily routine expected from children and staff of the orphanage? In addition to the daily routine of the orphanage, what are the programs conducted with the intention of future security of children in the orphanage?

J. Coordination with DPCS

22. How do you keep contact with the DPCS? Do you send regular reports to DPCS? If yes, on what themes?
23. Do you have regular meetings with DPCS? If yes, how often and for what purposes?

K. Service evaluation

24. How do you evaluate the service provided by you to orphanage/s?
25. How do you receive feedback about your services from the orphanage/s?

L. Transparency of your service

26. Have you appointed an independent body to maintain transparency and to supervise your service at orphanage/s? If yes, what is the structure of the independent body?

M. Suggestions

27. In service wise, what are your suggestions for the improvement of quality of life and the enhancement of life chances of children in orphanages?

N. Service experiences

28. Have your orphanage/s ever been charged or alleged for misconduct, malfunctioning, maltreatment or for child abuse in the past? If yes, for what issues and how did you overcome these issues?
29. As a service provider, what is your happiest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?
30. As a service provider, what is your saddest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?

Appendix 14: Questionnaire (Probation officers)

Questionnaire to: Probation Officers **Ref. Number** **Province**

A. Work experience, Educational and Professional qualifications

1. Your work experience

a. Your service period as a Probation Officer

Ref.	Description	No. of years
i.	In this Department of Probation and Child Care Services	
ii.	Other Department of Probation and Child Care Services	
	TOTAL	

b. Your other working experience

Ref.	Type of working experience	No. of years
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

2. Your educational qualifications

a. School education (Place a "X" in the appropriate box)

Ref.	Description	X
i.	Ordinary level exam passed	
ii.	13 years or below	
iii.	Advanced level exam passed	

b. Diploma or other courses

Ref.	Type of Course / Diploma	Name of the Institution
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

c. University education

Ref.	Type of Degree	Field of study	Name of the University
i.	B. Sc.		
ii.	B. A.		
iii.	Other		

3. Professional qualifications

a. Professional qualifications relevant to Child Well-being

Ref.	Type of professional qualification	Name of the Institution
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

b. Professional qualifications other than child-wellbeing

Ref.	Type of other professional qualification	Name of the Institution
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

c. Training by the Department of Probation and Child Care Services

Ref.	Name of the training course	Number of hours
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

B. SERVICE INFORMATION

Answer if only you have orphanages under your supervision and investigation.

4. How many orphanages and children are under your supervision?

Number of orphanages ☐ Number of children ☐

a. Do you visit orphanages for supervision? YES ☐ NO ☐

If "Yes", please answer the following;

i. How often? (Example: Once a month) ☐

ii. What are your duties carried out when visit an orphanage? Please list them in the table below;

Ref.	Duties
1.	

iii. Do you arrange discussions in between child and family? YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Placement histories of children

During your service period as a Probation Officer, have you maintained a record on the placement histories of children recommended by you for alternative care at orphanages? (Placement histories are the factors that contribute to the child's entry into care at orphanage)

YES ☐ NO ☐

If the answer is "YES", please fill up the table below (use records during your service period in the present work place).

Ref.	Factors that contribute to the child's entry into care	No. of Boys	No. of Girls
a.	Domestic troubles		
	i. Neglect and cruelty		
	ii. Drug addicted parents		
	iii. Domestic violence		
	iv. Poverty		
	v. Insecurity		
	vi. Institutionalized		
	vii. Bed ridden		
	viii. Parents dead		
	ix. Other (specify.....)		
b.	Child labour		
	i. Outside home		
	ii. Domestic		
	iii. Slavery		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
c.	Victims of natural disasters		
	i. Elephant attack		
	ii. Earth slides		
	iii. Tsunami		
	iv. Floods		
	v. Tropical storms		
	vi. Other (specify .....)		
d.	Street children		
	i. Child beggars		
	ii. Homeless		
	iii. Stranded		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
e.	Juvenile Delinquents		
	i. Acts of terrorism		
	ii. Sale and use of drugs		
	iii. Theft / Looting / Burglaries		

	iv. Prostitution and straying		
	v. Offenders of physical injuries to others		
	vi. Other (specify .....)		
f.	Disabled children		
	i. Psychological		
	ii. Physical		
	iii. Neurological		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
g.	Abuse and harassments		
	i. Physical		
	ii. Sexual		
	iii. Emotional		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
h.	Children affected by acts of terrorism		
	i. Civil war		
	ii. Shock / Threat		
	iii. Child soldier		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		

6. **Please list down the Reunification Efforts that you have taken to re-integrate children with their birth families who are under your supervision.**

   a. .....
   b. .....
   c. .....
   d. .....
   e. .....

7. **Please list down other alternative care efforts made by you when you are unable to reintegrate children with their birth families.**

   a. .....
   b. .....
   c. .....
   d. .....
   e. .....

8. **Do you visit or correspond with the relevant schools to gather information with regards to orphanage children's education that are under your supervision?** Yes ☐ No ☐

   If "Yes", please answer the following;

   i. How often? (Example: Once a month) ☐

   ii. What are your duties carried out when visit a school? Please list them in the table below;

Ref.	Duties
1.	

9. **Answer the following questions using records in your present work place)**

Ref.	Question	NO. of children
a.	How many children have there been under your supervision?	
b.	How many have been re-integrated with birth families?	
c.	How many have been found permanent adoption care?	
	i. Local adoption?	
	ii. Foreign adoption?	
d.	How many have been found foster care?	
e.	How many have been qualified for higher education?	
	i. Technical education?	
	ii. University education	
f.	How many have been found work places?	
g.	How many have been found self-employment?	
h.	How many have been married?	

10. **Please list out programs and/or projects that you have found practicing in some orphanages that you think are very important to maintain the quality of life of children in orphanages**

Ref.	Programs and / or projects
a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	

11. **From your experiences, write two stories of the following;**
    a. What is your happiest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?

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    b. What is your saddest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?

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12. **What are your suggestions for the enhancement of life chances of the children in alternative care at orphanages?**

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Appendix 15: Questionnaire (Child rights promotion officers)

Questionnaire to: Child Rights Promotion Officers

Ref. Number

Province

A. Work experience, Educational and Professional qualifications

1. Your work experience

a. Your service period as a Child Rights Promotion Officer

Ref.	Description	No. of years
i.	In this Department of Probation and Child Care Services	
ii.	Other Department of Probation and Child Care Services	
	TOTAL	

b. Your other working experience

Ref.	Type of working experience	No. of years
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

2. Your educational qualifications

a. School education (Place a "X" in the appropriate box)

Ref.	Description	X
i.	Ordinary level exam passed	
ii.	13 years or below	
iii.	Advanced level exam passed	

b. Diploma or other courses

Ref.	Type of Course / Diploma	Name of the Institution
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

c. University education

Ref.	Type of Degree	Field of study	Name of the University
i.	B. Sc.		
ii.	B. A.		
iii.	Other		

3. Professional qualifications

a. Professional qualifications relevant to Child Well-being

Ref.	Type of professional qualification	Name of the Institution
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

b. Professional qualifications other than child-wellbeing

Ref.	Type of other professional qualification	Name of the Institution
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

c. Training by the Department of Probation and Child Care Services

Ref.	Name of the training course	Number of hours
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

B. SERVICE INFORMATION

Answer if only you have orphanages under your supervision and investigation.

4. How many orphanages and children are under your supervision?

Number of orphanages ☐ Number of children ☐

a. Do you visit orphanages for supervision? YES ☐ NO ☐

If "Yes", please answer the following;

i. How often? (Example: Once a month) ☐

ii. What are your duties carried out when visit an orphanage? Please list them in the table below;

Ref.	Duties
1.	

iii. Do you arrange discussions in between child and family? YES ☐ NO ☐

5. Placement histories of children

During your service period as a Child Rights Promotion Officer, have you maintained a record on the placement histories of children recommended by you for alternative care at orphanages? (Placement histories are the factors that contribute to the child's entry into care at orphanage)

YES ☐ NO ☐

If the answer is "YES", please fill up the table below (use records during your service period in the present work place).

Ref.	Factors that contribute to the child's entry into care	No. of Boys	No. of Girls
a.	Domestic troubles		
	i. Neglect and cruelty		
	ii. Drug addicted parents		
	iii. Domestic violence		
	iv. Poverty		
	v. Insecurity		
	vi. Institutionalized		
	vii. Bed ridden		
	viii. Parents dead		
	ix. Other (specify.....)		
b.	Child labour		
	i. Outside home		
	ii. Domestic		
	iii. Slavery		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
c.	Victims of natural disasters		
	i. Elephant attack		
	ii. Earth slides		
	iii. Tsunami		
	iv. Floods		
	v. Tropical storms		
	vi. Other (specify .....)		
d.	Street children		
	i. Child beggars		
	ii. Homeless		
	iii. Stranded		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
e.	Juvenile Delinquents		
	i. Acts of terrorism		
	ii. Sale and use of drugs		
	iii. Theft / Looting / Burglaries		

	iv. Prostitution and straying		
	v. Offenders of physical injuries to others		
	vi. Other (specify .....)		
f.	Disabled children		
	i. Psychological		
	ii. Physical		
	iii. Neurological		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
g.	Abuse and harassments		
	i. Physical		
	ii. Sexual		
	iii. Emotional		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
h.	Children affected by acts of terrorism		
	i. Civil war		
	ii. Shock / Threat		
	iii. Child soldier		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		

6. **Please list down the Reunification Efforts that you have taken to re-integrate children with their birth families who are under your supervision.**

   a. .....
   b. .....
   c. .....
   d. .....
   e. .....

7. **Please list down other alternative care efforts made by you when you are unable to reintegrate children with their birth families.**

   a. .....
   b. .....
   c. .....
   d. .....
   e. .....

8. **Do you visit or correspond with the relevant schools to gather information with regards to orphanage children's education that are under your supervision?** Yes ☐ No ☐

   If "Yes", please answer the following;

   i. How often? (Example: Once a month) ☐

   ii. What are your duties carried out when visit a school? Please list them in the table below;

Ref.	Duties
1.	

9. **Answer the following questions using records in your present work place)**

Ref.	Question	N0. of children
a.	How many children have there been under your supervision?	
b.	How many have been re-integrated with birth families?	
c.	How many have been found permanent adoption care?	
	i. Local adoption?	
	ii. Foreign adoption?	
d.	How many have been found foster care?	
e.	How many have been qualified for higher education?	
	i. Technical education?	
	ii. University education	
f.	How many have been found work places?	
g.	How many have been found self-employment?	
h.	How many have been married?	

10. **Please list out programs and/or projects that you have found practicing in some orphanages that you think are very important to maintain the quality of life of children in orphanages**

Ref.	Programs and / or projects
a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	

11. **From your experiences, write two stories of the following;**
    a. What is your happiest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?

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    b. What is your saddest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?

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12. **What are your suggestions for the enhancement of life chances of the children in alternative care at orphanages?**

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Appendix 16: Questionnaire 1 (Wardens and matrons)

Questionnaire to: Wardens and matrons

Information of the staff of the orphanage

1. **Your work experience**

a. Your service period as a Warden or Matron

Ref.	Description	No. of years
i.	In this Orphanage	
ii.	In other Orphanages	
	TOTAL	

b. Your other working experiences

Ref.	Type of working experience	No. of years
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

2. **Your educational qualifications**

a. Your school education (Place a "X" in the appropriate box)

Ref.	Description	X
i.	0 – 5 years	
ii.	6 – 8 years	
iii.	9 – 11 years	
iv.	Ordinary level exam passed	
v.	12 - 13 years	
vi.	Advanced level exam passed	

b. Diploma or other courses

Ref.	Type of Course / Diploma	Name of the Institution
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

c. University education

Ref.	Type of Degree	Field of study	Name of the University
i.	B. Sc.		
ii.	B. A.		
iii.	Other		

3. Professional qualifications

a. Relevant to Child Well-being

Ref.	Type of professional qualification	Name of the Institution
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

b. Professional qualifications (Other than child-wellbeing)

Ref.	Type of other professional qualification	Name of the Institution
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

c. Training by the Department of Probation and Child Care Services

Ref.	Name of the training course	Number of hours
i.		
ii.		
iii.		

4. Service and Remuneration related questions

a. What is your monthly salary?

b. What are your other monthly allowances and how much?

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.....

c. What are your working hours? From ..... To .....

d. Answer the following questions in the table with an "X" in the appropriate box.

Ref.	Question	Yes	No
i.	Are you a member of Employment Provident Fund?		
ii.	Are you a member of Employment Trust Fund?		
iii.	Is your service pensionable?		
iv.	Do you have a room allocated for you in the orphanage?		
v.	Do you stay in the orphanage?		
vi.	Do you have over one & half days leave per week?		
vii.	Is there a warden/matron or an assistant warden/matron to supplement your work during your holidays?		

5. **When you were employed in this Orphanage, were you asked to submit any documents / certificates by your employer?** YES ☐ NO ☐

   a. If YES, what certificates did you submit to your employer? (Select from the table below and place an "X" in the appropriate box)

Ref.	Name of the document / certificate	X
i.	Application including your bio-data	
ii.	Birth certificate	
iii.	Marriage Certificate	
iv.	Police clearance Certificate	
v.	"Grama Niladari" Certificate	
vi.	Certificate from a Justice of Peace	
vii.	Documents relevant to work experiences	
viii.	Documents relevant to educational qualifications	
ix.	Documents relevant to professional qualifications	
x.	Sports certificates	
xi.	Extra-curricular activity certificates	
xii.	Nonrelated Referee Certification	
xiii.	Others (Please specify)	
	1.	
	2.	

6. **Have you received / do you receive the following documents / things from your employer? (Select from the table below and place a "X" in the appropriate box)**

Ref.	Name of the document	X
i.	Employment Certificate	
ii.	Duty specification document	
iii.	EPF / ETF Number	
iv.	Salary slips	
v.	Annual salary increments	
vi.	Annual bonus	
vii.	Others (uniforms, new year gift parcel, etc.) Please specify	
	1.	
	2.	
	3.	

7. **May I know your employer's name please?** .....

8. **Do you have a staff to support you in the orphanage?** YES ☐ NO ☐

   If "YES" fill their details in the table below;

Ref.	Staff's position	Scope / Duty
i.		
ii.		
iii.		
iv.		
v.		

9. **May I know your age please?** **Age in years** ☐

10. **From your experiences, write two stories of the following;**
    a. What is your happiest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?

    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....

    b. What is your saddest incident/experience when dealing with orphanages?

    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....

11. **What are your suggestions for the enhancement of quality of life of the children in your orphanage?**

    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....
    .....

Appendix 17: Questionnaire 2 (Wardens and matrons)

Questionnaire to: WARDENS AND MATRONS

Information of the children of the orphanage

Please provide me the following information of your children in the orphanage in between age 5 and 19.

1. **Gender**
   - a. Boys — Number ☐
   - b. Girls — Number ☐

2. **Ethnicity**
   - a. Sinhalese — Number ☐
   - b. Tamil — Number ☐
   - c. Muslim — Number ☐
   - d. Other (.....) — Number ☐
   - e. Unknown — Number ☐

3. **Religion**
   - a. Buddhist — Number ☐
   - b. Hindu — Number ☐
   - c. Islam — Number ☐
   - d. Christian / Catholic — Number ☐
   - e. Other (.....) — Number ☐
   - f. Unknown — Number ☐

4. **Availability of Birth Certificates**
   - a. Available — Number ☐
   - b. Not available — Number ☐
   - c. Assumed certificates — Number ☐

5. **Schooling**
   - a. Boys — Number ☐
   - b. Girls — Number ☐

6. Reasons for not schooling and number of children in each case

Ref.	Reason	No. of boys	No. of girls
a.	Below age 6		
b.	Over age 18		
c.	Mentally handicap		
d.	Disabled		
e.	Never gone to school		
f.	Attendance irregular		
g.	Documentation problem		
h.	School rejects to accept		
i.	Child rejects schooling		
j.	Lack of facilities		
	i. School equipment		
	ii. Mode of travelling		
	iii. No school near by		
	iv. No suitable grades		
	v. Other		
k.	Discrimination		
l.	Vocational training		
m.	Other		
	i.		
	ii.		

7. Children's Family backgrounds

Ref.	Description	No. of boys	No. of girls
a.	Death		
	i. Father died		
	ii. Mother died		
	iii. Both parent died		
b.	Migration		
	i. Father abroad		
	ii. Mother abroad		
	iii. Both parent abroad		
c.	Incarceration		
	i. Father imprisoned		
	ii. Mother imprisoned		
	iii. Both parent imprisoned		
d.	Environment		
	i. Lived with Step father		
	ii. Lived with Step mother		
	iii. Lived with siblings		
	iv. Lived with relatives		
e.	No family members		
f.	Unknown (No documents available)		
g.	Other		
	i.		
	ii.		

8. Children's Placement histories

Ref.	Factors that contribute to the child's entry into care	No. of Boys	No. of Girls
a.	Domestic troubles		
	i. Neglect and cruelty		
	ii. Drug addicted parents		
	iii. Domestic violence		
	iv. Poverty		
	v. Insecurity		
	vi. Institutionalized		
	vii. Bed ridden		
	viii. Parents dead		
	ix. Other (specify .....)		
b.	Child labour		
	i. Outside home		
	ii. Domestic		
	iii. Slavery		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
c.	Victims of natural disasters		
	i. Elephant attack		
	ii. Earth slides		
	iii. Tsunami		
	iv. Floods		
	v. Tropical storms		
	vi. Other (specify .....)		
d.	Street children		
	i. Child beggars		
	ii. Homeless		
	iii. Stranded		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
e.	Juvenile Delinquents		
	i. Acts of terrorism		
	ii. Sale and use of drugs		
	iii. Theft / Looting / Burglaries		
	iv. Prostitution and straying		
	v. Offenders of physical injuries		
	vi. Other (specify .....)		
f.	Disabled children		
	i. Psychological		
	ii. Physical		
	iii. Neurological		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		
g.	Abuse and harassments		
	i. Physical		
	ii. Sexual		
	iii. Emotional		
	iv. Other (specify .....)		

h.	Children affected by acts of terrorism		
	i. Civil war		
	ii. Shock / Threat		
	iii. Child soldier		
	iv. Other (specify ....)		

9. Children's Dates of birth and Dates of entry into care

Number	Date of Birth or Age	Date of entry into orphanage	Sex (M/F)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

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