

## Institutional Support and Social Work in a Post-war Context

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**Abstract:** The social work profession largely concerned with disaster-related issues has evolved using a combination of two approaches: residual and institutional. These paths while providing preventive or responsive support offers opportunities for capacity building of personnel as a critical responsive input that enhances the quality of the institutional support. This paper attempts to demonstrate the importance of capacity building of the relevant staff as a crucial factor in providing qualified and experienced institutional support as a responsive methodology in child protection during post war recovery. The Diploma programme in child protection initiated by the National Institute of Social Development has been engaged in this noble task of training quality personnel knowledgeable in the best practices and field work skills on child protection for the recovery period of a disaster. To protect the children during recovery the school of social work with support from northern provincial council and UNICEF initiated a Diploma programme in child protection to enhance and update the knowledge and skills of the probation officers, child rights promotion officers and child protection officers employed in Northern Province of Sri Lanka. This study is based on reflective practice illustrated the effectiveness of in-service training programme as a tool to enhance the capacities of the relevant officers in Sri Lanka. The data for the study was obtained from participants through questionnaires and key informant interviews. Field visits and supervision experiences were used as illustrations of evidence based knowledge in this study. This study showed that application of appropriate skills by the officers during field practices and after training was very much dependent on the provision of appropriate institutional facilities that promote best practices in child protection and also demonstrated further the fact that professional social work for rehabilitation and recovery was very much grounded in the adoption of proper skills imbibed through training in appropriate methodology practiced in the field under guided supervision. The study proved beyond doubt that quality training of the relevant personnel was a pre-requisite for the building of the capacity of the personnel providing institutional support in the area of child protection during post war recovery.