

Socio-Legal Models of Care Order Proceedings in Europe

ESF Exploratory Workshop

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Interrelations and Expectations of Multi-profession *Child and Adult Protection Authorities* and Social Workers in Swiss Child Protection

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Overview

1. Background and data basis of our presentation
2. The 2013 reform in Child and Adult Protection: Establishment of multi-professional Child and Adult Protection Authorities (CAPA)
3. Interrelations and Expectations: CAPA vs. Social Services / Children's Services
4. Conclusions, challenges, future prospects

1. Background and data basis of our presentation

1. Development of the prototype process manual

2. Field work I - implementation and testing

3. Field work II - utilisation and effects

4. Revision / Finish

1. Background and data basis of our presentation

- Evaluation of Swiss Journals covering current debate on Child Protection / 2013 Reform of Child and Adult Protection:
 - Journal for Child and Adult Protection (*Zeitschrift für Kindes- und Erwachsenenenschutz*); Practice of Family Law (*Familienrechtliche Praxis, fampra*), (Volumes 2011-2014), *Sozial Aktuell* (2014)
- Current research and development project: collaborative development of a comprehensive child protection assessment framework (Process Manual)
 - information gained at 3 workshops (1,5 days each) with Social Workers and members of Child and Adult Protection authorities from 4 cantons (Basel, Zürich, Zug, Aargau); the workshops includes SWOT-analyses of local practices

2. The 2013 reform in Child and Adult Protection

The new multi-professional *Child and Adult Protection Authority (CAPA)*

- Due to the 2013 reform of the *Swiss Civil Code (SCC)* [legal basis of child protection] the decision making body is a 3 (or more) – person «interdisciplinary» body («Kindes- und Erwachsenenschutzbehörde, KESB»)

2. The 2013 reform in Child and Adult Protection

The CAPA ...

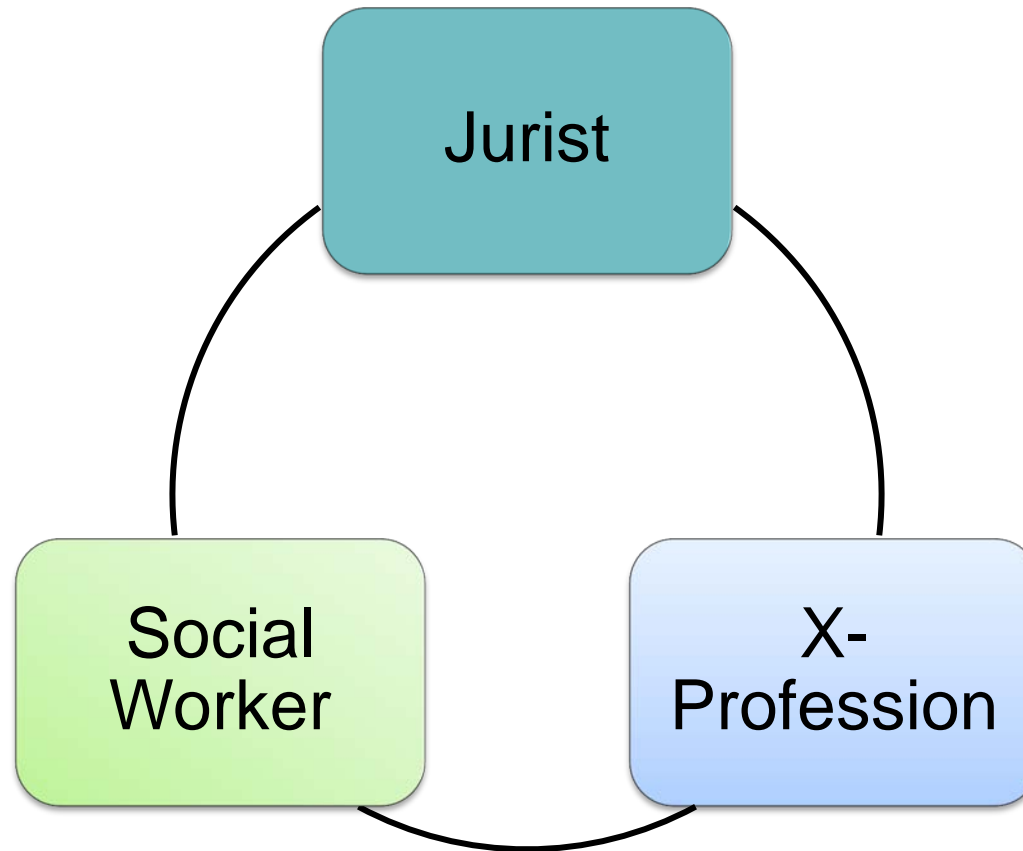
- holds competence for the entire process - from investigation to decision
- conducts investigation/assessment itself
- or «instruct a suitable person or agency to carry out investigations» (§ 446 SCC) e. g. local *Social Services / Services for Children and Youth*

2. The 2013 reform in Child and Adult Protection

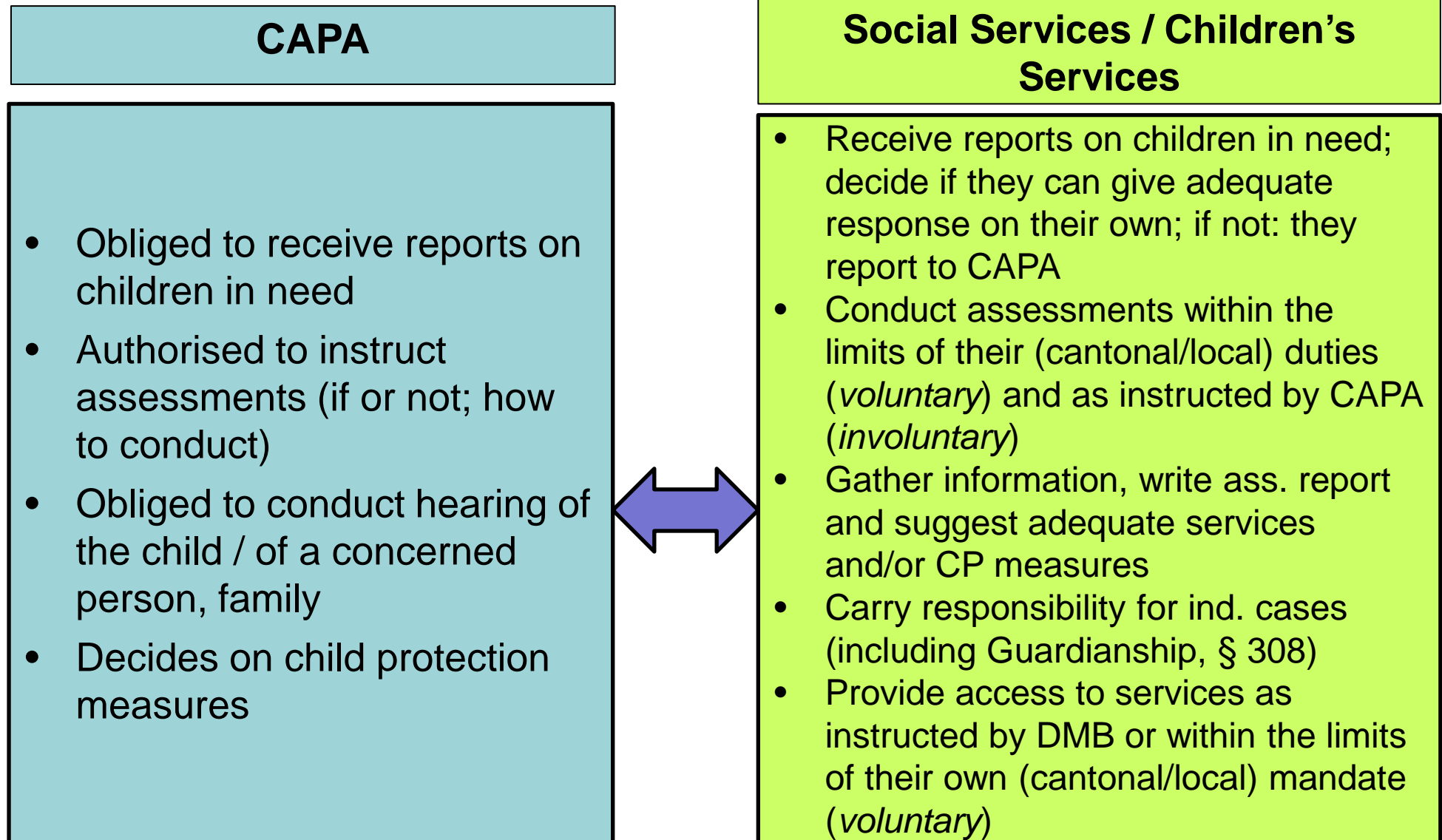
The reform of 2013

- A challenge for relations between institutions / organisations in the field child protection
- Created new opportunities for the role of social work in child protection: options and threads
- Two different perspectives are relevant:
 - Social Work(ers) *inside* the Decision Making Bodies / CAPA: relations and expectations within multi-professional authorities
 - Interrelations and expectations between Social Services / Children's Services (which are traditional domains of Social Work) and CAPAs

SW inside the CAPA/ Decision Making Body



CAPAs vs. Social Services / Children's Services: division of tasks (in most german speaking cantons)



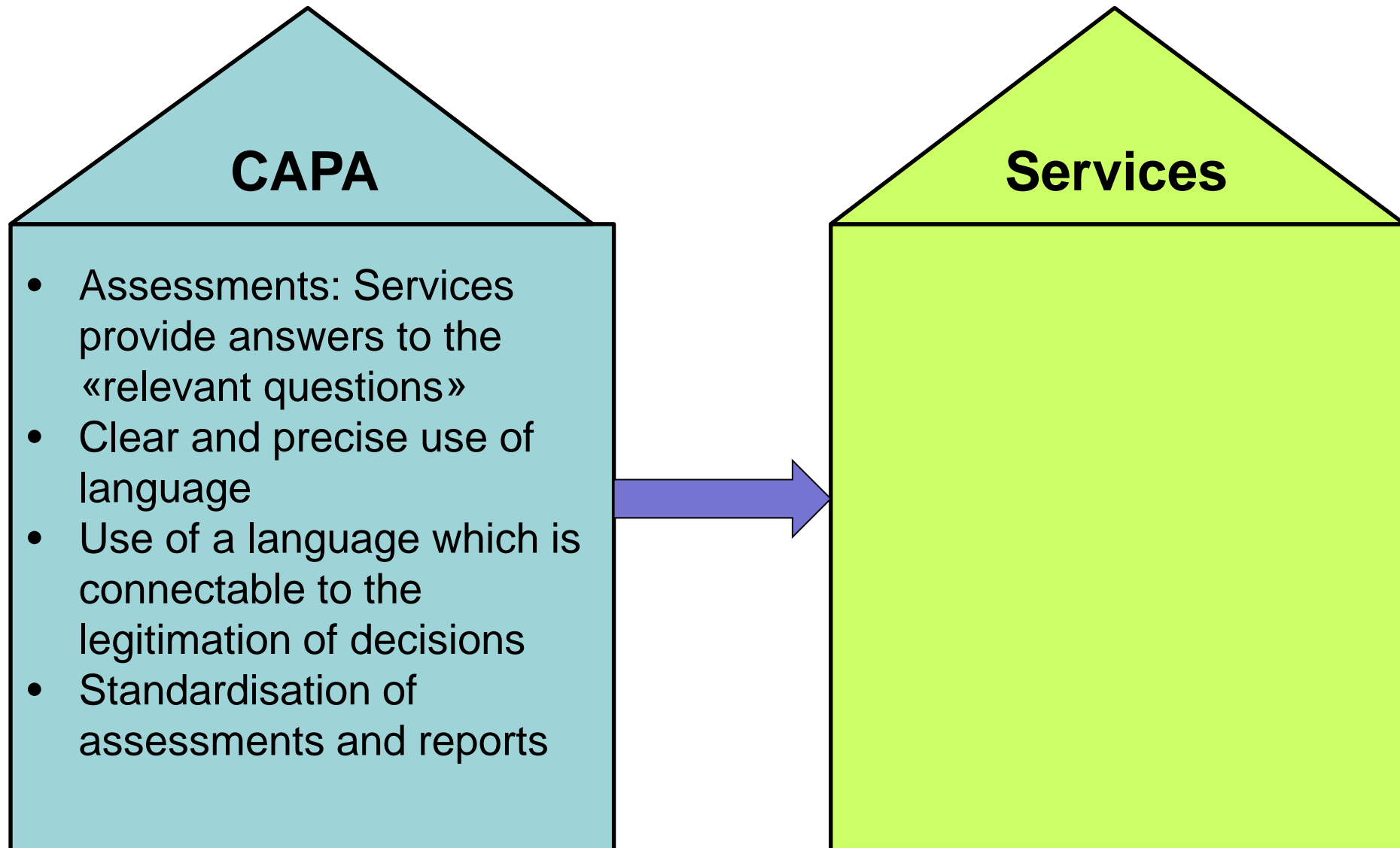
3. Social Work inside the CAPA: Interrelations and Expectations

- Authors with background in Social Work argue that Social Work could make a indispensable contribution to the CAPA/Decision-Making-Body (Heck 2011; 2014; Vogel/Wider 2010), because Social Work ...
 - ... is a profession with expertise and experience in interdisciplinary / inter-professional collaboration and networking; therefore SW is able to enhance and promote interdisciplinary / inter-professional collaboration inside the CAPA to the benefit of all professions represented in a CAPA
 - ... is best suited for instructing or conducting assessments; for diagnostic work; for making decisions on adequate responses to individual needs and checking the plausibility of support plans
 - ... has special professional skills in communicating with children and families

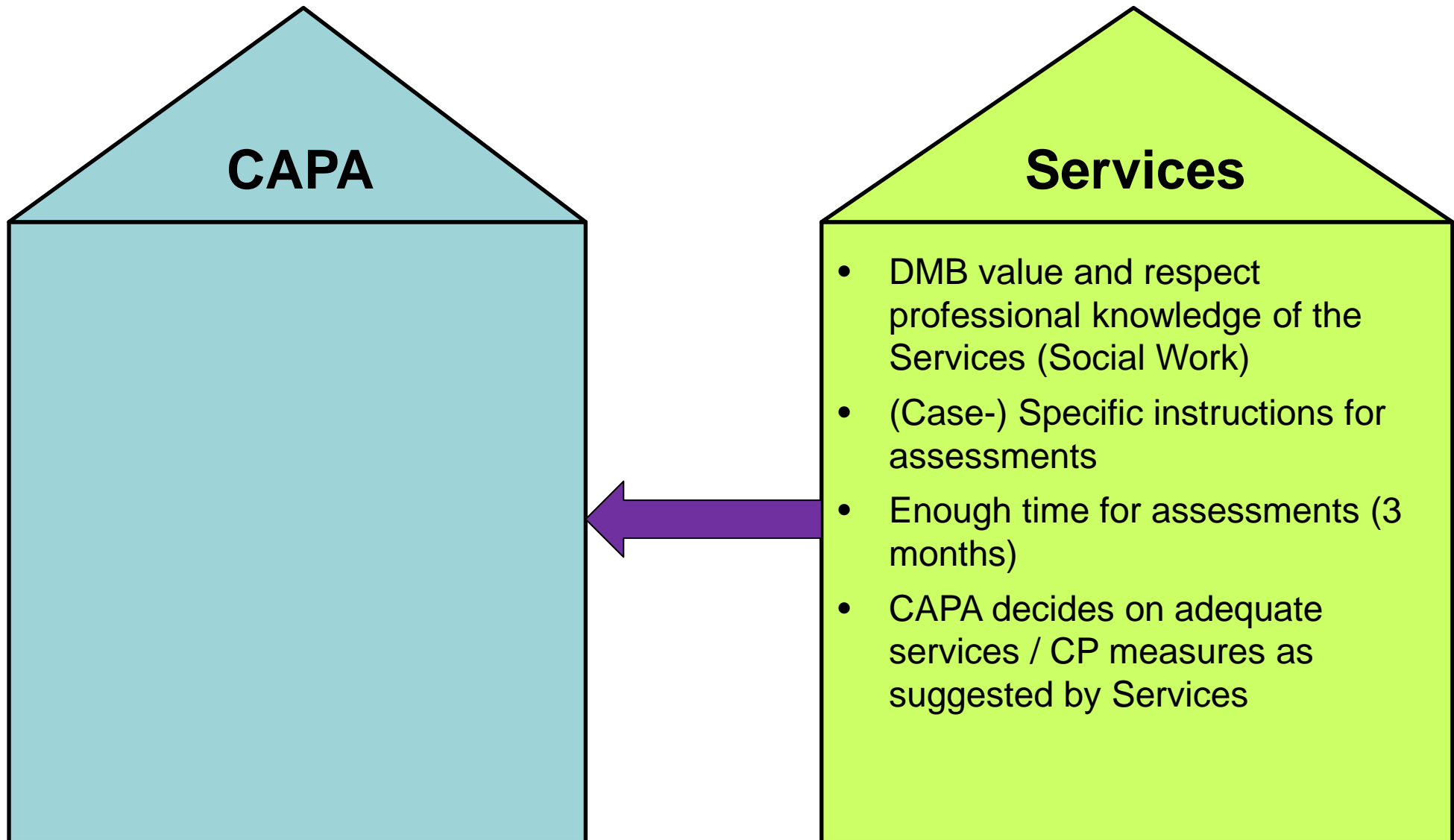
3. Social Work inside the CAPA: Interrelations and Expectations

- Some authors believe, that Social work is not ready to make use of the new opportunities, because Social Work ...
 - ... is a weak profession; tending to self-attribution of inferiority and low status in comparison with law, medicine (Dörflinger 2011, Eberli 2014)
- Dörflinger questions if Social Work is able to make a substantial contribution to the CAPA
 - Although Social Work claims to be specialising in bio-psycho-social multiple problems, it often does not fill this position. This is evident in its choice of language. It often uses jargon or technical terminology. The language is loaded with hard-to-follow interpretations and evaluations. It often remains unclear how social workers come to their judgments in child protection (Dörflinger 2011)

Expectations of CAPA towards Social Services / Children's Services



Expectations of Social Services / Children's Services towards CAPA



4. Conclusions, challenges, future prospects

- Multi-professional DMB bear a potential to integrate perspectives and logics of Law, Social Work, Education/Pedagogy, Psychology, Medicine in decision making; it is too early to judge on the results; up to now our observations are not too optimistic
- acteurs perceive working in multi-professional CAPAs/DMB as challenging
- CAPAs / DMBs are challenged to develop a common language that facilitates mutual understanding in multi-professional teams
- Within the majority of CAPAs law tends to become the dominate profession/discipline
- many social workers worry, that SW might become an auxiliary profession

4. Conclusions, challenges, future prospects

- Another open question refers to the logics and perspectives of the child and the family: are they respected? Is the position of the child strengthened by the obligatory hearing? Little is known about the practice of such hearings.
- Social Services / Children's Services are involved in voluntary and involuntary child protection work; this constitutes vast opportunities for unclear and non-transparent settings and a mixing-up of roles – most likely to the disadvantage of the child / family
- There is need for the development of
 - transparent patterns and structures of cooperation between CAPA, Social Services / Children's Services and service providers within the cantons
 - a culture of transparent communication between CAPA, Services and Children/Families

4. Conclusions, challenges, future prospects

- Up to 2013 the use of methods and tools for assessments in child protection was quiet uncommon; Professional/specialised knowledge and skills in child protection are still scattered and practice is considerably inconsistent across the 26 cantons
- There is urgent need for knowledge and skills enabling assessments, communication with the child and family, conclusion on adequate responses and support plans