

Family-Friendly Policies A Global Survey of Business Policy

Working Paper

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Acronyms and abbreviations

CHRB	Corporate Human Rights Benchmark			
EU	European Union			
IFC	International Finance Corporation			
ILO	International Labour Organization			
MNE	Multinational enterprise			
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development			
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal			
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprise			
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund			



Introduction

In 2018, over 75 per cent of men and 48 per cent of women worldwide were employed or looking for work.¹ The private sector accounts for most of these jobs, sometimes up to 90 per cent in developing countries.² The conditions of employment can have a huge impact on the wellbeing of workers, their children and families. It is therefore critical that any discussion of familyfriendly workplace policies considers business action and engagement on the issue as well as the regulatory environments that influence them.

To advance business action on family-friendly policies, UNICEF undertook a global study of business policies. This survey is the first with significant geographic scope and a comprehensive approach that includes a wide range of familyfriendly policies – from parental leave and breastfeeding support to childcare solutions. The objective of the survey was to:

- Understand the current situation of business action on a comprehensive package of family-friendly policies and explore the policies across a wide range of businesses;
- Understand the key drivers of business action;
- Learn more about the **challenges businesses** face in implementing these policies.

The findings of the study provide important conclusions on how business action on familyfriendly policies can be strengthened. It can guide the businesses themselves, but also governments and other actors who seek to influence business policies for families.³

1 What are family-friendly workplace policies?

International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions have enshrined several aspects of decent work as critical for reconciling work and the family life of workers. The ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No.183) and its recommendation 191, and the ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No.156) as well as recommendation 165, provide key stipulations on such policies as parental leave, breastfeeding and non-discrimination in the workplace. These policies have also been referenced in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5.4 on valuing and supporting unpaid care and domestic work, as well as in SDG 8.5 on achieving productive employment and decent work for all.

In UNICEF's recently published evidence brief, *Business and Family-Friendly Policies*, familyfriendly policies are defined as those that "positively impact (a) workers' abilities to reconcile work and family responsibilities; as well as advance (b) the well-being and development of their children".⁴ It undertakes a comprehensive mapping of a range of business policies that uphold this definition by providing working caregivers with time, resources and services to support their children. Family-friendly policies transcend culture, they transcend race, they transcend income level, professional levels, they transcend everything.

- HARSHA JALIHAL, VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES, UNILEVER

From an advocacy point of view, UNICEF has identified four major policy areas as critical for children's well-being, women's empowerment and the provision of decent work for caregivers. They are outlined in the box below. The global study of business policies collected information on business performance and compared it to the first three of these policy areas: parental leave, breastfeeding in the workplace and childcare solutions. It then assessed the level of policy adoption in comparison to UNICEF policy recommendations.

UNICEF FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

In July 2019, UNICEF launched new evidence and recommendations for four sets of policies to advance family-friendly workplaces. These recommendations are based on evidence of what works for children and families. For further information on the policy recommendations and supporting evidence, visit UNICEF's website: 'Redesigning the workplace to be family-friendly: What governments and businesses can do', <www.unicef.org/early-childhood-development/family-friendly-policies>.

These four sets of policies are:

- 1. Guaranteeing sufficient paid leave for all parents and guardians, in both the formal and informal economies, to meet the needs of their young children. This includes paid maternity, paternity and parental leave, and leave to care for sick young children. The recommendation calls on business and government to ensure a minimum of six months paid maternity, paternity and parental leave, after the birth of the child, including at least 18 weeks of paid maternity leave.
- 2. Supporting the ability of mothers to breastfeed exclusively for six months, as recommended by global endorsed standards, and to continue breastfeeding for as long as they choose;
- 3. Ensuring that all children have access to affordable, quality childcare and early education;
- 4. Providing child benefits and adequate wages to help families provide for young children.

The survey assessed business performance against these recommendations. See Annex 1 for the specific recommendations to business.

3

Methodology

The objective of the global survey was to assess the extent to which businesses adopt familyfriendly policies. The survey explored three broad policy areas:

- a. Policies in relation to parental leave both maternity and paternity leave:
- b. Policies in relation to supporting breastfeeding in the workplace;

c. Policies in relation to supporting the childcare needs of workers.

The global survey collected data using the four methodologies outlined below. The online survey enabled participants to choose from a menu of options, but also allowed them to include additional information. The in-depth interviews with companies also explored business motivation and drivers.

Participating companies were invited to complete

policies and engagements, both within their own

COMPANIES BY SECTOR/INDUSTRY

an online guestionnaire on their family-friendly

operations and in their supply chain.

1. QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY OF BUSINESS POLICIES

UNICEF's survey on workplace policies collected data from 307 businesses in 14 countries and territories: Argentina: Botswana: China and its Special Administrative Region Hong Kong; Finland; India; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Madagascar; Malaysia; New Zealand; South Africa; Sri Lanka; Viet Nam. The surveyed businesses ranged in size from large multinationals to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and represented diverse business sectors.

Outreach to business was undertaken through UNICEF's in-country networks, and interested businesses that volunteered to participate. This caused an inherent bias in the sample - because companies self-selected themselves and because these companies are more aware of children's rights, given their engagement with UNICEF. Nevertheless, the findings provide important conclusions about policy adoption among these advanced companies.

2. IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS WITH BUSINESS

In addition to the online questionnaire, businesses were also invited to participate in an in-depth bilateral interview by phone. Fortythree of the companies accepted to be interviewed. The interviews explored their motivations, drivers and challenges in greater detail.

Services 22%

3. REVIEW OF PUBLIC INFORMATION ON BUSINESS POLICIES

A review of publicly available information was conducted on 60 of the world's largest publicly traded apparel as well as food and

4. BUSINESS WORKSHOP IN NEW YORK, 19 JULY 2019

The preliminary findings of the survey were shared with business and other key stakeholders in a workshop and summit on 19 July 2019 organized by UNICEF. The event was a key milestone in the family-friendly policies campaign and included over 20 senior business

beverage companies related to their engagements on family-friendly policies in their operations and across their supply chains.

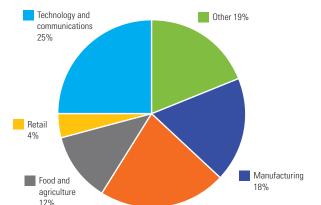
executives and leaders from around the world.

Their contributions and feedback at the workshop

also helped inform these findings. In addition, the

workshop initiated next steps and recommended

actions by business and policymakers.



4



Key findings

1 Parental leave

PAID MATERNITY LEAVE

Paid leave for mothers is the most widely implemented of the family-friendly policies, although its duration and remuneration are often inadequate.

The survey findings suggest that, while many businesses have maternity leave policies, their duration and remuneration fall far below UNICEF policy recommendations.

Of all the family-friendly policies, maternity leave is the policy most widely implemented by businesses in their own workplaces; 86 per cent of respondents indicated having a policy on paid maternity leave.

Variation in the duration of this maternity leave is significant, with responses ranging from a minimum of four weeks to a select few providing as much as 90 weeks. However, over half of the surveyed companies do not meet the maternity leave provision of 18 weeks. Thus many companies are below UNICEF's policy recommendation of 18 weeks' maternity leave and a combined parental leave of at least six months.

Importantly, the length of maternity leave provided by businesses typically follows standards defined by national legislation. For example, in Sri Lanka, India and Viet Nam, where the legal minimum leave is higher than in the other countries studied, businesses reported higher maternity leave provisions in line with national legislation. The reverse was also true, and businesses in countries with low legislative requirements typically reported lower rates of maternity leave provision. This is problematic as, according to an ILO study, only just over half of the countries that have ratified ILO Convention 183 on maternity protection meet the ILO minimum standard requiring at least 14 weeks of maternity leave, let alone the ILO recommended duration of 18 weeks.⁵ There was one exception: multinational businesses headquartered in countries or territories with low legal requirements. For example, in Hong Kong, China, half of the businesses surveyed provide 14-16 weeks' paid maternity leave, while the national minimum is 10 weeks. In New Zealand, the businesses surveyed offer on average double the national minimum leave of 14 weeks. New Zealand is ranked among the lowest on familyfriendly public policies among Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries and compared to European Union (EU) countries.⁶ One reason may be that many of the businesses surveyed from these countries are multinational entities competing for global talent and thus need to stay competitive with standards offered by other multinational businesses in high-income countries.

With regard to remuneration during maternity leave, 66 per cent of the companies surveyed stated that their employees' maternity leave is paid at a level equivalent to two thirds of employees' previous earnings. This is in line with the ILO recommendation to grant employees maternity leave cash benefits amounting to at least two thirds of employees' previous earnings.⁷ This means that for the remaining companies, the remuneration received by mothers on maternity leave is likely inadequate to support them and their families.

The case study of Jordan provides an interesting alternative: maternity leave is funded through the national social security system, and almost all businesses surveyed stated that their employees are covered at a rate of 100 per cent of their previous earnings as a result. This further supports the argument for publicly supported systems.

Finally, the survey also explored business policies to protect pregnant and nursing working mothers. Employment protection, non-discrimination policies and occupational health and safety protections for pregnant and nursing women are important measures to safeguard both child and maternal health. Excessive hours, arduous work and exposure to hazardous chemicals can have severe effects on prenatal and postnatal health. Discrimination against women due to their real or perceived pregnancy can significantly reduce their earnings and negatively impact the nutrition, health and well-being of both mother and child. Overall, the study found that many surveyed businesses include some reference to protections for pregnant and nursing women in their company policies. Protections against discrimination

and returning to the same position after leave were the most cited, closely followed by occupational safety and health provisions aimed at protecting pregnant or breastfeeding women workers by assigning them work that ensures that they and their child are safe from any harms.

PAID PATERNITY LEAVE

Fewer than half of businesses provide paternity leave, which is often of very limited duration.

The survey data demonstrate that many companies around the world have a long way to go to fulfil UNICEF policy recommendations to increase leave for fathers. Only 48 per cent of the surveyed businesses have a policy on paternity leave and, more often than not, the paternity leave amounts to only a few days. While some pioneering companies provide 52 weeks of leave for fathers, the average is 3.2 weeks, declining to as low as two days. In contrast, UNICEF's new investment case on family-friendly policies calls for combined parental leave for caregivers of at least six months and encourages up to nine months.

In many interviews, it was clear that businesses conflate annual leave and paternity or secondary caregiver leave; often there is no separate paternity leave entitlement for working fathers beyond what is available as annual leave. This indicates the need to raise awareness of the concept of paternity leave or secondary caregiver leave as separate from annual leave, and of the benefits for working fathers and children of taking this dedicated leave in the first days, weeks or months after birth. In addition, efforts are needed to change norms in the workplace so it is more culturally accepted for fathers to be involved in the care of their children and to take time to do so.

Just five of the 14 countries in the survey have national legislation on paternity leave. This means that, in contrast to maternity leave, many businesses are providing at least a few days of paternity leave despite the absence of a national legal minimum.⁸ This is likely an indication that, in many countries, legislation may be lagging societal norms and the shifting expectations of fatherhood, and leading businesses are adapting accordingly. In Botswana, for example, most companies surveyed offer paternity leave of between one and four weeks, despite the absence of legislation. In Sri Lanka, no legislation on paternity leave exists, yet one third of the companies surveyed offer paternity leave to their employees. 7

As it is the case with maternity leave, however, as one business noted, "Making paternity leave a legal obligation would create a better work-life balance, increase employee engagement and improve gender equality and diversity within the workplace and ultimately in society." Accordingly, as seen in other key policy areas, legislation for paternity leave could drive greater implementation across all businesses in a country.

2 Breastfeeding support

Only 39 per cent of surveyed businesses offer any support for breastfeeding, usually in the form of breaks. More comprehensive programmes to support lactating mothers are absent.

Only 39 per cent of surveyed businesses have one or more policies supporting breastfeeding; the most common workplace policy observed is paid breastfeeding breaks, which 59 businesses offer. A similar number (57) of businesses provide a room for breastfeeding or expressing breastmilk, while fewer businesses (20) provide information and other nutritional support, such as the services of a lactation consultant for breastfeeding women. Some interviewees mentioned that it can be challenging to provide a dedicated room for breastfeeding, or a clean space for storing expressed breastmilk, as physical space is costly. Again, as with maternity leave policies, the survey evidence highlights the clear link between national or mandatory legislation on breastfeeding in the workplace and business action. In countries and territories with specific legal requirements for supporting breastfeeding in the workplace, surveyed businesses comply and have workplace policies in line with those requirements. Where no legal obligation exists, businesses with policies to support breastfeeding mothers are the exception rather than the rule.

Given that almost half of countries do not grant more than the ILO standard of a legal minimum maternity leave of 14 weeks, and that UNICEF and the World Health Organization recommend exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months after childbirth, the survey findings show a global gap in supporting working mothers who are breastfeeding.⁹

3 Childcare support

Childcare support is the least implemented policy, with cash support the most common arrangement. Only a handful of businesses provide on-site childcare facilities.

The survey findings indicate that supporting parents with childcare needs is the policy least adopted by businesses; only 24 per cent of surveyed businesses provide such support.

Typically, this support takes the form of cash or other assistance for parents to access community and government-run childcare centres or to make their own care arrangements with private individuals or organizational providers. Of the 307 businesses surveyed from around the world, only seven had on-site childcare facilities for employees. Combined with the fact that only 24 per cent of surveyed businesses provide any form of childcare support, the survey thus reveals a childcare crisis and the significant momentum needed to shift business policies.

In some of the interviews, businesses explained that traditional care roles mean that an on-site childcare policy is inefficient in practice. For example, in densely populated Hong Kong, China, where parents and grandparents traditionally live close by and where there is access to cheap labour for domestic work (typically migrant workers from South East Asia), one business reported that childcare services are not a popular choice for parents.

Another challenge reported during the interviews is the fact that some workplaces are simply not appropriate for safe childcare services. In workplaces with hazardous chemicals, noise and/ or dangerous machinery, children in the workplace, even in a dedicated space, could put them at risk of harm. For example, integrated companies in agribusiness may provide childcare services in their offices but cannot replicate this service in their factories or plantations for health and safety reasons. This creates unequal opportunities for childcare benefits among employees, depending on their type of work and level of skills. This difficulty could explain why businesses might opt to provide financial support to their employees rather than childcare services. In Viet Nam, 25 per cent of the businesses surveyed provide support to their workers to help them access childcare services, but only 6 per cent have on-site childcare facilities.

CASE STUDY

SORWARTHE RWANDA – PUBLIC- AND PRIVATE-SECTOR COLLABORATION FOR SCALE

About the company

SOWARTHE is Rwanda's oldest private tea factory, located in Kinihira, about 70 km north of Kigali. Most of SOWARTHE's production is for export and it is one of the largest tea producers in Rwanda, with annual production of around 3.6 million kg. The company employs approximately 2,500 workers per day, and 4,500 tea farmers depend on the factory.

What action did the business take?

SORWARTHE established mobile crèches, where mothers can leave their children in the care of trained caregivers while they work nearby. The crèches offer a safe, convenient environment for the children to rest and play while their parents work. UNICEF-trained caregivers care for and play with the children and prepare nutrient-rich food to supplement their diets.

SORWARTHE's efforts created interest from the Government of Rwanda to expand the initiative to other tea businesses in the agricultural export sector; it demonstrated the value of this work to businesses. As a result, in 2017 UNICEF launched a partnership with the National Agricultural Export Development Board (NAEB) to implement similar childcare solutions for the sector. Successful piloting with SORWATHE provided an opportunity to scale up within the tea sector by embracing an industry approach – which resulted in the partnership with government/NAEB

Key lessons learned

CREATING SYNERGIES: Synergies between the public and private sectors can provide positive catalytic effects and help take work to scale. SORWARTHE's initiative acted as a proof of concept and demonstrated interest from the private sector. Following the documented success of the mobile crèches, the engagement with the NAEB seeks to mainstream the approaches across the Rwandan agricultural sector.

4 Family-friendly policies of multinational enterprises

Multinational enterprises (MNEs) have limited adoption of family-friendly policies. Global policies are rare and application varies depending on the legislation in the country or territory of operation. Supply chain standards rarely include family-friendly policy support.

The Corporate Human Rights Benchmark (CHRB) is a collaboration led by investors and civil society to create an open and public benchmark of corporate human rights performance. In 2018, CHRB assessed 101 of the world's largest publicly traded companies; these businesses were chosen because of their size (market capitalization) and revenues. In collaboration with CHRB, UNICEF conducted a complementary analysis of 60 of the apparel and agricultural businesses reviewed by CHRB, comparing them against indicators related to family-friendly policies in their operations and supply chains. The review was based on publicly available information.

Findings from the review of the MNEs echo the results of the online questionnaire and bilateral interviews; the scope of family-friendly policies is

often restricted to parental leave. While close to 60 per cent of the MNEs reviewed have a public policy on parental leave, less than 30 per cent have childcare or breastfeeding provisions in their company policy. Where present, these provisions are mostly limited to headquarter offices.

Of the 60 businesses reviewed, only 8 per cent have a 'global' parental leave policy that is applicable to all employees regardless of location. Several studies suggest that multinational businesses retain strong links with their respective home country's business environment, leading to what is termed a 'country-of-origin effect'.10 In the case of parental leave policies, such an effect remains elusive. Rather, the evidence indicates a stronger link between local regulation and attitudes in host countries and company policies. Many of the businesses reviewed have different policies on parental leave by country, each tailored to the specific local context. These national applications of policy seldom surpass the local legal regulatory requirements. The exceptions are among the big multinational businesses competing for global talent. This was echoed during the interviews with MNEs as well: many reported

finding it challenging to have a one-size-fits-all policy applicable in all countries of operations, given the wide range of political, regulatory and cultural contexts in which they operate as well as the varying degrees of government involvement and support.

Evidence of MNEs' engagement on familyfriendly policies within their supply chains is scarce. Of the 60 businesses reviewed, only 10 per cent have a maternity protection clause in their supplier codes of conduct. An estimated 450 million people minimum work in supplychain-related jobs.¹¹ Global businesses have the potential to use their influence and leverage to facilitate family-friendly workplaces across their global supply chains, complementing the efforts of national governments. One palm oil business interviewed for the survey noted that it provides maternity protection and leave to all its employees to meet the standards of the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, the industry's largest sustainability initiative. Yet, as the review of the 60 businesses concludes, the potential for brands to leverage their influence in their supply chains is largely untapped.

Drivers of business change

The survey's findings on workplace policies identified four key drivers of business engagement on family-friendly policies: (a) regulation (public policy) and compliance; (b) productivity and profitability; (c) business brand enhancement; and d) values, such as diversity, gender and human rights. The workshop in New York helped to further validate these conclusions. In the United States, the business case can be difficult to make. But when we aggregate all things together, including the impact on [employee] stress, it is way north of a 100 per cent return on investment.

> - RICK RIDGEWAY, VICE PRESIDENT, PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, PATAGONIA

1 Role of government, including national legislation

As discussed, the findings demonstrate that business policies rarely go beyond what is directed by national law or mandatory requirement, even when such legislation does not meet international standards. It is clear then that for most companies, especially SMEs, achieving compliance with national law is the goal. Recognizing this as the most powerful driver

means that any action to shift the dial on familyfriendly policies must prioritize strengthening national legislation. This approach can deliver the greatest change at scale when complemented with effective enforcement mechanisms.

In addition to national legislation, businesses also described how governments can create

an enabling environment for change through supportive policies, such as government financing for family-friendly policy initiatives. For example, national social security systems, tax incentives and subsidies can be helpful, especially to increase endorsement in SMEs. Many participants in the UNICEF workshop also spoke of joint action by industry and government – for example, public childcare facilities that can be supported and accessed by the employees of businesses. It was also noted that these government systems can help to ensure equity and access for all workers, including workers in the informal economy. Finally, governments have an important role to play in establishing minimum standards and supporting staff training for early childhood care centres. Some of the business speakers at the UNICEF workshop called on their peers to advocate for governments to adopt universal public policies to make workplaces family friendly, and noted that leading businesses can be powerful voices in their communities to shift the policy discourse.

2 Productivity and profitability: The business case

Some businesses reported that they adopt familyfriendly policies in recognition of the business case (i.e. benefits for the business).

For businesses competing for talent, offering a better work–life balance, which includes family-friendly policies, can enhance competitiveness to attract labour and talent. One company communicated that, "It is a strategy in a 'battle of talents', where we need to offer the most attractive practices to employ highly skilled workers". This is also true in labour-intensive sectors, such as manufacturing and agribusiness. One speaker in the New York workshop noted that in China, where factories have difficulty recruiting workers, providing family-friendly policies has helped to recruit and retain workers.

Many employers also recognized that their employees' well-being is a strong factor for

We are convinced that when our people are happy with their children and with their families, and are safe, productivity increases, and they are focused on the job, which is their second home, where they spend a majority of their time.

improved productivity; this was one of the most cited reasons for investing in family-friendly policies. For example, a business in Botswana reported that providing a minimum of three months' maternity leave contributes to a healthier, happier and more productive workforce.

3 Family-friendly policies and business brand

Several business participants in the workshop in New York also raised the case of branding as a crucial element of family-friendly policies. Indeed, companies are increasingly conscious of their public image and how their brands are perceived by consumers and potential employees. To appeal to their consumers, businesses may find that family-friendly policies are important for brand alignment with products and brands targeting children or families. For example, ICTI CARE, the toy association, noted that its member companies want their toy factories to be seen as the best places to work for families; its branding link is important and successful.



UNICEF/UNI143579/KHAN

CASE STUDY

THE BUSINESS CASE: EXAMPLE FROM PARTICIPANTS IN THE NEW YORK WORKSHOP

Ines Kaempfer, Executive Director, Centre for Child Rights and Corporate Social Responsibility

The Centre for Child Rights and Corporate Social Responsibility (CCR CSR) works with business to advance child rights. CCR CSR has been implementing programmes with factories in China, among other places, such as training opportunities for parents, childcare support, after-school care and work with local schools to accept the children of migrant workers. CCR CSR has noted that, following the implementation of these programmes, it has recorded a decrease in employee turnover, generally somewhere between 8 to 15%, decreased to as little as 2.5% per month. This decrease is significant, given that it can take as long as nine months for factories to train staff and prepare them to operate at full capacity.

4 Values: Diversity, gender and human rights

The interviews conducted as part of the UNICEF survey confirmed that values and social norms are important drivers in the development of certain family-friendly policies. Values may relate to a company being a 'family'-oriented business, or to values of diversity and inclusion – especially gender – or to a company's engagement on human rights.

Gender diversity was an often-cited driver; for many companies, family-friendly policies are a part of gender equality initiatives. For example, businesses, particularly those in traditionally maledominated sectors such as IT and engineering, emphasized that one of the major incentives for implementing family-friendly policies is the need to boost workforce diversity and attract more women workers. They noted that these policies help women workers to maintain their employment in the company while supporting their work-life responsibilities. During the interviews, some companies responded that national discourse on gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women had prompted them to offer programmes or policies that reflect the changing public expectations of women in society and the workforce.

Gender equality is important to us, and you cannot drive gender equality if you don't make it easy for both men and women to lead productive personal and professional lives. It contributes to the overall well-being of a family when parents can care for their children without having to sacrifice their professional success. And happy families lead to happy individuals, which lead to happy employees. It's a very simple equation.

> - HARSHA JALIHAL, VICE PRESIDENT, HUMAN RESOURCES, UNILEVER

Almost all businesses interviewed cited the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Children's Rights and Business Principles or alternative human rights frameworks as part of their business commitment to familyfriendly policies and employee well-being.¹²

Challenges reported by business

The UNICEF survey on workplace policies investigated challenges identified by companies themselves.

1 Budget and cost

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For most companies, family-friendly policies are still perceived as having high implementation costs, especially in the immediate term. All employers of the SMEs interviewed mentioned that their capacity to offer family-friendly policies to their employees is affected by unpredictability in their business operations. For example, agricultural businesses cited fluctuations in global commodity prices and

2 Culture and gender norms

In several interviews, respondents discussed the challenges of implementing paternity leave when cultural norms and gender roles do not support the responsibility of fathers as caregivers or indeed embrace the role of mothers in employment. Many survey respondents indicated that fathers simply do not take the leave, even when provided. The Centre for Child Rights and Corporate Social Responsibility highlighted their experience with providing longdistance parenting training and support for migrant

3 Equity and coverage

The family-friendly workplace policies of many of the businesses surveyed typically apply to full-time employees with benefits. Part-time employees, contractual workers, seasonal workers and other workers in non-standard forms of employment often do not benefit from these policies. Interviewed businesses also discussed the difficulties in applying family-friendly policies to varied workplace contexts in offices versus in factory and farm contexts with lower-skilled jobs. The discussion on family-friendly policies should also cover the issue of making them more inclusive and accessible to all parents, regardless of the nature of their work contracts, income levels, type of job (union or non-union and part-time or full-time), gender or sexual orientation, status as minorities or migrants, etc. Some speakers at the UNICEF workshop also highlighted the fact that

small businesses reported cyclical business volumes as factors leading to business uncertainty. These businesses reported finding it complicated to plan and guarantee paid leave, childcare and flexible working arrangements to employees. Losing an employee for six months can have a big effect on a business with a small workforce. Policy solutions are needed to support these SMEs.

workers in China. It requires a conscious effort to ensure that fathers are also involved and engaged in the training. Yet once fathers are given the opportunity, they become some of the most active participants. Gender norms can also make it challenging for mothers. One business speaker at the UNICEF workshop reported that many female staff in their factories face spousal abuse at home and that it is difficult to ensure that male partners can support their wives' work and share in the caregiver role.

Particularly coming from Latin America, we have an enormous informal economy. So, if services are only dependent on the condition of employment, half the people will be left out. That's why universally available, quality services are so important.

- NATALIA GHERARDI, ARGENTINIAN LAWYER

societies have changed, such that family-friendly policies should embrace the diversity of families, including single-parent families or families with caregivers with disabilities, same-sex parents, etc. The roles of government and publicly funded services and public-private collaboration were also relevant to the discussion.

CASE STUDY

IKEA – SUPPORTING FAMILIES OF MIGRANT WORKERS

About the company

The IKEA business is a Swedish-founded multinational business that designs and sells ready-toassemble furniture, kitchen appliances and home accessories, among other useful goods and occasionally home services. It has been the world's largest furniture retailer since at least 2008 and has operations in 42 countries. IKEA is a brand, Inter IKEA Group is the group of companies which covers the IKEA product and food range, supply, production and franchising.

What action did the business take?

Many factory workers in China are internal migrant workers. Their children often stay in their hometown and are cared for by extended family. IKEA worked with their suppliers to bring families together by providing housing and access to school for the children of migrant workers. The company worked with a corporate social responsibility platform to develop this programme. Bringing the children closer improved worker productivity and efficiency. It also reduced turnover, as workers stay in their jobs longer when their children go to school close to their parents' workplace.

Key lessons learned

EXPANDING COVERAGE: Inclusivity as a component of family-friendly policies ensures they are responsive to the constantly changing landscape of work and worker types. Indeed, the rise of non-standard forms of employment and the movement of labour and expertise are becoming integral parts of a changing commercial world, so it is vital for companies to develop policies that cover the needs of workers inside and outside conventional work contexts. For both internal and international migrants, managing a healthy family life becomes increasingly challenging as abrupt relocations and separations can expose growing children to such risks as physical and psychological neglect, while traditional social structures and safety nets that typically supported unpaid care responsibilities may be absent and place additional burdens on workers.

4 The application of family-friendly policies in global supply chains

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As highlighted, many businesses do not integrate family-friendly policy standards into procurement contracts and guidance. Global companies interviewed for the study described the following integration challenges: designing policies adaptable to local contexts; addressing non-compliance in supply chains as suppliers are overwhelmed with standards; and providing the cost and time required to design successful global policies. In the deeper supply chain, businesses reported that the priority still lies in ensuring the absence of child and forced labour, and guaranteeing safe work conditions.

5 The need for data, evidence and 'how-to' guidance

Many of the companies participating in the UNICEF workshop emphasized the need for more comprehensive research, data and evidence of the business benefits, the favourable impact on workers and families, and the effectiveness of different strategies. They also noted that businesses starting to implement family-friendly policies need more support, practical solutions and 'how-to' guidance. Feedback and monitoring during implementation could measure the effects of the companies' policies; indicators such as staff satisfaction with policies, returns on investments, productivity measures, and impact on children and families could be assessed.

A SNAPSHOT OF SOLUTIONS FROM THE NEW YORK WORKSHOP

- A supportive environment for breastfeeding: Supporting breastfeeding is about more than having a break or room where women can express milk; a range of policies are needed to create the enabling environment, including flexible hours, paid breastfeeding breaks and initiatives reducing the stigma of breastfeeding at work. Safety and health standards are important to ensure that breastfeeding children and mothers are not exposed to hazardous chemicals or toxins. Employees value options that support breastfeeding and not just expressing milk at the place of work, which may mean investing in on-site childcare facilities. It also means promoting a culture in which breastfeeding is valued, benefiting mother and baby. One business reported allowing mothers to bring breastfeeding infants to the workplace during meetings and conferences.
- Support for breastfeeding during business trips: A business can pay for a caregiver to accompany a mother who is breastfeeding or caring for a young child while travelling for work, and for two adjoining hotel rooms to ensure on-site support during the trip.
- Shorter commutes for more time with the family: A business can provide free transportation to and from work in a city where transportation infrastructure is difficult. Workers who spend less time commuting have more time to spend with their families.
- Phased implementation: A business can start small, or stagger the introduction of initiatives and learn during the process. One business started out by creating lactation rooms, then instigated a broader family wellness programme. This helped the company learn along the way.
- It is important for multinational businesses deploying global programmes to understand diverse national laws, and adapt accordingly, as well as to coordinate with government programmes in the country.
- Equity for parents irrespective of marital status: A business can make sure that parents, regardless of marital status, can access family-friendly policies.
- Cost sharing between the public and private sectors: Governments can subsidize the costs of parental leave and provide tax relief for SMEs. The public and private sectors can collaborate to introduce public childcare solutions that allow private-sector contribution.
- Mandatory parental leave: Paternity leave can be made mandatory, reducing any stigma attached to fathers taking leave to care for children.
- Coordination with government: A business shared examples of working with and building partnerships with the public sector, civil society, unions and communities, leading to the success of its initiatives.
- Childcare during summer holidays: A local school can be used during the summer months, employing teachers who would like to work more, thus providing care solutions when children are out of school.
- Integration of early childhood learning: Childcare centres are more than just a physical space; ensuring minimum standards of quality, an early learning curriculum and training for care staff can augment the quality of childcare facilities for the best development of children.
- National accreditation and quality standards: A business can work with government to secure the national accreditation of childcare facilities and appropriate training and pay for childcare staff. Advocating for minimum standards of employer-supported childcare facilities can raise the quality of services.

REGIONAL CROSS-COUNTRY ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS ACTION ON CHILD RIGHTS

The UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office and consulting firm Deloitte conducted a series of surveys of business policies in 2017–2018 in Colombia, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. An online questionnaire was sent to a large group of corporate partners and major companies. The questionnaire addressed three areas: workplace, marketplace, and community and environment. UNICEF country offices coordinated the implementation of the survey at the national level in collaboration with Deloitte. As a result, 310 companies, most of whom are large enterprises, completed the questionnaire.

Outcome of the study

The four countries in which the study was implemented allow a comparison between the countries and a regional analysis of the most pressing issues on business and children's rights. Based on the survey questionnaire, UNICEF built an online self-assessment tool for companies to interact with the survey in a simplified way. Companies receive a personalized report based on each response, within the framework of the 10 Children's Rights and Business Principles, with contextual information regarding existing legislation on maternity, and children and advertisement, among others. The tool was piloted in three countries: the Plurinational State of Bolivia, the Dominican Republic and Mexico. The latter launched it in August 2018 and compiled over 150 answers by engaging with business associations and key chambers.



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NATIONAL SURVEY OF WORKPLACE POLICIES – UNICEF ARGENTINA

In 2019, UNICEF Argentina published a study on corporate policies and practices that have a direct or indirect impact on children and adolescents to build evidence on the range of ways in which the private sector affects, either negatively or positively, the rights and welfare of children. The study covered 710 employers (90 per cent SMEs and 10 per cent large-scale enterprises) and achieved statistical representation of the business sector in the country. It thus offers robust and reliable information to address the knowledge gaps and encourage both the private and public sectors to guarantee that companies respect the rights of children, thus preventing a negative impact while identifying opportunities to promote these rights, strengthening their positive impact. The study gives continuity to initial research carried out in 2013 with a similar methodology, which provided data on the situation of children's rights and the private sector in Argentina.

The issues covered by the survey were based on the priorities of children and adolescents in Argentina and on key areas where companies must respect and can support children's rights, in their business relations and activities, in the work environment, in the market, in their communities and in their relationship with the environment. The study focused on diverse topics, such as corporate commitment policies, safe products and services, appropriate communication and marketing practices, and private social investment in childhood. In addition, a full chapter was dedicated to internal policies related to employee well-being and family-friendly policies, as well as protected youth employment.

The study's main results and findings pertaining to family-friendly policies are:

- 8 per cent of companies do not offer a minimum of 90 days of maternity leave as stipulated by national law.
- 48 per cent of companies offer more than the two days of paternity leave required by national law.
- The number of days companies offer for maternity and paternity leave increases as the number of women in hierarchical positions increases.
- 39 per cent of companies do not offer reduced working hours for breastfeeding in the first year of the child's life as stipulated by national law.
- 92 per cent of companies do not have a breastfeeding room in their facilities, and 95 per cent do not provide access to childcare centres, either within the company or through an additional cash benefit, or through an agreement with another institution.
- 17 per cent of companies do not offer extended maternity or paternity leave in cases requiring special attention (disability, prematurity, a health condition or multiple births, etc.), in adoption cases, for treatments of assisted fertilization, in cases of gender violence, or to same-sex couples.

Finally, the study allowed the classification of companies based on 10 indicators, revealing their degree of commitment to child rights. One fifth (21 per cent) of companies presented high commitment, half (49 per cent) showed medium commitment and almost one third (30 per cent) indicated low commitment. This classification is useful to understand the specific characteristics of each group, design customized strategies and monitor the evolution of the enterprises over time.

Conclusion

This UNICEF study on workplace policies was the first to be conducted on a global scale and to assess a comprehensive package of business policies related to parental leave, breastfeeding in the workplace and employee childcare needs. The sample included an inherent bias due to the fact that the businesses participating in the survey and interviews form part of UNICEF's in-country business networks and thus are already committed to children's rights. Focused on policy adoption at the corporate level, the study does not assess the acceptance or implementation of policies.

Nevertheless, it is significant that, even among these leading businesses, such a gap exists in achieving UNICEF's family-friendly policy recommendations.¹³ These findings shed light on the perspectives of businesses on family-friendly policies, their drivers and the challenges they face, which can enable additional targeted actions

1 Recommendations

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This survey helped to bring a business perspective to the understanding and implementation of familyfriendly policies. This is valuable for decision-makers – whether in business, government or civil society organizations – who seek to change business policy and practice for families. The survey findings validate the following next steps and recommendations for policymakers working on this agenda to:

- 1. Support **government regulation and financing** for family-friendly policies, especially for SMEs.
 - Governments should establish a comprehensive framework of familyfriendly policies for all businesses and employers and support its implementation.
 - Governments and other stakeholders can adopt innovative financing to help businesses, especially SMEs, with the cost of financing these initiatives. For example, they can create subsidies and tax incentives for companies to implement family-friendly policies.
 - Joint public-private action to address the key challenges and bottlenecks is also key, as businesses report that many of the challenges require coordinated action by business and industry.

with the private sector on this agenda. And in this regard, the findings align with the conclusions of the literature review summarized in the UNICEF evidence brief.¹⁴ For example, the need for robust implementation and monitoring systems, industry-government collaboration, and subsidies and tax incentives to support businesses, especially SMEs.

For many of the businesses surveyed, the single biggest driver of change is national legislation and government support. Thus, the conclusions also reinforce the idea of the 'diamond of care', that the State, business, family and community (including civil society and international organizations, trade unions, community-based organizations, the nonprofit sector and informal networks) must come together in an integrated approach for familyfriendly policies. Such synergistic effort is crucial to enable more workers to maximize the benefits of work and family, and the fuller realization of every child's right to family life.¹⁵

- Integrate family-friendly policies as a key element of women's economic empowerment and diversity initiatives. In light of the feedback from many businesses, linking family-friendly policies to gender equality efforts can increase the likelihood of their adoption.
- 3. Develop **business guidance and tools**, and **support research on what works**. This includes key performance indicators and suggestions for policy implementation and financing for SMEs.
- 4. Develop guidance for businesses on integrating family-friendly policies into procurement and sourcing standards for supply chains. This guidance can support businesses to address practical challenges identified in the implementation of policies among their suppliers.
- 5. Address equity and coverage in the development of policies. As coverage for all employees was a key shortcoming across all policies for a variety of reasons, looking more closely at achieving equity and coverage for all individuals is critical.

Annex 1

FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES: REDESIGNING THE WORKPLACE OF THE FUTURE

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Excerpts of the recommendations to business from UNICEF policy briefs

POLICY NAME	KEY ELEMENTS	POLICY AREA	DESCRIPTION	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
FAMILY-FRIENI	DLY POLICIES			
Maternity protections and inclusive parental leave (Primary and secondary caregiver leave is a gender neutral term ¹⁶)	 Paid maternity leave Paid paternity leave Paid parental leave¹⁷ Emergency leave Care leave Employment protection and non-discrimination (right to return, prohibition of pregnancy testing) for all family forms Occupational safety and health requirements for pregnant and nursing workers Maternal health and nutrition initiatives Reintegration support for workers returning from leave 	Parental leave Breastfeeding	Not only is paid maternity leave in and of itself a labour right, ¹⁸ it is also crucial to child health and development. Paid parental leave is important to allow mothers to recover from childbirth, and for mothers and fathers to provide adequate care for their infants. Policies that prevent discrimination and arbitrary dismissals of pregnant mothers also provide social protection benefits for newborn children. Health and safety protections for pregnant and nursing women are important to protect child and maternal health. A mother's health and nutritional status affect her ability to bear and raise a healthy child, which can be exacerbated by poor working conditions.	Businesses should ensure that paid parental leave is implemented and should champion paternity leave as being equally important as paid maternity leave. They should provide guarantees of paid paternity leave in addition to maternity leave. Businesses should promote the uptake of parental leave by men. They should ensure job protection for anyone taking parental leave. Businesses should ensure at least 18 weeks of paid maternity leave and at least six months of paid maternity, paternity and parental leave, after the birth of the child. Paid parental leave should be of sufficient duration to provide for parental care until affordable and quality infant care is available. Businesses should strive to provide combined leave for parents of at least nine months after the birth of the child. Businesses should work with governments to create mechanisms to ensure that paid parental leave is made available to men and women in both the formal and informal economies. Businesses should ensure that leave is paid at a rate sufficient to make it feasible for all parents to meet their family needs. Businesses should prohibit discrimination on the basis of pregnancy, marital or family status and of leave associated with family responsibility. Businesses should effectively enforce these protections and provide training to managers and staff on the value of employee retention and productivity resulting from parental leave and leave for the care of sick children. Businesses should provide parents with paid leave to care for sick children and implement leave specifically for the care of a child's health needs. Businesses should bolster these efforts on parental leave, generate evidence on its benefits and raise awareness among business partners, employees, consumers and the wider public.
Breastfeeding support	 Breastfeeding arrangements Breastfeeding breaks Breastfeeding rooms and supportive equipment 	Breastfeeding Parental leave	A supportive breastfeeding environment is critical to facilitate breastfeeding at work and promote the health and development of children. Despite the benefits, research has found that returning to work can be a leading obstacle to optimal breastfeeding practices, without adequate support mechanisms in the workplace. ¹⁹	Businesses should provide at least 18 weeks of paid maternity leave and at least six months of paid maternity, paternity and parental leave, after the birth of a child. In line with national policy and beyond, businesses should guarantee paid maternity leave and remunerated breastfeeding breaks at work to facilitate the ability of mothers to breastfeed for the duration of their choice. Businesses should provide a safe, clean, hygienic and culturally appropriate space for women to breastfeed and/or express milk, and refrigeration for the storage of expressed milk at the workplace. Businesses should prohibit discrimination in the workplace on the basis of pregnancy, breastfeeding or family status. Businesses should ensure the monitoring of workplace discrimination. Business leaders and their networks should lead coalitions with governments and civil society actors to raise awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding in terms of higher employee retention, lower turnover costs, health benefits to the child and mother, and lower absenteeism due to child illness. Businesses should advocate for stronger government policy on breastfeeding support in the workplace.

POLICY NAME	KEY ELEMENTS	POLICY AREA	DESCRIPTION	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS	
Support for care (childcare)	 On-site or near- site childcare After-school care Summer camps Presence of a child in the workplace Safe transport to school Financial support/ subsidies for care arrangements Support for migrant workers' families 	Childcare	Childcare is important to help mothers return to work and to support early childhood development. A lack of affordable, good quality childcare can also mean that children may be at risk of neglect and abuse while their parents are working. ²⁰	Businesses should assess employee childcare needs, in collaboration with worker representatives and labour unions, invest in solutions to meet these needs and, where appropriate, support meeting any remaining needs of the surrounding community. Business employers and labour unions should work together to ensure safe working conditions for pregnant women and their children, minimize shift work and long, unpredictable working hours of parents with young children, and introduce flexible work arrangements to enable parents to take care of their children.	
Working time and arrangements	 Working hours (overtime, long hours, night work limits) Flexible work arrangements, including teleworking and work from home Work sharing/ rotation Part-time work options 	Parental leave Breastfeeding Childcare	Flexible working hours and arrangements allow parents to balance work with family life and allow them to spend quality time caring for their children.	Business employers and labour unions should work together to ensure safe working conditions for pregnant women and their children, minimize shift work and long, unpredictable working hours of parents with young children, and introduce flexible work arrangements to enable parents to take care of their children.	
Promotion of positive parenting practices	 Awareness raising campaigns to promote positive parenting practices among employees – e.g. promoting breastfeeding, postnatal education, the participation of fathers, etc. 	Parental leave Breastfeeding Childcare	While not the responsibility of businesses in relation to workplace policies, many businesses have actively promoted positive parenting practices with employees and customers.	Businesses have an opportunity to promote positive parenting practices among employees, generate evidence on its benefits, raise awareness among employees and provide training and guidance.	
Advocacy and partnerships	 Partnerships with government and civil society Use of business leverage to canvass for better policies in supply chains and sectors of low visibility 	Parental leave Breastfeeding Childcare	The voice of business can be a critical piece to encourage and support government action, including stronger legal and regulatory standards and national initiatives on family- friendly policies.	Businesses have an opportunity to undertake advocacy and champion family-friendly policies to advance stronger government regulation, industry standards and national initiatives.	
OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES					
Supply chain and procurement	 Decent work for parents and caregivers in core supply chain standards and capacity building Promotion of family-friendly policies Housing and accommodation for migrant worker families 	Parental leave Breastfeeding Childcare	Businesses and employers can use their influence and leverage within their supply chains and other business partners to promote decent work for parents and caregivers.	Businesses should go beyond legal compliance and pay particular attention to family-friendly working conditions and sufficient wages for families in their own workplaces and in their supply chains.	

POLICY NAME	KEY ELEMENTS	POLICY AREA	DESCRIPTION	POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
Minimum wages	 Minimum wage levels sufficient to support dependents and the needs of the migrant workforce 	Parental leave Breastfeeding Childcare	Working conditions for parents and caregivers influence their ability to provide an adequate standard of living for their children. Decent wages at levels sufficient for workers to support dependents and children enable parents to financially provide for children.	Businesses should pay all workers, regardless of their contractual status, a sufficient wage that allows them to support themselves and their families.
Gender equality and prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination	 Prevention of sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace Gender equality measures 	Parental leave Breastfeeding Childcare	Sexual harassment in the workplace is widespread and can affect not only the victims but also their families. Adolescents and young workers are at increased risk. Wide-ranging gender equality efforts in the workplace can support the attitudes, norms and culture where men and women feel able to actively benefit from family-friendly workplace policies.	Business should ensure take-up of family-friendly policies by fathers to promote the redistribution of unpaid care work within families. Businesses should also ensure comprehensive policies and programmes to prevent sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

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Endnotes

- See United Nations Children's Fund, Family-Friendly Policies: Redesigning the Workplace of the Future, A Policy Brief, UNICEF, New York, July 2019, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-policy-brief-familyfriendly-policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 15 October 2019; International Labour Organization, World Employment and Social Outlook: Trends for Women 2018 – Global snapshot, ILO, Geneva, 2018, p. 7, <www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/ public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_619577. pdf>, accessed 18 October 2019.
- 2 See, for example, the International Finance Corporation's report Tackling Childcare: The Business Case for Employer-Supported Childcare, IFC, Washington, D.C., September 2017, which notes that 90 per cent of jobs in developing countries are in the private sector.
- 3 UNICEF's diamond approach to family-friendly policies outlines the "four key actors ... needed to advance family-friendly policies as four corners of a diamond: the State, businesses, families and communities (including civil society and international organizations, trade unions, community-based organizations, the non-profit sector and informal networks). This 'diamond of care' can come together in an integrated approach for family-friendly policies". Family-Friendly Policies, p. 3.
- 4 United Nations Children's Fund, Business and Family-Friendly Policies: An evidence brief, UNICEF, New York, July 2019, p. 1, <www.unicef.org/sites/ default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-Business-Family-Friendly-Policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 15 October 2019.
- 5 International Labour Organization, Maternity and paternity at work: Law and practice across the world, ILO, Geneva, 2014.
- 6 United Nations Children's Fund, Are the world's richest countries family friendly? Policy in the OECD and EU, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence, June 2019, <www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/Family-Friendly-Policies-Research_UNICEF_%202019.pdf>, accessed 15 October 2019.
- 7 ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183).
- 8 The minimum length of paternity leave required by law remains very low in most countries, with the exception of Scandinavian countries. In 2014, the ILO found that 66 countries had national minimum paternity leave, predominantly in developed economies, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and only rarely in other regions. The same study found that the uptake of leave is low and that when shared leave is offered, it is often used by women.

- The World Health Organization and UNICEF recommendations on breastfeeding are as follows: "initiation of breastfeeding within the first hour after the birth; exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months; and continued breastfeeding for two years or more, together with safe, nutritionally adequate, age appropriate, responsive complementary feeding starting in the sixth month". They also state that: "Early and exclusive breastfeeding helps children survive, but it also supports healthy brain development, improves cognitive performance and is associated with better educational achievement at age 5. Breastfeeding is the foundation of good nutrition and protects children against disease." UNICEF, "Breastfeeding", <</td>
- 10 See, for example, Noorderhaven, Niels G., and Anne-Wil Harzing, 'The "country-of-origin effect" in multinational corporations: Sources, mechanisms and moderating conditions', June 2003, <<u>https://harzing.com/download/ cooeffect.pdf</u>>, accessed 14 October 2019.
- 11 International Labour Organization, *World Employment and Social Outlook* 2015: The changing nature of jobs, ILO, Geneva, 2015.
- 12 Human rights frameworks cited in the interviews include the Children's Rights and Business Principles, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the ILD Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the United Nations SDGs, the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact and the ILD Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (MNE Declaration).
- 13 Family-Friendly Policies.
- 14 Business and Family-Friendly Policies.

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- 15 For a discussion of the diamond of care model, see *Family-Friendly Policies*.
- 16 Boston Consulting Group Henderson Institute, *Why Paid Family Leave Is Good Business*, BCG, Boston, February 2017.
- 17 An absence often seen as additional to maternity or paternity leave that can be taken by either parent to care for children.
- 18 ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183).
- 19 Rollins, Nigel, et al., 'Why invest, and what will it take to improve breastfeeding practices?' *Lancet*, vol. 387, January 2016, pp. 491–504.
- 20 IFC, Tackling Childcare: The Business Case for Employer-Supported Childcare.



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