

FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES

HANDBOOK FOR BUSINESS

Acknowledgements

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The handbook builds on the work of UNICEF to redesign workplaces for the future and enable parents to give their children the best start in life, while boosting productivity and women's empowerment. Find out more at <www.unicef.org/early-childhood-development/family-friendly-policies>.

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Cover Photo

Ingfah Chommeelap, pre-school child at Baan Wanaluang School in the northern province of Mae Hong Son, Thailand, and her family. Mother of Ingfah says "Eat, Play, Love" are the key to raising her child. A child should eat nutritious food, has free time to play, and is loved by people around her.

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Foreword

Today's children are the drivers of tomorrow's economy. These girls and boys are the future engineers, farmers, entrepreneurs, scientists, factory workers, CEOs, doctors, nurses and teachers. They will create and support families, own and work for businesses, and become the foundation of their communities and countries. They are the people on whom we will rely on during the next pandemic.

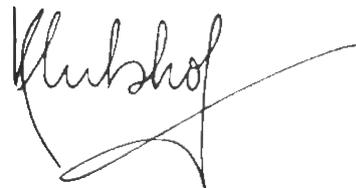
But, now, in 186 of the world's countries, 1.29 billion children are directly affected by national school closures, and 300 million of these children live in East Asia and the Pacific.

Unless we work vigilantly to protect the significant advances in increasing access to education and reducing poverty made during recent decades, COVID-19 will unravel progress on child rights. It will tear apart economies, significantly worsen inequalities, disrupt key essential public services and safety nets, and reverse the gains under way in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

This new environment calls for all actors, including the private sector, to reimagine their business models, collaborate and expand partnerships, act quickly and build a better, resilient and sustainable society where no-one is left behind, particularly the most vulnerable.

At this critical juncture, UNICEF is urging business leaders and decision makers to protect the future by protecting families with young children, and supporting every child's right to grow and develop to their fullest potential.

By making greater investments in family-friendly policies, businesses everywhere can support the people who do the most important job in the world. By enhancing family well-being through workplace policies, we can work together to secure more positive outcomes for children. This handbook is designed to help companies make that happen.



Karin Hulshof
Regional Director
UNICEF East Asia and Pacific

1. Introduction to the handbook

During the first 1,000 days of a child's life, parents have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build a baby's brain and shape a child's ability to learn and flourish. As their children grow, fathers and mothers continue to have the most important job in the world: building the foundations for life in the future. When businesses, as well as governments, invest in policies that give parents the support they need to raise happy and healthy children, societies and economies can thrive.¹

Companies, on their own and in collaboration with other stakeholders, have a pivotal role in making the workplace family-friendly.² To address the needs of children, parents and other caregivers, family-friendly policies feature:

- ✓ Paid parental leave, covering both mothers and fathers to care for young children.
- ✓ Flexible work arrangements that offer choices on when and where workers fulfil their responsibilities, such as adjusted working hours, compressing the work week, or working from home.
- ✓ Protections for pregnant women, including job security, and support for breastfeeding mothers, including paid breaks and adequate facilities to accommodate breastfeeding at work.
- ✓ Access to affordable, quality childcare, from the end of parental leave to children's entry into the first grade of school.
- ✓ Child benefits, which include regular cash transfers as part of a government-sponsored system of social protection and social services, and can be supported by public-private partnerships between government, local industry associations and communities to mobilize additional resources.

As noted throughout the handbook, these measures can save lives, increase health and well-being, and reduce health-care costs and absenteeism. While the benefits and the need were already evident, as work and family life have been upended in the context of COVID-19, the timetable for fortifying family-friendly policies and expediting new programmes must be greatly accelerated.

Though many companies have adopted some or all of these policies, they are not yet a reality for most parents around the world. Only 30 per cent

BOX 1.

DEFINING 'FAMILY-FRIENDLY' POLICIES

UNICEF applies a child rights lens to define family-friendly policies as the measures and arrangements that have a positive impact on workers' abilities to reconcile work and family responsibilities – and advance the development and well-being of their children.

The potential constructive impacts of family-friendly policies include reducing child mortality and low birthweight, decreasing instances of child abuse, increasing rates of breastfeeding and immunization, and enhancing children's cognitive development and school performance.

As demonstrated throughout this handbook, it is vital to recognize the contribution these policies can make in improving children's lives.



With its holistic and straight forward approach, this handbook offers guidance, ideas and suggestions for employers who seek to maximize their positive impacts while enhancing workforce well-being and productivity.

of countries, for example, offer maternity leave that meets International Labour Organization (ILO) standards – and two-thirds of children under age 1 live in countries where their fathers are not entitled by law to a single day of paid paternity leave.³ And the needs become increasingly apparent for workers outside the formal sector. More than 60 per cent of the global workforce, or 2 billion people, earn their living in the informal economy,⁴ which is often unpredictable, less regulated and poorly covered by social protection.

¹ UNICEF Parenting, 'It's About Time', United Nations Children's Fund, <www.unicef.org/parenting/its-about-time>, accessed 29 April 2020.

² For more information on making workplaces family-friendly, see: United Nations Children's Fund, 'Family-Friendly Policies: Redesigning the workplace of the future – A policy brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-policy-brief-family-friendly-policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 29 April 2020; and United Nations Children's Fund, '7 Ways Employers Can Support Working Parents during the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Outbreak', UNICEF, New York, 23 March 2020, <www.unicef.org/coronavirus/7-ways-employers-can-support-working-parents-during-coronavirus-disease-covid-19>, accessed 5 May 2020.

³ Fore, Henrietta H., 'Family-Friendly Policies Benefit All of Us: Here are 4 ways to boost them', World Economic Forum, Geneva, 29 July 2019, <www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/07/4-ways-to-build-family-friendly-policies-parental-leave>, accessed 5 May 2020.

⁴ International Labour Office, *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A statistical picture*, 3rd ed., International Labour Organization, Geneva, 2018, p. 13, available at <www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_626831/lang-en/index.htm>, accessed 9 May 2020.

The Family-Friendly Policies Handbook for Business aims to strengthen business-supported practices. Companies that are interested in or already engaged in delivering family-friendly solutions in their operations will find this handbook useful as it helps them:

- ✓ Enhance their knowledge, advance their interests and explore multiple options.
- ✓ Reflect on and improve existing policies.
- ✓ Introduce or expand established family-friendly programmes.

With its holistic and straightforward approach, this handbook offers guidance, ideas and suggestions for employers who seek to maximize their positive impacts while enhancing workforce well-being and productivity. It is designed for use by any size company, across the supply chain and business relationships. Acknowledging that each business has a different level of experience in addressing sustainability and corporate responsibility, the content is meant to be tailored to the company's needs and adapted to local contexts.

Section 2 summarizes the benefits of a family-friendly workplace for business, society and building community resilience against emergencies. Section 3 outlines key steps to take when implementing policies, including assessment and mapping, company commitment, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Section 4 wraps up the handbook with a discussion of core principles and details on six basic measures that apply to the family-friendly workplace.

The ideas and recommendations found in the handbook draw on UNICEF's evolving experience across Asia and the Pacific, including the pilot programmes in Bangladesh and Viet Nam to promote family-friendly policies and practices in factory settings.⁵ We hope the handbook will help establish a solid foundation for increased uptake in family-friendly programmes across the region and beyond.

2. When companies invest in family-friendly policies and programmes, everyone benefits

Well-planned and implemented family-friendly policies represent a win-win-win situation: good for business, good for parents and children, and good for communities and society as a whole. Section 2 of the handbook reviews the wide range of advantages that can be accrued in these realms, then describes how family-friendly workplaces prepare communities for greater resilience when a crisis hits.

2.1 Business benefits

Family-friendly policies are generally aligned with, or sometimes even stronger than, international, national and industry standards for corporate social responsibility, workplace safety and human rights – including children's rights.⁶ This makes it easier for companies to lower their risks and heighten their social licence to operate. Further, these policies are a great opportunity to promote and create

BOX 2.

HOW FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES CAN BENEFIT BUSINESS

- ✓ Mitigate compliance risks and strengthen regulatory compliance
- ✓ Improve worker retention, especially women
- ✓ Improve workers' well-being, productivity and performance
- ✓ Increase job satisfaction and loyalty, reduce employee turnover and absenteeism
- ✓ Promote corporate culture, reputation, public image and brand value
- ✓ Boost profitability

⁵ The pilot project reports are: UNICEF Bangladesh, 'Better Business for Children: Understanding children's rights and the ready-made garment sector in Bangladesh', United Nations Children's Fund, Dhaka, May 2018, available at <www.unicef.org/bangladesh/en/reports/better-business-children>, and UNICEF Viet Nam, 'The Apparel and Footwear Sector and Children in Viet Nam', United Nations Children's Fund, Ha Noi, June 2017, available at <www.unicef.org/vietnam/reports/apparel-and-footwear-sector-and-children-viet-nam>, accessed 15 May 2020.

⁶ For international standards on business and child rights, see: UNICEF Better Business for Children, 'Children's Rights & Business Principles', United Nations Children's Fund, <www.unicef.org/csr/theprinciples.html>, accessed 11 May 2020

visibility on company values linked to diversity and inclusion – especially gender – or to a company's commitment to human rights as part of its core business model.

Following the robust implementation of tailored programmes, many companies report increased levels of satisfaction and loyalty among workers, and a decline in turnover and absenteeism.⁷ Evidence confirms that family-friendly programmes are highly effective tools to improve the well-being and productivity of all workers, and they encourage female workers to be able to stay with the job.⁸ Businesses in the United States with lactation support for working mothers, for example, report employee retention rates of 83–94 per cent, compared with the national rate of 59 per cent.⁹

Well-designed and implemented family-friendly workplace measures nurture an inclusive family-

oriented business culture. This can enhance a company's socially responsible brand image, boost its competitiveness to attract diverse talent in the labour market, and lower recruitment costs. Companies from labour-intensive sectors, such as manufacturing and agribusiness, may find this advantage particularly appealing.

Many businesses also find that family-friendly programmes – such as day-care services, fee subsidies, breastfeeding support and paid parental leave – increase profitability, making these programmes an additionally worthwhile investment. A survey published by the International Finance Corporation in 2019, for example, found that although only 23 per cent of the sampled companies provide childcare, 51 per cent of the companies that do offer childcare solutions reported positive impacts on profitability.¹⁰

BOX 3.

FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES CAN BE GOOD FOR SMALLER COMPANIES, TOO

For many small and medium-size employers, family-friendly policies might appear to add financial burdens to the other challenges faced in their business operations. However, family-friendly programmes take many forms and can often be adopted by small and medium-size companies, even 'mom-and-pop' businesses.

Affordable options include flexible or part-time hours, job-sharing, allowing work off-site, family-oriented events, college scholarships or loans for employees' children, and covering family issues as part of an employee assistance programme. Whether a company's policies are directly aimed to achieve family-friendly outcomes, or may be only incidentally family-friendly, these measures help create a better place to work.¹¹

By offering family-friendly arrangements, businesses can also reduce turnover and increase staff retention – avoiding replacement costs that can reach up to 20 per cent of the 'lost' worker's salary, and thereby boosting the company's bottom line.¹²

Source:

¹¹ Community Tool Box, 'Chapter 25 – Section 11: Promoting family-friendly policies in business and government', Center for Community Health and Development, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kan., 1994–2020, <<https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/implement/changing-policies/business-government-family-friendly/main>>, accessed 25 April 2020.

¹² Fore, Henrietta H., 'Family-Friendly Policies Benefit All of Us: Here are 4 ways to boost them', World Economic Forum, Geneva, 29 July 2019, <www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/07/4-ways-to-build-family-friendly-policies-parental-leave>, accessed 5 May 2020.

⁷ International Finance Corporation, *Tackling Childcare: A guide for employer-supported childcare*, IFC, Washington, D.C., November 2019, p. 17, available at <www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/gender+at+ifc/resources/guide+for+employer-supported+childcare>, accessed 4 May 2020.

⁸ For evidence of positive impacts, see: Jayasekaran, Subajini, et al., 'Business and Family-Friendly Policies: An evidence brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-Business-Family-Friendly-Policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 29 April 2020; and Beghini, Valentina, Umberto Cattaneo and Emanuela Pozzan, *A Quantum Leap for Gender Equality: For a better future of work for all*, International Labour Organization, Geneva, 2019, pp. 81–82, available in English, French and Spanish at <www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_674831/lang-en/index.htm>, accessed 4 May 2020.

⁹ Griswold, Michele, and Aunchalee Palmquist, 'Breastfeeding and Family-Friendly Policies: An evidence brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, p. 3, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-Breastfeeding-Family-Friendly%20Policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 4 May 2020.

¹⁰ International Finance Corporation, *Tackling Childcare: The business benefits and challenges of employer-supported childcare in Bangladesh*, IFC, November 2019, pp. 14–16, <<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/867371582283308546/pdf/Tackling-Childcare-The-Business-Benefits-and-Challenges-of-Employer-Supported-Childcare-in-Bangladesh.pdf>>, accessed 12 May 2020.

FIGURE 1. THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



2.2 Social benefits

Family-friendly programmes strengthen both corporate sustainability and social sustainability. Business success and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), for example, can be mutually reinforcing and achieved together. The private sector's active participation in employer-supported workplace programmes directly contributes to achieving many of the SDGs, which are illustrated in Figure 1.

This section summarizes issues and solutions related to eliminating poverty, improving education opportunities, advancing gender equality, and expanding economic development through stable employment and reduced inequality.

SDG 1: No poverty – Despite having a job, 8 per cent of the world's workers lived in extreme poverty – less than US\$1.90 a day – as of 2018.¹¹ One in five children (385 million) were living in extreme poverty in 2019, and nearly one in two (689 million) were living in multidimensionally poor households, indicating deprivations in health, education and standard of living; across these two measures, children were twice as likely to live in poverty as adults.¹²

Business investments in family-friendly programmes can provide financial security to new parents and improve family well-being in the long run. In high-income countries, each additional week of paid parental leave is associated with a 4.2 per cent lower chance of single mothers living in poverty.¹³

BOX 4.

HOW FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY

Children:

- ✓ Improve health and nutrition
- ✓ Enhance social and emotional development
- ✓ Strengthen language and cognitive skills
- ✓ Improve readiness for school
- ✓ Prevent and reduce child labour

Parents and other caregivers:

- ✓ Increase personal well-being and productivity
- ✓ Increase participation in labour markets
- ✓ Reduce poverty and alleviate financial stress
- ✓ Improve work-life balance
- ✓ Improve parenting skills through parenting programmes and support
- ✓ Support the well-being of families

Communities and society:

- ✓ Build human capital, enlarge the talent pool
- ✓ Increase workplace productivity and earnings, likely reducing dependence on social assistance
- ✓ Reduce poverty
- ✓ Secure decent working conditions
- ✓ Improve gender equality in economic participation and reduce women's dropout rates

¹¹ United Nations, 'Sustainable Development Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere – Progress & info (2019)', <<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg1>>, accessed 12 May 2020.

¹² International Labour Office and United Nations Children's Fund, 'Towards Universal Social Protection for Children: Achieving SDG 1.3', ILO-UNICEF Joint Report on Social Protection for Children, UNICEF and ILO, New York and Geneva, 6 February 2019, pp. 2, 3, <www.unicef.org/media/49401/file>, accessed 14 May 2020.

¹³ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Family-Friendly Policies: Redesigning the workplace of the future – A policy brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, p. 4, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-policy-brief-family-friendly-policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 29 April 2020.

SDG 3: Good health and well-being – Parental leave gives caregivers the opportunity to bond with their young children, meet children’s health, nutritional and developmental needs, and prepare children for a healthier and more prosperous adulthood.¹⁴

When it comes to infant and child health, one month of paid maternity leave can lead to a 3 per cent decline in infant mortality in high-income countries and a 13 per cent reduction in low- and middle-income countries. One month of parental leave increases the duration of breastfeeding, a primary health benefit for infants, by two months. And a child’s chances of having potentially fatal diarrhoea – which kills hundreds of thousands of children under age 5 every year – can be reduced by 35 per cent with a month of extended maternal leave.¹⁵

SDG 4: Quality education – Progress on education access and participation has advanced significantly over the past decades. But as of 2017, 262 million children aged 6–17 were still not in school, and more than half of the world’s children and adolescents could not meet minimum standards for proficiency in reading and mathematics.¹⁶

“ One month of paid maternity leave can lead to a 3 per cent decline in infant mortality in high-income countries and a 13 per cent reduction in low- and middle-income countries. ”

Investing in early childhood education is a powerful and cost-effective way to mitigate the negative consequences of poverty and inequity on child development and adult opportunity.¹⁷ The long-term benefits of effective early childhood programmes have been confirmed in influential research finding

that children who received high-quality care had significantly better life outcomes than those who did not receive care or those who received lower quality care.¹⁸

SDG 5: Gender equality – Women face disadvantages or discrimination related to employment, wages and leadership opportunities throughout their working life. In every region, women invest more time in unpaid caregiving than men – 4.1 times more in Asia and the Pacific.¹⁹ Across the world, 606 million working-age women (21.7 per cent) perform unpaid caregiving work on a full-time basis, compared with 41 million men (1.5 per cent). This work without pay is the primary factor that keeps women from joining the workforce.²⁰ As one result of this imbalance, the rate for women’s participation in the labour force was 63 per cent, in 2018, while men’s workforce participation rate was 94 per cent.²¹

“ Investing in early childhood education is a powerful and cost-effective way to mitigate the negative consequences of poverty and inequity on child development and adult opportunity. ”

High-quality childcare is one of the fundamental ways to bring about more equal responsibilities for caregiving. When a company provides or supports childcare services for workers, it makes a significant contribution to economic equality. Subsidized childcare and paid maternity leave are vital measures for reducing the gender earnings gap, allowing mothers to secure employment and supporting women’s economic empowerment. These and other family-friendly policies will also advance SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth) and SDG 10 (reduced inequalities).

¹⁴ See: Chzhen, Yekaterina, Anna Gromada and Gwyther Rees, ‘Are the World’s Richest Countries Family Friendly? Policy in the OECD and EU’, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, Florence, Italy, June 2019, p. 4. <www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/Family-Friendly-Policies-Research_UNICEF_%202019.pdf>, accessed 30 April 2020.

¹⁵ Fore, Henrietta H., ‘Family-Friendly Policies Benefit All of Us: Here are 4 ways to boost them’, World Economic Forum, Geneva, 29 July 2019, <www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/07/4-ways-to-build-family-friendly-policies-parental-leave>, accessed 5 May 2020.

¹⁶ United Nations, ‘Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all – Progress & Info (2019)’, <<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>>, accessed 11 May 2020.

¹⁷ On the benefits of early childhood education, see: United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘1.3 Equitable Pre-primary Education Is an Effective Strategy for Promoting Economic Growth’, A World Ready to Learn: Prioritizing quality early childhood education, UNICEF, New York, April 2019, pp. 22–25, available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish at <www.unicef.org/reports/a-world-ready-to-learn-2019>, accessed 10 May 2020.

¹⁸ The Heckman Equation, ‘Research Summary: The lifecycle benefits of an influential early childhood program’, 2020, <<https://heckmanequation.org/resource/research-summary-lifecycle-benefits-influential-early-childhood-program>>, accessed 11 May 2020.

¹⁹ Addati, Laura, et al., Care Work and Care Jobs for the Future of Decent Work, International Labour Office, Geneva, 28 June 2018, p. 54, available at <www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_633135/lang-en/index.htm>, accessed 14 May 2020.

²⁰ Beghini, Valentina, Umberto Cattaneo and Emanuela Pozzan, A Quantum Leap for Gender Equality: For a better future of work for all, International Labour Organization, Geneva, 2019, p. 13, available in English, French and Spanish at <www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_674831/lang-en/index.htm>, accessed 4 May 2020.

²¹ UN Women, Turning Promises into Action: Gender equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN Women, New York, p. 108, available at <www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2018/2/gender-equality-in-the-2030-agenda-for-sustainable-development-2018>, accessed 12 May 2020.

²² Heilman, Brian, et al., State of the World’s Fathers: Time for action, Promundo, Sonke Gender Justice, Save the Children and MenEngage Alliance, Washington, D.C., 2017, p. 14, <https://s30818.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PRO17004_REPORT-Post-print-June9-WEB-3-1.pdf>, accessed 12 May 2020.

²³ See, for example: Chopra, Deepta, and Meenakshi Krishnan, ‘Linking Family-Friendly Policies to Women’s Economic Empowerment: An evidence brief’, UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-Gender-Family-Friendly-Policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 12 May 2020.

BOX 5.**HIGH RETURNS ON INVESTMENT**

Although quality programmes for young children require financial investments, taking action to provide these services can lead to significant gains. Economists have demonstrated that the potential returns on investment in quality service provision for young children can be as much as US\$9 for every US\$1 invested and that high-quality early childhood programmes can increase future earnings for participating children by 25 per cent.[1]

As stated in a recent International Finance Corporation document, “In addition to gaining immediate benefits by helping their employees, employers who invest in childcare solutions contribute to the entire business community in the long term ... Support for workers in the informal sector can also deliver benefits to individuals and society as a whole.”

Source:

^[1] United Nations Children’s Fund, *Early Moments Matter for Every Child*, UNICEF, New York, p. ii, available in English, French and Spanish at <www.unicef.org/publications/index_100862.html>, accessed 11 May 2020.

^[2] International Finance Corporation, *Tackling Childcare: A guide for employer-supported childcare*, IFC, Washington, D.C., November 2019, p. 22.

2.3 Resilience during emergencies

More than any previous crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the importance of giving working parents the time, information, services and resources needed to cope with shocks, including through family-friendly policies and practices. The pandemic has disrupted education and childcare, put health at risk and, very quickly, led to severe losses of household income. In the context of widespread school and childcare closures, domestic care responsibilities for working parents, especially women, increased dramatically during the crisis.

Employment and income protection, paid leave to care for family members, flexible working arrangements and access to quality, emergency childcare have all come up as important measures to enable workers to protect and care for themselves, their children and their relatives during a crisis such as the coronavirus outbreak.

“ The recommendations and steps outlined in this handbook provide a blueprint for companies on how to mitigate some of the negative consequences on workers and their families linked to an emergency such as COVID-19

The recommendations and steps outlined in this handbook provide a blueprint for companies on how to mitigate some of the negative consequences on workers and their families linked to an emergency such as COVID-19. The process of establishing family-friendly policies is a long-term commitment that requires meaningful and ongoing engagement with workers and management to understand needs and potential gaps, leading to continuous amendments and improvements.

By making an investment in family-friendly policies before a crisis hits, companies can build business resilience by putting in place structures that can be adapted to rapidly changing contexts and unexpected business disruptions.²⁴

²⁴ Even if a company has limited policies or processes in place, UNICEF, together with the International Labour Organization and UN Women, has issued interim recommendations to help employers strengthen support for workers and their families during the COVID-19 crisis. See: United Nations Children’s Fund, International Labour Organization and UN Women, ‘Family-Friendly Policies and Other Good Workplace Practices in the Context of COVID-19: Key steps employers can take’, Interim Recommendations, UNICEF, ILO and UN Women, 27 March 2020, <www.unicef.org/media/66351/file/Family-friendly-policies-covid-19-guidance-2020.pdf>, accessed 12 May 2020.

3. Making family-friendly policies a business reality

Section 3 introduces the pathways companies can take to establish or strengthen family-friendly policies in the workplace. It outlines five key steps in the cycle of development through implementation and monitoring:

- 1 Conduct a family-friendly policies needs assessment, collecting information and feedback from both management and the workforce. Analyse the data gathered during the assessment to understand the general situation and determine whether and what kind of family-friendly policies are needed.
- 2 Analyse existing policies, e.g., the company's code of conduct, and map the measures that could be supportive to children and their families. Use the results to decide which barriers can be removed or corrected, and what actions can be taken to fill the gaps and make policies more family-friendly.
- 3 Develop a formal commitment that details the company's promise to adopt family-friendly policies and clearly expresses its vision, objectives and support from high-level management.
- 4 Design and implement family-friendly policies and programmes, including a governance structure, a workplan, company-wide awareness-raising and feedback channels.
- 5 Monitor and evaluate all family-friendly policies and delivered programmes, making continuous improvements and maximizing the positive impacts.

“Assessing the needs is the first step towards discovering whether a workplace is sufficiently family-friendly and finding ways to create stronger policies and programmes. Having comprehensive and accurate data at hand will go a long way towards making promises a reality.”

Some of these activities require fairly complicated tasks that require a high level of expertise. One option for a business to consider is engaging independent third parties, such as child rights institutions, non-governmental organizations or consulting companies, to provide professional support as needed throughout the process.

3.1 Assess the needs

This is the first step towards discovering whether a workplace is sufficiently family-friendly and finding ways to create stronger policies and programmes. An assessment can take different forms, for example, a stand-alone appraisal, a review that is integrated into management systems or due diligence assessments, or part of ongoing social dialogue²⁵ involving workers and their representatives (e.g., trade unions). Key objectives will include:

- ✓ Identifying the most pressing needs of parent workers.
- ✓ Revealing whether or not current workplace policies are supportive enough for families.
- ✓ Determining which improvements can be made.

To help determine management's perspective, the handbook offers a sample self-assessment survey in Appendix I, Table A. By adapting this worksheet to your company's needs, it will be possible to identify management's knowledge of the challenges facing its workforce (particularly that of parent workers), perceptions on whether the current workplace is family-friendly and how well workers are engaged in related policymaking processes, as well as the status of worksite compliance with labour rights and child rights protection.

To help determine workers' needs, a sample survey on family-friendly policy is offered in Appendix II, Table B. The workers' needs assessment will identify basic personal and family demographics; workers' financial situation, including income level and living expenses; and the status of labour rights protection, e.g., social insurance, health and safety, and working hours, holiday and leave time. The assessment will also aim to reveal workers' self-identified challenges and proposed solutions, knowledge and awareness of childcare, family care and associated rights and entitlements; and how they view the accessibility, affordability and quality of family-friendly measures already being offered.

²⁵ See more about social dialogue at: International Labour Organization, <www.ilo.org/ifpdial/areas-of-work/social-dialogue/lang-en/index.htm>%20a>, accessed 10 May 2020.

A needs assessment creates expectations, and companies should be ready to follow up on the results, including with meaningful action on the needs identified by workers and management. Having comprehensive and accurate data at hand will go a long way towards making promises a reality.

Recommendations from UNICEF’s pilot programme in Viet Nam, for example, highlighted the need to build an evidence base for factory- and community-based programmes, particularly as a way to support factories’ management in identifying the gaps between policy and practice.²⁶ In UNICEF’s pilot programme in Bangladesh, the participating factories had all made commitments to supporting workers’ children, but none maintained a database to track which workers had children, the children’s ages or where the children were living. As part of the pilot, these factories were finalizing a data exercise to make sure they could identify and adopt the best approach to family-friendly strategies.²⁷

3.2 Map the policy landscape

The end goal of mapping the company’s policies is to set the ground for moving beyond legal compliance to achieve best practices that reflect workers’ needs and provide additional safeguards for working parents. An adaptable template that can guide the process is offered in Appendix III, Table C.

It starts with collecting up-to-date information on the external legal provisions and regulatory requirements for protecting and supporting parent workers, as set by global organizations such as the ILO and the World Health Organization, as well as relevant industry or sector codes. This will include

“ Mapping policies starts with collecting up-to-date information on the external legal provisions and regulatory requirements for protecting and supporting parent workers – covering all countries of operation.

benchmarks for international, national and local legislation related to parental leave, maternity and paternity leave, pregnant and nursing women, social insurance, living wages, working hours, gender equality and any other categories identified in the company’s other assessments on family-friendly measures.

The review should cover the legal frameworks in all countries of operation. To identify gaps and the legal framework that has the most progressive approach to family-friendly policies, it can also be helpful to compare international standards and legal protection provided in other countries (e.g., one role-model country and one country with a similar social-economic status).

The next step is reviewing policies, strategies and practices that are in place across the company to gauge its compliance – along with the policies and codes of conduct governing partners acting for or on behalf of the company. In all cases, you will want to determine how these policies and practices are being communicated to all appropriate individuals, including workers, management and contractors.

After the needs assessment and policy mapping are complete, it will be time to determine the priorities for family-friendly support. The checklist in Table 1 describes four primary policy options; the company could also consider expanding this list to include other types of support, such as those mentioned following the table.

TABLE 1. SELECTING PRIORITIES FOR YOUR FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE

Policy options	Priority level
<p>Parental, maternity and paternity leave</p> <p>Employers can provide a range of job-protected and paid family leave options for all workers, including men and women, mothers, fathers, and adoptive and surrogate parents. Along with parental, maternity and paternity leave, this could include paid time off for childcare and eldercare (see Section 4.1).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low
<p>Flexible work arrangements</p> <p>Flexible work arrangements give workers the option to choose when or where they work. Arrangements might include flex time, reduced working hours, job-sharing, telecommuting, or a temporary or permanent switch to part-time work (see Section 4.2).</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low

continued

²⁶ UNICEF Viet Nam, ‘The Apparel and Footwear Sector and Children in Viet Nam’, United Nations Children’s Fund, Ha Noi, June 2017, p. 7, available at <www.unicef.org/vietnam/reports/apparel-and-footwear-sector-and-children-viet-nam>, accessed 15 May 2020.

²⁷ UNICEF Bangladesh, ‘Better Business for Children: Understanding children’s rights and the ready-made garment sector in Bangladesh’, United Nations Children’s Fund, Dhaka, May 2018, p. 8, available at <www.unicef.org/bangladesh/en/reports/better-business-children>, accessed 15 May 2020.

continued

<p>Breastfeeding support A supportive breastfeeding environment enables exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months after a baby is born, with the option to continue as long as desired. It includes paid lactation breaks during working hours to allow mothers to breastfeed and express milk at work (see Sections 4.3 and 4.4). An ideal breastfeeding space would be private, hygienic and well-equipped (sink, refrigerator, high-quality breast pumps).</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low</p>
<p>Childcare Employees may have a range of care needs depending on their family circumstances. Care policies can include on-site or off-site childcare or financial support to parents so that they can choose their own childcare facility; back-up care to help parents when regular childcare arrangements break down; after-school care, school-holiday programmes or holiday camps for older children; and referral services to provide parents access to high-quality, affordable, and accessible childcare (see Section 4.5). In addition, policies could apply to eldercare, particularly through resources and referrals.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Medium <input type="checkbox"/> Low</p>

Other types of family-friendly support

Information and placement services to help workers with family responsibilities to stay in or re-enter the labour force are a good starting point for almost any business that wants to become more family-friendly. One example is providing referral services for parents on how to access affordable, quality childcare.

Employee and family health benefits can include an on-site doctor and nurse, adequate health and dental insurance, and health-oriented programmes for workers and their families. These could encompass, for example, sexual and reproductive health and rights training and resources, breast cancer screenings, and domestic and gender-based violence prevention policies and resources. If possible, set up an on-site fitness and wellness centre or provide subsidies for joining a gym or participating in sports and other healthy recreation.

Employer-provided transportation services can help workers overcome security and mobility concerns, defray logistics costs or simplify commuting arrangements. When a company helps transport employees' children to and from an on-site or near-site childcare centre, it can enable women's participation in the workforce.

Seminars and workshops on parenting, mental health and other topics, especially for new workers who are relocating from other locations/countries, are a valuable benefit, along with counselling services and support groups for workers, including new parents. In addition, company-sponsored

events – such as picnics, end-of-year parties, bring-your-child-to-work and family appreciation days – can be a way to promote family bonding and build an inclusive family-friendly workplace culture that benefits all workers, with or without children.

3.3 Establish and communicate the company's commitment

A family-friendly workplace policy sets out the company's commitment to protect and support children and their families. This commitment informs the path towards implementation and continuous development, clearly stating how the company will respond to concerns and deliver what it has promised. The commitment should always be based on a thorough understanding of workers' needs and gaps in meeting these needs, as discovered through assessments among both workers and management (see Section 3.1).

To maximize the positive impacts on behaviour throughout the business, the commitment can be integrated into overarching human resources policies and company codes of conduct, or written as a stand-alone policy complemented by a guidance document on family-friendly procedure. There is no single model that fits all, and the best option will depend on the company's context. When developing and writing the policy content, companies can consider using the checklist in Table 2.

TABLE 2. CHECKLIST FOR A FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE POLICY COMMITMENT

Policy item	Suggested content
<input type="checkbox"/> Statement of commitment	<p>Declare why support for parent workers and their children is important to the company; mention, for example, corporate values, national laws and/or international human rights or labour standards.</p> <p>Describe what support the business will provide for its workers and how it will carry out this commitment.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs for family-friendly workplace policy and statement of equality	<p>Describe the motivation for creating this policy. Based on issues revealed during the needs assessment, give tangible examples of potential negative vs. positive impacts on children and working parents.</p> <p>As appropriate to the context, note the groups of children who are most likely to benefit from this commitment to resolve issues that negatively impact their well-being (e.g., children in migrant or displaced families, those living in isolated or disadvantaged locations). Include a statement of non-discrimination and equal treatment.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Key terms defined	<p>Define the most important terms, in particular, a child as any individual under age 18, regardless of whether the national age of majority is younger.</p> <p>For ideas on how to define the core family-friendly measures – parental leave, flexible work arrangements, protection for pregnant and nursing women, support for breastfeeding, childcare and child benefits – see the beginning of each subsection in Chapter 4.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Applicability of commitment	<p>Clarify that the commitment covers all employees and other individuals or entities acting on behalf of the company. And it applies to all aspects of the company's operations and business relationships where children and their families are potentially impacted.</p> <p>Reinforce that caring for children is everyone's responsibility and that everyone covered is required to adhere to the commitment. Explain how the family-friendly workplace policy commitment links to other company policies and procedures, for example, the code of ethical conduct.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize the value of the policy, and call for broader cooperation	<p>Reiterate the importance, value and long-term contribution of the family-friendly workplace policy, and invite all stakeholders to cooperate with and support the company's new policy.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> Governance structure	<p>Name the business function (e.g., general management, human resources) or individual (high-level management) who has responsibility for implementing the commitment, and the 'corporate sponsor' or executive assigned to ensure the commitment is upheld.</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> CEO or chairman of the board approval	<p>The commitment should be signed off at the highest level of the company, for example, by the CEO or the chairman of the board. Not only does the CEO's signature align with external stakeholder expectations, but it also signals to workers and business partners the commitment's importance to the company.</p>

3.4 Implement your policies

After a family-friendly workplace policy is developed or revised, the company will need a plan to operationalize its commitments across the organization. This section outlines four action steps for implementing family-friendly policies.

1. *Develop a governance structure* to provide oversight and management. As a company works to embed its family-friendly policies across the organization, it is essential to develop a governance structure and to appoint a focal point or unit within the company. Senior management ownership and support should be ensured throughout the process. Moreover, the governance structure should include a diversity of voices, particularly from parents of young children, breastfeeding mothers and parents of older adolescent children.

Governance of the family-friendly workplace policies can be integrated into existing structures or stand alone. Both the integrated and stand-alone models require that the individuals who take on this responsibility within the organization have an appropriate level of knowledge and expertise, including on human resources policies and links to compliance and legal requirements.



It is essential to develop a governance structure for family-friendly policies and to appoint a focal point or unit within the company. Senior management ownership and support should be ensured throughout the process.

2. *Set a comprehensive workplan*, clearly stating the timeline, dedicated personnel, financial and administrative resources and other applicable implementation support. An implementation team, usually staff from the human resources department, should be designated to carry out the programmes. Given the different types of family-friendly programmes, the workplan should identify how budgetary and administrative support will be provided, and a timeline covering the entire programme cycle should be drafted and approved.
3. *Roll out company-wide awareness-raising and training activities*. It is essential to support children and parent workers throughout the company's activities. Ensuring that all employees – from the facilities custodian to the CEO – are aware of the company's commitment and their corresponding responsibility is a vital

step towards creating a rights-aware culture. Adequate levels of awareness-raising and training also help promote a family-friendly culture in the workplace.

Company-wide awareness-raising can take many forms and should be informed by the unique culture and approach to communications developed by the company. The communications can take place through all-staff meetings or email messages, announcements or posters in the company's public information-sharing venues, broadcasting, policy introduction at hiring, integration into ethics or code of conduct training, or a separate e-learning or training course.

4. *Provide channels for feedback and communication*. Throughout all family-friendly programme development and implementation, interactive channels – such as a manager's inbox or grievance procedures – can be utilized or refined so that workers are encouraged to provide feedback and raise concerns without being afraid of retaliation.

3.5 Monitor, evaluate and sustain family-friendly programmes

Family-friendly programmes are not a one-off measure. They take time and resources to make a genuine difference in workers' lives. Being 'sustainable' means the continuation of a programme's goals, principles and efforts to achieve desired outcomes. A good way to accomplish this involves applying the '3Rs': review, refine and renew. Appendix IV briefly outlines methods for gathering quantitative data, and details qualitative methods for monitoring and evaluating family-friendly policies and programmes – including a sample monitoring survey, suggestions for an interview with management, and a sample script for a staff focus group discussion.

It is typically recommended to set up a team of management, human resources staff and workers who will be involved in evaluating programmes. Based on early evaluation data and ongoing monitoring, this team should review what has worked, what needs modification, what needs expansion, what budgetary issues have surfaced, and so forth.

Project monitoring is the pivotal method for keeping track of all relevant activities and find out how well the company is meeting its goals for

a family-friendly workplace. It also helps project managers and their teams foresee potential risks and obstacles, and identifies potential problems so corrective action can be taken to ensure that the project is within scope, on budget and meets the specified deadlines. Here are some typical questions that can be answered through project monitoring:

- ✓ Are the defined family-friendly actions being carried out as planned?
- ✓ Are there any unforeseen consequences that arise as a result of these actions?
- ✓ How is the designated team performing during the given period of time?
- ✓ What are the elements of the project that need to be changed?
- ✓ What are the impacts/consequences of these changes?
- ✓ Are these changes leading the company to its expected results?

Project monitoring can often be conducted via direct engagement with workers and their representatives (e.g., trade unions) as part of ongoing social dialogue; staff meetings conducted on a regular basis; partners' meetings or learning forums; and participatory reviews by the stakeholders (focus group discussion, surveys). It can also include

monitoring and supervision missions (self, donor or joint assessments) and statistics or progress reports.

Impact assessments or evaluations also cover a wide range of issues, such as the appropriateness of the programme design, cost and efficiency, unintended consequences, how the family-friendly programme corrects the problem it was intended to address, and how to improve future programmes.

The family-friendly programme team is likely to be involved in *refining* the programme and selecting suitable actions based on the review results, and can decide on ways to revise goals, objectives and design. A decision matrix can be used to evaluate and prioritize a list of options. The tools offered in Appendix IV for tracking qualitative metrics that will support decisions based on evidence.

To *renew* and continue the family-friendly programme after the initial phase, financial and administrative support are needed. This requires renewed commitment or approval from management, renewed efforts from all stakeholders, particularly the family-friendly programme team, and continuous allocation of resources to sustain the programme.

4. Core principles, fundamental measures and the factors for success

Section 4 sets out to provide readers with a clear picture of how to build a successful family-friendly programme in their own business operations. It begins with a set of overall principles and proceeds to discuss six core family-friendly measures: (1) parental leave, (2) flexible work arrangements, (3) protection for pregnant and nursing women, (4) support for breastfeeding, (5) childcare and (6) child benefits. The six subsections – one for each measure – offer a brief definition, note international standards, highlight relevant facts, and conclude with the vital elements for success founded on experience and evidence.

It is not always easy or practical to implement all measures at once. Based on the needs of a

given workforce and the capacities of a given company, the business can select and prioritize the most relevant measures to start with. Over time, its family-friendly policies and programmes can be amended and expanded, and all measures regularly reviewed with the aim to make continuous improvements.

Table 3 outlines the fundamental principles for creating robust policies. These should be applied to any and all measures the business is considering or has already established.

TABLE 3. PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINING A FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORKPLACE**Always act in the best interests of the child and of parents**

For any business decisions, ask if and how they will impact children and if these decisions are in the best interests of children. This means considering children's different needs at different ages and may require support from an expert. When making any decisions that will impact children and parents, the following questions can be helpful:

- ✓ Does it address the needs of the children impacted by the measure?
- ✓ Will it contribute to their well-being?
- ✓ Will it support children's healthy development?
- ✓ How will parents be impacted?

Do no harm

Make sure your business activities do not expose people, and in particular children, to additional risks and harm. If your business activities negatively affect children and working families then it is important that your first priority is to make changes to mitigate any negative effects.

Adapt your family-friendly policies to the needs of your workforce

Not all companies or all of their workers have the same needs. For instance, migrant parent workers who live with their children have very different needs from those who have left their closest family members behind, and workers who live on a plantation might need different support than those who travel to work on a daily basis. So before you get going, thoroughly assess the situation and needs of your workers.

Support basic social protection for all your workers

Social protection is a central factor in addressing the vulnerabilities of workers and their families to poverty, inequality and deprivation.²⁸ While social protection is primarily a government responsibility, family-friendly policies in the workplace can support these efforts by ensuring that:

- ✓ All workers receive a salary sufficient to cover a family's basic needs, including nutrition, education and health care.
- ✓ When needed, subsidies are provided for workers to access health, unemployment and disability insurance, and this is extended to workers in the informal sector.

Always apply the stronger legal protection

As a bottom line, family-friendly policies and programmes must not contradict legal requirements and should always apply the higher standard.

- ✓ When national or local laws and regulations provide stronger protection than international standards, your company must comply with the national and local laws where you operate.
- ✓ Where international standards provide stronger legal protection, or relevant national law is missing, it is strongly recommended that you learn from international legal standards, national legal practices from other countries, and best practices from the industry and other companies, and apply stronger protection in your business.

Do not discriminate on any grounds

No group should be discriminated against or excluded from benefits or services based on their gender, race, religion, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or any other grounds, such as marital status, pregnancy or work status. For instance, no group of workers (contract workers, temporary workers, migrant workers, etc.) can be excluded from basic rights solely based on their employment status in the company; maternity protection and social insurance should always apply to all workers. Additional supportive actions or measures that aim at preventing or correcting discrimination against certain vulnerable groups are not to be considered as discriminatory.

continued

²⁸ For more information on social protection, including links to current resources, see: International Labour Organization, 'ILO Basic Social Protection Package', <www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowTheme.do?tid=12>, accessed 14 May 2020.

continued

Inform, create awareness and obtain consent

- ✓ For all policy elements, make sure all your employees know about them, understand them and feel comfortable using them. To achieve this, it is essential that there is no reprimanding, teasing or retribution if employees take advantage of family-friendly policies.
- ✓ Make sure that all stakeholders, including workers and their children, are given the opportunity to voice their opinion on any actions or processes that will affect them.
- ✓ Make sure that when workers and children are directly involved in family-friendly activities or programmes, the business obtains their consent.

Strive for sustainability and scalability

When you develop and implement family-friendly policies in business operations, aim for a long-lasting system to support children and their families, rather than a quick-fix or one-time solution. Specifically:

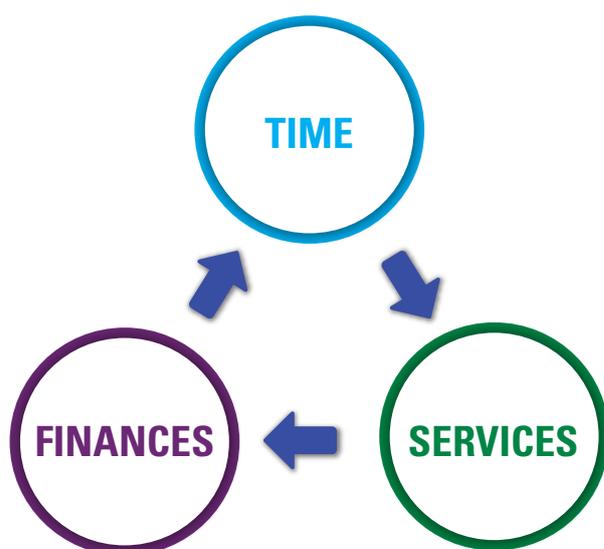
- ✓ Make sure all family-friendly policies are compatible with and integrated in core business practices and management systems (e.g., code of conduct).
- ✓ Strive for sustainable business relationships and promote family-friendly policies in your supply chain and among business partners.

The most effective family-friendly policies are designed as a holistic and balanced package that provides parents and other caregivers with more family time, supportive services and finances. As illustrated in Figure 2 these three categories support and complement each other. The associated policies need to accommodate a variety of family forms, e.g., couple-with-children, single-parent-with-children, and extended-family households, and non-standard work situations, and consider the range of

roles that parents – particularly women – perform as workers and caregivers.

The next sections aim to help companies explore the options and develop new ideas that support solid preparation and successful implementation of family-friendly policy and programmes. This content highlights definitions and facts for each measure, touches upon frequently found gaps, and details the factors that lead to success.

FIGURE 2. COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES: TIME, SERVICES AND FINANCES



TIME

- Parental leave (mothers and fathers)
- Flexible work arrangements
- Lactation and breastfeeding breaks
- Family emergency and medical leave

SERVICES

- Childcare
- Protection of pregnant and nursing women
- Family-oriented events
- Elder care
- Information campaigns

FINANCES

- Child benefits
- College scholarship or loan for workers' children
- Family insurance package
- Worker emergency fund

4.1 Parental leave

In this handbook, *parental leave* refers to maternity, paternity and adoption leave. Paid parental leave provides working parents with time off from work around the birth or adoption of a child, with pay at all or some of their usual earnings. This provides parents with time to care for and bond with their infant, establish routines for feeding and care, and attend to their medical needs, while also providing mothers who have been through childbirth time to recover physically.

Maternity leave refers to the paid period of time that a new mother takes off from work, typically starting just before giving birth to her baby. Maternity leave, in various forms, has been available as a legal right for many years. In 2014, the International Labour Organization (ILO) reviewed parental leave policies in 185 countries and territories, and found that only 51 per cent of provided at least 14 weeks of maternity leave.²⁹

Many governments and companies adopt a similar policy for fathers – *paternity leave* – which allows for paid leave of absence to take care of new babies. A number of countries and organizations are moving towards gender-neutral leave policies, offering equitable leave for all parents in recognition of children’s right to have time with and care from both their parents.

International standards that address parental, maternity and/or paternity leave include:

- ILO C183 – Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), which calls for a minimum of 14 weeks of paid maternity leave for mothers of infants.
- ILO R191 – Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191), an accompaniment to Convention No. 183, extends the period of maternity leave to at least 18 weeks.
- ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation (No. 202) and Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation (No. 204) provide guidance for extending maternity protection to workers in the informal economy.
- ILO C103 – Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103) and ILO C003 – Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3) are still in force in some countries.³⁰

Potential gaps: Although various types of parental leave have been confirmed as a legal right worldwide for a long time, in practice there are significant disparities in duration of leave, ensuring there are no intended or unintended penalties for parents taking leave, and making sure that paid leave is available to both fathers and mothers.

Worldwide, mandatory maternity cash benefit schemes cover, by law, 45.0 per cent of women in employment. But recent estimates show that 41.1 per cent of women with newborns actually receive a maternity benefit, and there are large inequities by region. In Africa, for example, only 15.8 per cent of childbearing women receive such benefits. Financial insecurity exposes mothers and their children to significant health risks, because many women – especially those in the informal economy – must keep working into the very late stages of pregnancy or return to work too soon.³¹

Myths vs. Facts

MYTH

Women will not come back after maternity leave. Long, mandatory maternity leave keeps women out of the job market and does more harm than good.

FACT

Maternity leave and parental leave are the number one measures to enable women to come back to work after having a child. For an employer, this means not losing the training, skills, experience and talent that have been invested female employees. Because many employers operate in markets with limited labour resources, avoiding employee turnover is a key element of a successful business.

²⁹ International Labour Office, *Maternity and Paternity at Work: Law and practice across the world*, International Labour Organization, Geneva, 2014, p. xi <www.ilo.org/global/topics/equality-and-discrimination/maternity-protection/publications/maternity-paternity-at-work-2014>, accessed 16 May 2020.

³⁰ For details on maternity standards, see: International Labour Organization, ‘International Labour Standards on Maternity Protection’, ILO, Geneva, 1996–2020, <www.ilo.org/global/standards/subjects-covered-by-international-labour-standards/maternity-protection/lang-en/index.htm>, accessed 17 May 2020.

³¹ International Labour Office, *World Social Protection Report 2017–19: Universal social protection to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals*, International Labour Organization, Geneva, November 2017, p. 27, <www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-dgreports/-dcomm/-publ/documents/publication/wcms_604882.pdf>, accessed 17 May 2020.

MYTH

A pregnant worker will cost the employer a lot of money, and maternity leave with full pay would disproportionately affect small businesses and drive up wage costs.

FACT

In a majority of countries, maternity leave is financed or subsidized by the national tax or social welfare systems. In Asia, Papua New Guinea is the only country in which paid maternity leave is not provided by law.³² This means that the government covers most costs for the leave while the employer only pays very little, or the employer pays for maternity leave but can reclaim a certain amount from the government.

MYTH

New mothers will be less productive when returning to work.

FACT

One of the benefits of paid maternity leave is that it provides sufficient time to assure that new mothers recover fully from any physical or emotional stress and are ready for their return to work. While both new mothers and their employers often have concerns about productivity after childbirth, with additional support from the employer, new mothers can maintain high productivity and focus, meet deadlines effectively and take their career to the next level.

✓ Key elements of success

For effective parental leave policies, business is encouraged to consider the full range of options, including those outlined below.

Legal compliance and stronger protection: An essential starting point is to make sure that paid parental and maternity leave are provided in your business operations, and in line with – or better than – international, national and local laws. For multinational corporations, if legal requirements in the home country and host countries vary or conflict with each other, it is highly recommended to adopt a global policy (code of conduct) and incorporate the higher level of protection among all branches and sub-companies.

Full coverage: Ensure that your parental leave policies cover all your workers, including informal, temporary, immigrant and part-time workers or subcontractors. Establish a paternity leave policy that provides new fathers with the same job protection as mothers, and encourage men to take paternity leave. Be sure to offer the same protective policies to parents who have adopted a child.

Fair recruitment: During the recruitment process, do not ask female applicants about their pregnancy status unless required by law. At work, do not inquire about or interfere with an employee's family planning, and never ask women to take a pregnancy test.

Practically this means: If a woman applies for a position that is not available to pregnant workers, you may ask her to inform you if she is pregnant, but it is not appropriate to organize or force women to take pregnancy tests.

Non-interference: Before and after a child is born or brought into the family, do not prevent workers from taking their leave. During pregnancy, women should be allowed to take time off for medical check-ups, without any hindrance from the employer. Ensure that these benefits can be taken without reprimand by direct supervisors or co-workers.

Decent pay: It is not really maternity or paternity leave if it is not paid. Maternity, paternity or parental leave must be paid, so that the basic living needs of new parents and the family can be met. Pay during leave should be made in full (or partially upon special agreement), on time and regularly, and should not expose workers and their families to significant income loss.

³² WORLD Policy Analysis Center, 'Is Paid Leave Available to Mothers and Fathers of Infants?' (interactive database), WORLD, Los Angeles, Calif., 2020, <www.worldpolicycenter.org/policies/is-paid-leave-available-for-mothers-of-infants>, accessed 10 May 2020.

Length of leave: Ensure that your workers get at least 14 weeks or the recommended 18 weeks of full-time maternity leave, or 6 months maternity, paternity or combined parental leave (full-time and/or part-time arrangement). Also make sure that workers can take a significant portion of their leave after a child is born or adopted – 14 weeks at minimum, even if they had to leave work early, e.g., because of pregnancy complications.

In practice, this means that if a women has complications during pregnancy, for example, medically requiring bed rest before delivery – this time is to be considered sick leave and cannot be deducted from her maternity leave. She should still get the full time after birth foreseen in the company’s maternity leave policy.

Smooth return to employment: Ensure that workers who have taken their parental leave can return to their work/previous position when they have completed their leave. Their salary and bonus package should remain the same as (or higher) before they took the leave. In case an employer wants to change the position or responsibility of the new parent, or the parent initiates an adjustment, contractual terms should be established by mutual agreement between the employer and the worker. To facilitate new mothers’ returning to their work, it is highly recommended to have a ‘back-to-work transition programme’ that will help new mothers resume their work.

Even better ...

- ✓ Consider higher and broader maternity protection, such as offering maternal health counselling to pregnant workers and new mothers; offering a longer duration of leave and higher benefits, such as an additional 20 weeks of paid leave for bonding (available to moms and dads); or offering pregnant employees

paid pregnancy-related medical leave and financial benefits for pregnancy to ensure health protection for pregnant women and their babies.

- ✓ Promote your parental leave policy with your business partners, supply chain and the wider community.

4.2 Flexible work arrangements

Flexible work arrangements offer a modified schedule or other alternatives to the standard hours or location of a workplace, while workers continue to fulfil their job responsibilities. This can enable them to meet personal or family needs and achieve a better work-life balance. Flexibility should be viewed in the context of the employer’s legitimate requirements to ensure business continuity (e.g., timely delivery of tasks) and can be designed to create a win-win working relationship that simultaneously recognizes and realizes the needs of both employers and workers. Table 4 lists common types of flexible work arrangements.

“ Before applying any type of flexible work arrangement, be sure to examine its impacts on both workers and the employer, and state clearly how it will affect pay, benefits and holidays.

Before applying any type of flexible work arrangement, be sure to examine its impacts on such factors as employee benefits (e.g., pension plans) and qualification for government programmes (e.g., unemployment insurance). It should always be stated clearly – for both the worker and the employer – how these arrangements affect pay, benefits and holidays.

TABLE 4. TYPES OF MEASURES THAT OFFER FLEXIBILITY

Flex time	Flex time off	Flex location/roles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Banking of working hours ✓ Compressed work week ✓ Flexible working hours ✓ Switch shifts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Extra or prolonged holiday or personal leave ✓ Long-term leave with position being kept ✓ Reduced hours/part-time with the same hourly rate ✓ Paid lactation breaks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Telework or telecommuting ✓ Temporary remote work for caring purposes ✓ Job-sharing ✓ Change of responsibilities

BOX 6.**ADDITIONAL OPTIONS FOR FLEX ARRANGEMENTS**

Options for flexible work include *banking of hours/annualized hours* to allow employees to choose, within negotiated boundaries, their days and hours of work to the maximum for a set period of time (e.g., weekly, monthly, yearly). Such arrangements are often a combination of flex time and a compressed work week and can help reduce the amount of overtime hours required. These arrangements may be suited to businesses where there is variation in demands (e.g., seasonal peaks).

In *switch shifts*, employees work a full day but can vary the start and finish time for their working hours (e.g., 7:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m., 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m., 9:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m.). With efficient scheduling, for example, in a factory, this enables daily quotas to be met while supporting workers' family care needs.

In a *compressed work week*, an employee works for longer periods of time per day or shift in exchange for a day off. This schedule is often initiated by the worker, but an employer might introduce the option to improve operational efficiency, maximize production or set longer business hours to enhance customer service. Common arrangements based on a 40-hour work week include working 10 hours per day, four days a week, or working an extra hour per day with one day off every two weeks.

If few part-time positions are available within the company, *job-sharing* – when two or more people share a position or set of duties – might be an option. It is very important that those in a job-sharing arrangement work effectively as a team and communicate well.

International standards: Resources include the ILO's 'Guide to Developing Balanced Working Time Arrangements', 2019, available in English, French and Spanish at <www.ilo.org/travail/whatwedo/publications/WCMS_706159/lang-en/index.htm>.

Myths vs. Facts**MYTH**

Flexible working arrangements decrease productivity.

FACT

Flexible working arrangements can be a proven way to increase productivity. Research shows that the use of flexible working arrangements leads to a more productive workforce, more efficient business processes and enhanced business continuity, and helps attract a diverse pool of top talent.³³ Furthermore, the use of these arrangements can significantly increase staff members' motivation and engagement with the company, reducing absenteeism and overhead costs and creating a 'greener' and more sustainable environment.

MYTH

Flexible working arrangements are only for female staff with young children.

FACT

Flexible working arrangements should be equally available to and appropriate for all staff. Along with being a benefit for workers with young children, they also support care for older family members, health and well-being for everyone, and opportunities for workers to increase their education. As traditional roles change towards gender equality in caregiving, both men and women are looking for tools to better balance their work and family life. Senior-level support is an important factor in setting a good example for best practices.

³³ Shagvaliyeva, Sussanna and Yazdanifard, Rashad, 'Impact of Flexible Working Hours on Work-Life Balance', American Journal of Industrial and Business Management, 4(1):20-23 · January 2014, <www.researchgate.net/publication/260219489_Impact_of_Flexible_Working_Hours_on_Work-Life_Balance>, accessed 20 May 2020.

✓ Key elements of success

For effective flexible work arrangement policies, business is encouraged to consider the full range of options, including those outlined below.

Needs-based: Workers' needs can vary greatly under different circumstances and there are many types of flexible work arrangements available. Not all types are manageable or worthwhile for all sizes and types of organizations, so every employer considering flexible work arrangement should undertake an organisational assessment to determine whether and what kind of flexible scheduling will meet their needs the best.

As a practical measure, this could be achieved by allowing prolonged maternity leave and making sure that new mothers are not required to take overtime, or a compressed work week for parent workers so that they get one afternoon off each week, e.g., to help their primary-age children with school homework.

Non-interference and non-discrimination: Make sure that all your workers can benefit from flexible working time, and that no one is discriminated against or penalized for taking leave associated with family responsibilities. Quite often, approvals for flexible working arrangement are made on a case-by-case basis. It is therefore particularly important to ensure transparency throughout the application process and to communicate all results in a timely manner, so that workers who do not benefit from the policy or whose application gets rejected does not feel that they have been treated unfairly.

Well-defined responsibilities: No matter which programme or how many options are available, the duties, expectations and deadlines should be clearly outlined by the supervisor and agreed upon by both the employer/supervisor and the worker.

Wage and benefits compliance: Workers' participation in flexible work arrangements should not have negative impacts on their employment and career. For instance, workers with flexible hours or working from home should receive the same amount of payment in a timely manner; overtime carried home should be calculated and compensated; and annual bonus distribution should not be negatively affected.

Make it business-friendly: As a matter of course, flexible work times need to fit your business schedule. For a factory with a production line or frontline shop workers, flexible time is more challenging than for office workers. If flexible

working arrangements are not possible, consider alternative support for working parents such as childcare support (see section 4.5 on childcare below).

As a practical measure, if the business is bound to production lines and shop times it can support balanced time management, for example, by allowing certain leaves with sufficient notice, informing employees well in advance about overtime hours, and having a range of multi-skilled workers who can replace colleagues at different positions.

Even better ...

- ✓ Research the pros and cons of selected flexible work arrangements in your company, identify the management cost and difficulties and find solutions accordingly.
- ✓ Create systems for flex-time programme administration and a family-friendly working environment that addresses all business needs – and stands up to tests of fairness and comprehensiveness. The process used to create guidelines for a flexible work programme should include steps to ensure that new policies are compatible with existing company objectives. Issues such as eligibility, application processes, reversibility and changes to employee status should be clearly addressed.
- ✓ Share and promote your flexible work arrangement policy with your business partners, supply chain and wider business relationships.

4.3 Protection for pregnant and nursing women

Protection of pregnant and nursing women is closely linked to the mandates of maternity protection. In addition to minimum legal guarantees, such as paid maternity leave, non-discrimination for pregnant women, prohibition of termination of employment contract during pregnancy, it aims to further ensure health and safety during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Potential gaps: Major risks to providing sufficient protections for pregnant and nursing women in the workplace include frequent violations of their labour rights, and gender discrimination associated with pay, promotions, hiring and firing.

Myths vs. Facts

MYTH

Pregnant workers create high costs for companies.

FACT

A company's investment in protecting pregnant workers is beneficial for business. With more women (particularly young women) entering the labour market, strong maternity protection can contribute to women's economic empowerment, increasing wages and earnings, work experience and tenure. Studies have found that companies can increase their competitiveness and sustainability by enhancing their ability to attract and retain a diverse workforce and increasing employee productivity and morale.³⁴

MYTH

Providing maternity/paternity leave for new parents is enough.

FACT

Ongoing support boosts the benefits of paid maternity and paternity leave. Adequate parental leave will help new mothers recover fully from the physical stress of giving birth, and lets fathers and mothers prepare for their new roles, along with their return to work. But maternity protection is much broader than paid maternity leave. Supportive measures – including breastfeeding facilities, sufficient lactation breaks, flexible working arrangements, paid family and medical leave, childcare support, proper guidance and additional support from the employer – will help new parents to better fulfil their personal and professional roles.

MYTH

Breastfeeding is easy and does not need special support.

FACT

Breastfeeding support needs to be personalized. Every new mother is a unique individual, and nursing can be physically demanding, particularly during the first months. Essential support, such as breastfeeding breaks and facilities, should be coupled with understanding cultural factors or certain social norms, for example, privacy can be particularly important.

✓ Key elements of success

For effective policies to protect pregnant and nursing women, business is encouraged to consider the full range of options, including those outlined below.

Full coverage: All pregnant workers, on a permanent or temporary contract, those directly recruited or subcontracted (dispatched workers), in formal employment or flexible workers (e.g., consultant), have the same level of maternity protection.

“ With more women (particularly young women) entering the labour market, strong maternity protection can contribute to women's economic empowerment, increasing wages and earnings, work experience and tenure.

Non-discriminatory recruitment: During, employers must not request a pregnancy test as a precondition of employment or ask job applicants any questions related to family planning. Once recruited, workers must remain free from such requests or inquiries as this may result in gender and maternity discrimination. Exceptionally, employers can request women to inform them about their pregnancies so that the employer can make the right arrangements to protect pregnant women.

³⁴ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Family-Friendly Policies: Redesigning the workplace of the future – A policy brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-policy-brief-family-friendly-policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 29 April 2020.

Strong employment protection: Employers must act in strict compliance with their national and local laws concerning maternity protection. For instance, pregnant workers must not be dismissed or demoted, and new mothers are able to take full maternity leave and receive full salary (or a percentage as provided by law) during their maternity leave. In addition, women have the right to return to work on the equivalent position after their maternity leave and their opportunity for promotion cannot be negatively affected.

Protective measures for pregnant women: As part of the company's overall occupational safety and health risk management, additional protection will be provided to pregnant and nursing workers. Such measures include no hazardous or physically exhaustive work, no overtime, no night or overnight shifts, adequate personal protective equipment, and sufficient water intake during working hours.

Access to antenatal and post-childbirth check-ups: Pregnant workers will not be prevented from attending regular antenatal and postpartum check-ups as needed. Antenatal and postpartum check-ups can take the form of paid medical leave or sick leave, so that worker's salary will not be negatively impacted. Company clinic or medical support services can also provide free health counselling services to workers.

Even better ...

- ✓ Offer stronger protection. Businesses are highly encouraged to bolster their efforts by going beyond legal compliance and provide stronger or additional support to pregnant and nursing workers. For instance, open the possibility of prolonged (paid) maternity leave, give longer and more lactation breaks; enrol pregnant and nursing women into additional medical insurance schemes, provide medical counsel services at workplace, adopt creative measures or programmes to further support pregnant and nursing women.

4.4 Support for breastfeeding

A lactation break, or breastfeeding break, refers to a period of time during working hours for nursing mothers to accommodate breastfeeding or express breast milk. Lactation breaks also require a supportive breastfeeding environment (including adequate facilities) that enables mothers to continue exclusive or complementary breastfeeding after returning to work.

International standards:

- ILO Maternity Protection Convention 2000 (No. 183) and its Recommendation No. 191 encourage at least 18 weeks of paid maternity leave and workplace support for breastfeeding families, including two 30-minute breaks in an eight-hour shift.
- The World Health Organization recommends that infants be exclusively breastfed for six months, including initiation within the first hour of life, and that they are continually breastfed for up to two years or beyond. For recommendations, resolutions and guidelines, see 'Breastfeeding', <www.who.int/health-topics/breastfeeding#tab=tab_1>.

Potential gaps: Despite the positive effects of breastfeeding for both infants and mothers, only 40 per cent of children younger than 6 months old are exclusively breastfed as recommended.³⁵ Gaps among countries and regions are wide, and improvements are particularly needed for countries in Africa, the Arab States and Asia-Pacific.

Implementation of maternity leave and breastfeeding policies also vary significantly by type of industry, with higher-paying industries/employers having more supportive policies and workplace accommodations. Women in the service and production/transportation industry have the least support.

Inappropriate or non-supportive workplace settings represent a substantial barrier to women workers who want to breastfeed, especially in low-resource environments and fragile settings. Hazardous conditions and lack of autonomy in the workplace are also found to be associated with poor breastfeeding outcomes. Lack of awareness or misconceptions can prevent working mothers from breastfeeding or expressing breast milk for their babies. In addition, shorter breastfeeding duration among women who initiated breastfeeding is associated with discrimination in the workplace setting, including racial discrimination.

³⁵ World Health Organization, Infant and Young Child Feeding, April 2020, <www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/infant-and-young-child-feeding>, accessed 20 May 2020.

Myths vs. Facts

MYTH

Breastfeeding is not important and can easily be replaced by formula.

FACT

Breastfeeding is one of the most effective ways to ensure child health and survival. As established by the World Health Organization, breast milk is the ideal food for newborns and infants, providing all the nutrients they need for healthy development. Not only is it safe, it contains antibodies that help protect against common childhood illnesses such as diarrhoea and pneumonia, which are two of the main causes of death among children under age 5. Achieving universal levels of breastfeeding could save 820,000 child lives every year. Because infant formula does not contain the antibodies found in breast milk, it is not an adequate substitute.³⁶

MYTH

If a nursing mother goes back to work, she will have to wean her baby.

FACT

The decision to continue or stop breastfeeding is very personal, and not every mother will feel the same. To continue breastfeeding, mothers need practical support, time, practice and space, at home and work. The lack of this support forces many mothers who return to work to abandon breastfeeding partially or completely. However, employers can play a vital role in enabling women to continue breastfeeding by offering paid maternity leave, part-time work arrangements, an on-site crèche, facilities for expressing and storing milk, and breastfeeding breaks.

As a practical measure, offering your workers guaranteed maternity leave, particularly prolonged and/or flexible maternity leave, can be the most effective start to a child's life.

✓ Key elements of success

For effective policies to support breastfeeding, business is encouraged to consider the full range of options, including those outlined below.

Engaging management and workers in the process: Involve multiple stakeholders from the start and throughout the programme to improve its relevance, effectiveness and sustainability. In particular, be sure to provide women workers with opportunities to share their perceptions and voice their needs.

Duration of paid maternity leave: Multiple empirical studies have confirmed the positive impact of maternity leave on breastfeeding initiation, exclusivity and duration. A study on the relationship between maternity leave and breastfeeding duration in 12 diverse countries (including Thailand) found that women who had a three-month maternity leave were at least 50 per cent more likely to breastfeed for a longer period of time than women returning to work earlier. And an analysis of data from 38 low- and middle- income countries demonstrated that extending the duration of nationally mandated maternity leave can be effective in improving women's use of recommended breastfeeding practices.³⁷

Duration of the right to breastfeed and the length of breaks at work: A nursing mother may take breaks to pump breast milk at work for up to two years or beyond following the birth of her child. A nursing mother should be allowed to take breaks at least once every three hours to breastfeed her baby or to pump breast milk, with at least 30 minutes for each break.

The period of lactation breaks cannot be deducted from regular paid breaks or mealtimes. For example, if a woman takes a 30-minute break to pump breast milk, this should not affect her normal standard 30-minute lunch break. Also, be sure to prevent and stop any discrimination or retaliation in the workplace on the basis of pregnancy, breastfeeding or family status.

Practically this means that it is important for the company's management and workforce to understand the importance and value of breastfeeding. Management and supervisors should support nursing mothers' use of lactation breaks, encourage co-workers to show more understanding towards nursing mothers and breastfeeding, and try to address cultural unease related to breastfeeding in the workplace. These measures will help nursing workers feel more comfortable accepting lactation support in the workplace.

³⁶ World Health Organization, '10 Facts on Breastfeeding', WHO, Geneva, August 2017, <www.who.int/features/factfiles/breastfeeding/en>, accessed 30 April 2020.

³⁷ Griswold, Michele, and Aunchalee Palmquist, 'Breastfeeding and Family-Friendly Policies: An evidence brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, p. 2, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-Breastfeeding-Family-Friendly%20Policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 4 May 2020.

Establishing a breastfeeding-friendly environment: Be attentive to social and cultural norms, ensuring that the breastfeeding space is appropriate and creates a safe and friendly environment for nursing mothers. Support this environment with sufficient awareness-raising and training.

The place where nursing mothers feed their babies or pump breast milk must be safe, private, clean, hygienic and comfortable. It should be close to mothers' working sites, ideally within walking distance. Facilities should contain a chair, a small table or other flat surface that can be easily cleaned, a refrigerator and other necessary equipment for storing pumped milk. The space provided cannot be a restroom or toilet stall.

Even better ...

- ✓ Provide tailored information, counselling and capacity-building for working mothers before, during and after maternity leave, including: information on the benefits of breastfeeding for infants, mothers, families, communities and businesses; training in breastfeeding techniques

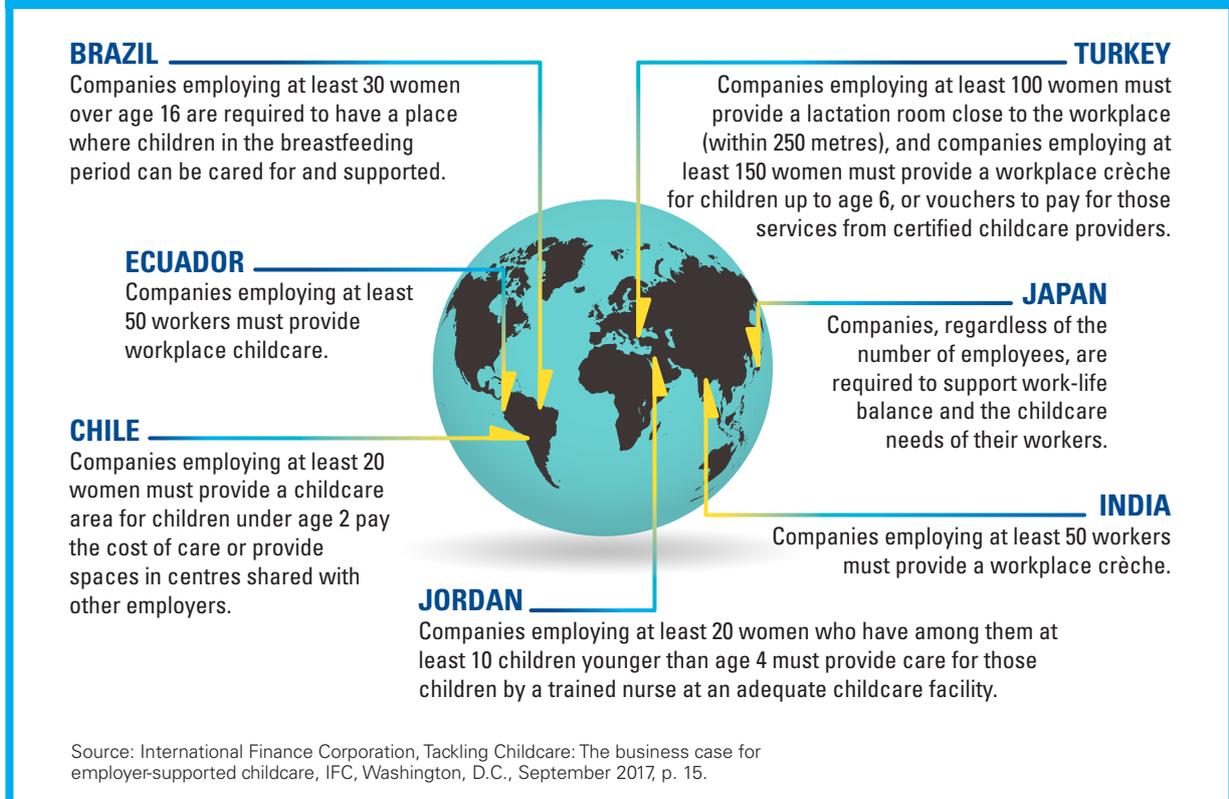
(expressing, storing, transporting and feeding breast milk) before a mother's return to work; and anticipatory guidance for managing exclusive and continued breastfeeding.

- ✓ Encourage workplace-based support for breastfeeding, in particular, from managers, supervisors and colleagues, and from co-workers who have successfully managed breastfeeding and working.

4.5 Childcare

Childcare is a vital pillar of family-friendly policies for business, and involves cooperation with government measures to support families in providing nurturing care for young children.³⁸ The main focus is on childhood development, emphasizing that quality care from a young age can have a substantial impact on a child's future well-being and success. Although childcare is primarily a public policy concern, a growing number of countries are starting to mandate employers to offer childcare support.

FIGURE 3. EXAMPLES OF COUNTRIES WITH CHILDCARE MANDATES FOR PRIVATE EMPLOYERS



³⁸ Samman, Emma, and Joan Lombardi, 'Childcare and Working Families: New opportunity or missing link? An evidence brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, p. 1, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-Childcare%20-Family-Friendly-Policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 11 May 2020. See also: International Finance Corporation, Tackling Childcare: A guide for employer-supported childcare, IFC, Washington, D.C., November 2019, available at <www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/topics_ext_content/ifc_external_corporate_site/gender+at+ifc/resources/guide+for+employer-supported+childcare>, accessed 4 May 2020; and Hein, Catherine, and Naomi Cassirer, Workplace Solutions for Childcare, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2010, <www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-dgreports/-dcomm/-publ/documents/publication/wcms_110397.pdf>, accessed 2 May 2020.

Potential gaps: Disparities among countries and regions can be stark. Childcare coverage is nearly universal in many European countries. But in lower- and middle-income countries, and some high-income countries, too, childcare options are limited, inflexible, expensive or simply not available. In the global South, a survey found that 40 per cent of countries do not have any legal requirement for childcare services to be offered by governments or employers. The quality of services is also erratic, due to such factors as difficulties in recruiting and retaining qualified childcare workers, and inadequate training and low wages for those employed in the childcare workforce.³⁹

UNICEF country reports indicate that just 45 per cent of countries worldwide and 15 per cent of low-income countries provide tuition-free pre-primary education (preschool). Private formal childcare in

low-income countries and middle-income countries point to significant expenses. For example, a study of four peri-urban areas of sub-Saharan Africa found that the average cost of a child in preschool represented between one quarter and nearly half of an average person's monthly spending.⁴⁰

Lack of accessible services is another significant barrier. Due to insufficient capacities for children's enrolment, standard opening hours that do not fit workers' schedules and poor working conditions (e.g., long and unpredictable hours, shift work, long travel times, and unreliable and expensive transport) – also compromises childcare. As a result, women or caregivers must sometimes take their children to the workplace, which is difficult for adult workers and increases the risk of exposing young children to unsafe conditions.⁴¹

Myths vs. Facts

MYTH

Women give birth to children, so it is natural for women to take on childcare responsibilities.

FACT

*When women have the sole or nearly total responsibility for childcare, gender inequality is maintained or worsened – hindering women's economic empowerment, reducing participation in the labour market, and increasing the likelihood of work that is part-time, informal, more insecure or home-based. But where enrolment rates in centre-based care for children under age 3 are high, such as many OECD countries, there is a strong correlation with high rates of employment for mothers, especially of mothers with young children.*⁴²

MYTH

Childcare is already very common and does not affect women's employment.

FACT

In 2018, global female labour force participation stood at 48 per cent, compared with 75 per cent for men. Across 89 countries, women in their prime reproductive years (age 25–34) are 22 per cent more likely than men to live in extreme poverty.⁴³ These conditions are compounded by a global crisis in early learning⁴⁴ and childcare. As of 2017, nearly 57 million children aged 3–5 (69 per cent) in 67 low- and middle-income countries did not attend any type of early childhood education programme. And in 76 low- and middle-income countries, an estimated 45 million children under age 5 went without adult supervision for at least one hour a week.⁴⁵

³⁹ United Nations Children's Fund, 'Family-Friendly Policies: Redesigning the workplace of the future – A policy brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, p. 6, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-policy-brief-family-friendly-policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 29 April 2020.

⁴⁰ Samman, Emma, and Joan Lombardi, 'Childcare and Working Families: New opportunity or missing link? An evidence brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, p. 3.

⁴¹ Samman, Emma, and Joan Lombardi, 'Childcare and Working Families: New opportunity or missing link? An evidence brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, p. 4.

⁴² Chaturvedi, Surabhi, 'Global Evidence on the Impact of Centre-based Quality Childcare on Maternal Employment and Early Childhood Development Outcomes', Working Paper No. 1, Initiative for What Works to Advance Women and Girls in the Economy, New Delhi, April 2019, p. 15, <https://www.wage.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/ChildcareseriesPaper1_compressed.pdf>, accessed 11 May 2020.

⁴³ Samman, Emma, and Joan Lombardi, 'Childcare and Working Families: New opportunity or missing link? An evidence brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, p. 1, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-Childcare%20-Family-Friendly-Policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 11 May 2020.

⁴⁴ On the global crisis in early childhood learning, and ways to overcome it, see: United Nations Children's Fund, A World Ready to Learn: Prioritizing quality early childhood education, UNICEF, New York, April 2019, pp. 13–15, available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish at <www.unicef.org/reports/a-world-ready-to-learn-2019>, accessed 10 May 2020.

⁴⁵ Samman, Emma, and Joan Lombardi, 'Childcare and Working Families: New opportunity or missing link? An evidence brief', UNICEF Early Childhood Development, New York, July 2019, pp. 1, 3, <www.unicef.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/UNICEF-Childcare%20-Family-Friendly-Policies-2019.pdf>, accessed 11 May 2020.

To apply good practices, a company should explore multiple childcare options, including on-site childcare centres and health clinics, a childcare allowance, flexible work arrangements, and community childcare support or after-school programmes. Consider promoting childcare with your business partners and suppliers.

The scale of the childcare programme should be adequate for the number of working parents in the factory or other worksite. For instance, if the employer has a large group of parent workers, or several working sites/factories/branches, then the childcare provided would be reasonably scaled up or expanded.

✓ Key elements of success

For effective childcare policies, business is encouraged to consider the full range of options, including those outlined below

Needs-based: Workers' childcare needs can vary greatly and there are multiple childcare arrangements available. Employers should therefore understand the needs of working parents in collaboration with worker representatives and trade unions before investing in any childcare solutions to help inform the design of appropriate and contextually relevant programmes. Because the needs for care continue even when children reach school age, after-school programmes and summer-school programmes may be needed to ensure continuity of care as children grow and develop.

Solid quality: As a basic requirement, childcare programmes should be carried out by reliable and specialized staff, preferably certified professionals who have completed the required education and training. Programmes should take place in safe and healthy facilities/spaces, with appropriate child-to-teacher ratios in order to maximize children's learning potential and ability to interact with and learn from their teachers and peers. For care programmes covering children who are under age 1, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development recommends no more than three children for each teacher, and no more than five children who are 1–3 years old for each teacher.⁴⁶

Quality also means having a strong child safeguarding policy that will help to minimize children's exposure to any harm or abuse by caregivers, volunteers, visitors, parents or other children. You can find more about child protection in UNICEF's 'Child Safeguarding Toolkit for Business: A step-by-step guide to identifying and preventing risks to children who interact with your business' (2018); to open this document online, go to <www.unicef.org/csr/files/UNICEF_ChildSafeguardingToolkit_FINAL.PDF>.

In practice, there are cost-effective ways to maintain quality childcare programmes. For instance, on-site childcare centres usually cost much less than building or renting an off-site facility. Parent workers, after participating in appropriate training, can be qualified volunteers to rotate and provide support to certified childcare professionals. Experienced parent workers can provide childcare training and counselling support to other parent workers.



⁴⁶ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Starting Strong 2017: Key OECD indicators on early childhood education and care, OECD Publishing, Geneva, 2017.

Clearly defined objectives: The childcare programmes developed or adopted should have clearly defined objectives. Bearing in mind the purpose and focus of childcare, all programmes adopted by the employer should foster incremental developmental progress in a healthy and safe environment, and should be flexible and engaging to capture children's interests and their individual abilities.

Ensure availability and accessibility: When deciding to introduce a childcare programme in the business operation, make sure to address such questions as: Is the childcare centre on-site, near-site or off-site? If the site is not in easy walking distance, is a shuttle bus or other easier/cheaper transportation provided? Do working parents need to go through lengthy procedures to apply for a childcare allowance? Are the working conditions safe for pregnant women and their children? What has been done to minimize excessive overtime for pregnant workers, frequent work shifts and unpredictable working hours?

In practice, this means that the childcare options available in the business operations are oriented to serve workers' needs, and the employer will make sure that fees are affordable by offering full or partial subsidies. It is highly recommended that companies provide stipends to disadvantaged families to help them secure childcare spots or give subsidies directly to providers with a specific mandate to accept children from their company.

Engagement and participation: Engage management and parent workers in the process. Providing working parents/caregivers with opportunities to share their perceptions, voice their needs and be involved from the start and throughout the programme improves its relevance, effectiveness and sustainability.

Promote fathers' engagement in childcare. Support the role of men as caregivers, allow them to take time off to participate in prenatal visits, visit/participate and engage in activities in the childcare

BOX 7.

CASE STUDIES: BEST PRACTICES IN FACTORY SETTINGS

International consulting firm implements a child-friendly programme in factories

The Center for Child-Rights and Corporate Social Responsibility (CCR CSR), a consulting firm based in China, has developed 'Child Friendly Spaces', factory-based facilities that provide a safe environment for the children of workers while their parents are at work. These spaces allow children to play, learn and develop social skills through interactions with teachers and other kids – and respond to an urgent need to provide childcare when children are out of school, either as an after-school facility or a full-day centre that is open during school holidays. From 2017–2019, CCR CSR has implemented 44 child-friendly programmes in China. The impact assessment consistently indicates positive results relating to the relationship between workers and managers, children and their parents, parent workers' efficiency at work, and corporate branding. Taking into account the informal sector, particularly the agriculture and plantation sectors, CCR CSR is developing mobile Child Friendly Spaces in order to reach more vulnerable parent workers.^[1]

Apparel manufacturer reduces absenteeism and turnover by providing childcare

The apparel manufacturer MAS Holdings, which has multiple childcare facilities for its factories around the world (eight of them in Sri Lanka), has seen reduced instability in attendance and turnover after introducing childcare benefits. At its MAS Kreedaa Al Safi-Madaba factory in Jordan, the company recorded an increase in the number of female employees, along with 9 per cent reduction in absences due to sick leave within the first nine months after introducing mother-and-child-friendly services. T of an on-site day-care centre, nursing care, breastfeeding room and safe transport. This factory is in a remote rural area in Jordan characterized by low socio-economic development and low female labour force participation.^[2]

Source:

^[1] Center for Child-Rights and Corporate Social Responsibility, Factory Child-Friendly Spaces Pilot Program in China, 2016: A Study on the Impact, Hong Kong, <www.ccrcsr.com/sites/default/files/CCR%20CSR%20FCFS%20Impact%20Assessment%202017.pdf>.

^[2] International Finance Corporation, 'Tackling Childcare: The business case for employer-supported childcare in Sri Lanka', IFC, Washington, D.C., December 2018, <www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/fe0a2fa6-6dde-483a-be75-48c0cc66ceb2/Report.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=mulpGtj>; and p. 12, <www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/c4932977-263e-45d4-9da4-f936694ee13c/MASKreedaa_Layout+3.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=IXu8BzS>, accessed 4 May 2020.

contexts, hire men to work in childcare centres with adequate training and risk mitigation measures in place, equip caregivers to challenge gender stereotypes and share unpaid work, and encourage paternity leave as standard practice together with the take-up of other family benefits.⁴⁷

Regular evaluation: Businesses should evaluate all childcare programmes on a regular basis, to practice continuous improvement.

Even better ...

- ✓ Take a holistic approach to maximize positive impacts. The delivery of childcare by a service provider is far from sufficient. Childcare and child development, for example, should be considered in tandem with the broader family context. Parental empowerment, economic stability and health all affect children's development significantly, and vice versa.
- ✓ Provide wider or full coverage. In addition to covering as many working parents and children as possible, also reach out to the most vulnerable children, such as those in rural or impoverished areas, or from families with an unemployed or sick parent. It is also important to reach children who suffer from chronic illnesses or who are marginalized, such as the left-behind children or migrant children, and children whose parents are working in the informal sector or whose caregivers may be less informed of their rights and procedures for childcare access.
- ✓ Sustain the availability, affordability, accessibility and quality of childcare programmes. Recognizing that it can be challenging to deliver affordable, accessible and quality childcare programmes, building them to last for the long term will be an even greater achievement.
- ✓ Support public policies that promote financing to assure affordability and quality childcare for all.

4.6 Child benefits

Child benefits are regular cash transfers provided to an identified caregiver of children who live in a defined jurisdiction. Generally, child benefits should be part of a system of social protection for young

children including access to quality social services. This means that governments have the primary responsibility to provide child benefits. However, government responsibility does not prevent companies from making active efforts to support child benefits or get involved in child benefits programmes.

Potential gaps: Globally, just 35 per cent of children receive social protection benefits. At the regional level, child benefit coverage reaches 88 per cent in Europe and Central Asia, 66 per cent in the Americas, 28 per cent in Asia and 16 per cent in Africa.⁴⁸ This means that the majority of children in the poorest countries, living in the poorest households, do not benefit from cash grants to support their development.

✓ Facts on the ground

Legal compliance and basic guarantee: Employers must always respect and comply with national, provincial and local laws and regulations related to labour rights and child rights protection, which means that requirements must be met for the minimum wage, social security and work conditions – including hours, overtime compensation, health and safety at the workplace. This is to ensure that workers, particularly working parents have the basic guarantee to cope with unexpected life risks and maintain a decent living.

✓ Key elements of success

Though child benefits are primarily a government responsibility, business is encouraged to consider the full range of options, including those outlined below

Holistic approach to maximize positive impact: Companies are highly recommended to make full use of all available family-friendly policies and other vital initiatives, including but not limited to those described in the handbook. To create the best outcomes and strengthen the long-term benefits for children and their families, business can partner with government, local industry associations and communities and mobilize more resources. Hybrid schemes based on public-private coordination can offer huge potential.

⁴⁷ Nepomnyaschy, Lenna, and Jane Waldfogel, 'Paternity Leave and Fathers' Involvement with Their Young Children: Evidence from the American ECLS-B', *Community, Work & Family*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2007, pp. 427–453.

⁴⁸ International Labour Office and United Nations Children's Fund, 'Towards Universal Social Protection for Children: Achieving SDG 1.3', ILO-UNICEF Joint Report on Social Protection for Children, UNICEF and ILO, New York and Geneva, 6 February 2019, p. 3, <www.unicef.org/media/49401/file>, accessed 14 May 2020.

Even better ...

- ✓ Offer stronger protection by bolstering the company's efforts by going beyond legal compliance. Pay particular attention to working conditions and strong wages for families in the company's own workplaces and in its supply chains, so that working parents are more capable of fulfilling their family obligations alongside their job responsibilities.
- ✓ Canvass employee demand for and preference with respect to child benefits to help inform the design of apt and contextually relevant child benefits options.
- ✓ Use social protection responses to support parents and other caregivers, including scaling up social transfer programmes horizontally (to more people) and vertically (increasing the transfer size) to expand coverage for the most vulnerable children and parents. This can be accomplished through universal child grants, maternity/parental leave benefits, cash transfers to informal sector workers, and gender and age-sensitive in-kind assistance where needed (e.g., menstrual hygiene management kits, diapers, food supplies).
- ✓ Combine cash with information messaging and 'plus' components that support positive parenting, gender equality and violence prevention.
- ✓ Support relevant public policies.

BOX 8.

CASE STUDY: INDUSTRIAL MANUFACTURER PROVIDES SUBSIDIES FOR CHILDCARE

At the Borusan Group's subsidiary, Borusan Mannesmann, a steel pipe manufacturer based in Turkey, working parents are offered a childcare subsidy that had been requested by its male blue-collar workforce to enable their wives to enter the formal workforce.

The programme aims to provide direct support to workers and their families, and to promote the company's goal of encouraging women's participation in the labour force in Turkey. If employees can verify that their children are enrolled in preschool or kindergarten, and that their spouse is in formal employment, a monthly subsidy of 200 Turkish lira (US\$57) is available to workers for each child aged 3–6.

Zafer Atabey, Borusan Mannesmann's general manager, describes how the programme developed: "In the beginning, I tried to design something much more complicated: build our own childcare facility, for example ... In the end, I tried to do something more powerful and concrete: the subsidy seemed to be the fastest and most efficient solution."

Source: International Finance Corporation, 'Tackling Childcare: The business case for employer-supported childcare – Case study: Borusan industry/heavy manufacturing, Turkey', IFC, Washington, D.C., September 2017, pp. 8–9, <www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/f608ce9f-bdb7-4a4f-9d6f-30ccab4b05ce/Borusan_Layout+2.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=IXu8vbH>, accessed 10 May 2020.

APPENDIX I: Management self-assessment survey

Self-assessment offers a way to better understand the company’s performance in relation to family-friendly policies and programmes. It is not a test or an audit, and there are no right or wrong answers.

The goal is to identify issues and find suitable solutions. While there are many factors that need

to be considered when making decisions on how to move forward, as an initial step, senior and mid-level management should be encouraged to respond to a self-assessment with an open attitude. Then the results can be read alongside an assessment of workers’ needs (*see Annex III*).

TABLE A. SAMPLE MANAGEMENT SELF-ASSESSMENT SURVEY ON FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICY

Basic information on the workforce	
Question	Answer
How many workers are employed by your company?	
What is the level of gender parity in various roles?	% women to men throughout the organization _____ % women to men in senior decision-making posts _____ % women to men junior management _____ % women to men in clerical work _____ % women to men in manufacturing _____
How many workers are migrants?	Total # of migrant workers _____ # of female migrant workers _____ # of male migrant workers _____
How many workers have children? Married versus single; and (may want to consider) same-sex couples	Total # of workers with children _____ # of married workers _____ # of single workers _____
What is the average number of children per worker?	
Regarding the age distribution of workers’ children, how many are there in each age group?	0–2 (breastfeeding age) _____ 3–5 (preschool) _____ 6–12 (primary school) _____ 13–15 (lower secondary) _____ 16–17 (working age ⁴⁹) _____ 18 or older (age of majority) _____

⁴⁹ ILO Convention 138 requires national governments to set the minimum legal age of children allowed to enter the workforce, seeking to ensure that work does not interfere with compulsory schooling. It also provides strict age-related guidelines about the nature of work that can be lawfully undertaken by a child. This fundamental convention sets the general minimum age for admission to employment or work at 15 years (13 for light work) and the minimum age for hazardous work at 18 (16 under certain strict conditions). See ILO: <www.ilo.org/global/standards/subjects-covered-by-international-labour-standards/child-labour>, accessed 22 May 2020.

Management's perception of general challenges faced its workforce, particularly that of parent workers and pregnant workers	
Question	Answer
Do you consider it important to have gender parity in the company?	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
Do you think it is important for your workers to keep a good work-life balance?	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
Has your company ever performed a needs assessment related to work-life balance and family responsibilities?	
In your company, which workplace factors/arrangements might have a positive impact on workers' private/family life?	
In your company, which workplace factors/arrangements might have a negative impact on worker's private/family life?	
Is there any additional support provided to parent workers in your company?	
How are pregnant workers and lactating workers protected in your company?	
Do you perceive any other challenges related to family responsibilities that may face your workforce?	

General situation of labour rights and child rights protection in the workplace

Question	Answer
What is the minimum age of employment required by your company?	
What is the maximum number of working hours per day for an adult worker (age 18 or above) at your workplace, including overtime?	
What is the maximum number of working hours per week for an adult worker (age 18 or above) at your workplace, including overtime?	
What is the maximum number of working hours per day for a young worker (age under 18 if applicable) at your workplace, including overtime?	
What is the maximum number of working hours per week for a young worker (under age 18) at your workplace, including overtime?	
Are young workers and pregnant/lactating workers: a. Allowed to engage in tasks that are considered hazardous work? b. Tasks that require the use of personal protective equipment? c. Exposed to toxic substances?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No b. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No c. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What percentage of workers is covered under social security insurance through the company?	
Does the company have a written policy on how to handle violations of the minimum age of employment?	
What is the minimum monthly salary of a full-time worker?	
What is the average monthly take-home salary of a full-time worker?	
What is the minimum local wage per month?	
Does the company keep records of pregnant women and women on maternity leave?	
Does the company have a written policy on maternity protection? If yes, please describe the policy	
Does the company have a policy that prevents young workers from taking on hazardous tasks? If yes, please describe the policy	
Are young workers, pregnant workers and lactating workers engaged in overtime or night shifts in the company?	

Management's knowledge and perception of family-friendly policies	
Question	Answer
Does your company have a general strategy for corporate social responsibility?	
Have you ever heard of the 'family-friendly workplace' concept?	
Do you think your company is family-friendly?	
If yes, please explain why.	
Do you think it is necessary to introduce family-friendly policies/programmes in your company?	
Does your company already have family-friendly policies/programmes?	
If yes, have family-friendly practices been planned or implemented?	
If yes, does management at all levels and/or the human resources department participate in training on family-friendly practices?	
If yes, do all workers receive training on the company's family-friendly policy, programmes or benefits?	
If yes, how many employees/workers have participated in training on the company's family-friendly policy, programmes or benefits?	
How regular is this training?	
If family-friendly practices have been implemented, do you think workers are satisfied?	
Are there clear procedures on how to handle violations of your policies?	
Do you work with your business partners to ensure that they respect parent workers, pregnant workers and children's rights?	

Management's perception on workers' engagement level in policymaking process	
Question	Answer
Do you encourage workers' participation in decision-making processes regarding family-friendly policies? If yes, please describe how they participate.	
How do you ensure workers' needs are reflected and voices heard in related decision-making process? Please specify.	

APPENDIX II: SURVEY FOR ASSESSING WORKERS' NEEDS

Creating and administering an effective survey to produce objective and accurate results is a complex process. If this type of expertise is not available within the company, consider engaging an independent third party to develop and conduct the survey and analysis.

An assessment of workers' needs can identify: personal and family demographics; financial situations, including income level and living expenses; labour rights protection at work (social insurance, health and safety, working hours, holiday and leave, etc.); self-perceived challenges and self-

proposed solutions to their challenges; knowledge and awareness of childcare, family care and other types of support; and the coverage of family-friendly measures, based on availability, accessibility, affordability and quality.

Be sure to consult relevant worker representatives to determine which questions are appropriate. Protections for privacy as required by company policy or legal mandate will need to be in place during the collection of this information, and after the data are gathered and analysed

TABLE B. SAMPLE SURVEY ON WORKERS' NEEDS FOR FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICY

Basic personal information	
Question	Answer
What is your gender?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
How old are you?	
What is your marital status?	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Do you have any children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, how many children do you have and how old are they?	# _____ age _____ # _____ age _____ # _____ age _____ # _____ age _____
Do any of your children attend a preschool or kindergarten programme? If yes, will you support your children to complete:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
a. Mandatory primary education? b. Secondary education? c. Higher education?	a. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No b. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No c. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do any of your children participate in any type of informal educational programme, e.g., community support, family tutoring?	

Physical and mental well-being (working conditions)

How much do you agree with the following statements? (Select one box at right.)

Question	Answer
<p>My working hours allow me enough time to be with my family.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree</p>
<p>I have enough paid leave to take care of urgent family matters.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree</p>
<p>I have experienced physical pain, illness or injury caused by my work.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree</p>
<p>I have experienced mental exhaustion or illness caused by my work.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree</p>

Basic living needs	
Question	Answer
<p>How much do you agree with the following statement? (Select one box at right.) My household has adequate basic living facilities, e.g., running water, electricity, toilet, clean drinking water.</p> <p>If you disagree, please list what is missing below:</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Neutral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree</p>
<p>How much do you agree with the following statement? (Select one box at right.) My salary/income is sufficient to support my family.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree (sufficient)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree (fairly sufficient)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Neutral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disagree (quite insufficient)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree (absolutely insufficient)</p>
<p>What percentage of your family income do you spend on food per month?</p>	
<p>If you are paying rent or a mortgage, what percentage of your family income do you spend on housing per month?</p>	
<p>What percentage of your family income is particularly related to taking care of your children – education, childcare, clothing, health care – per month?</p>	
<p>On average, how much can you save up per month?</p>	
<p>Are you covered by any type of medical insurance?</p>	
<p>Are your children covered by medical insurance?</p>	
<p>How long does it take (on average) for you to commute to work daily?</p>	

Major challenges workers face in relation to childcare and family care	
Question	Answer
Who is mainly taking care of your children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Myself <input type="checkbox"/> My spouse (wife/husband) <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparents <input type="checkbox"/> Older siblings <input type="checkbox"/> Other relatives <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: _____
Are you satisfied with the time and quality of the parental care and support you can give to your children?	<input type="checkbox"/> Very much satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfied <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Dissatisfied <input type="checkbox"/> Very dissatisfied
Can you explain why you are satisfied or dissatisfied with the parental care and support you can give to your children?	
What kind of challenges do you face in terms of childcare? (Select all that apply.)	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A (no child of childcare age) <input type="checkbox"/> High cost <input type="checkbox"/> Distance to home <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of caregivers <input type="checkbox"/> Concerned about safety <input type="checkbox"/> Hard to enrol <input type="checkbox"/> Opening hours <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Inadequate facilities (lack of cleanliness, space, toys, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> No challenges <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
What type of childcare support do you receive from your employer?	<input type="checkbox"/> Child-friendly spaces when school is not in session <input type="checkbox"/> After-school centre <input type="checkbox"/> Regular day care/ kindergarten <input type="checkbox"/> Childcare allowance <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Do you find the childcare support from your employer adequate?	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree

Workers' awareness of family-friendly workplace policies and practices

Question	Answer
<p>How much do you agree with the following statement?</p> <p>I am aware of my company's policy, practices and facilities related to a family-friendly workplace.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Neutral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree</p>
<p>How much do you agree with the following statement?</p> <p>My workplace provides encouragement to employees to pursue a family-friendly working style.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Neutral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree</p>
<p>How much do you agree with the following statement?</p> <p>The management values the importance of family-friendly policies and programmes.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Neutral</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree</p>
<p>Please select the types of family-friendly policies and practices in your workplace, checking all that apply.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Breastfeeding facility</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Family insurance package</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Flexible working hours</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Counselling programme for family issues</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Leave benefits</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> College scholarship or loans for workers' children</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Childcare support (room, fund, subsidy, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Eldercare support</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Family-oriented events or programmes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other _____</p>	

Feedback and/or expectations on family-friendly workplace policies and practices (availability, accessibility, affordability, quality)

Question	Answer
<p>How much do you agree with the following statement?</p> <p>I am satisfied with the family-friendly workplace policies and practices in my workplace.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly disagree
<p>Please rate the following family-friendly policies and practices in your workplace (1 is the least satisfied choice and 10 is the most satisfied choice). Select 'N/A' if there is no such policy/practice in place.</p>	
<p>Breastfeeding facility</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	
<p>Family insurance package</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	
<p>Flexible working hours</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	
<p>Counselling programme for family issues</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	
<p>Leave benefits</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	
<p>College scholarship or loan for workers' children</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	
<p>Childcare support (room, fund, subsidy, etc.)</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	
<p>Eldercare support</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	
<p>Family-oriented event or programme</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	
<p>Other (please specify) _____</p> <p>N/A <u>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</u></p>	

Suggested solutions to existing challenges	
Question	Answer
Do you know of any other challenges when it comes to achieving a work-life balance in your workplace?	
What kind of support would you need from management in terms of work-life balance and a family-friendly workplace?	
What are the other kinds of support that you need from management that would assist you to achieve your basic needs?	

APPENDIX III: BEST-PRACTICE ANALYSIS

To expedite your company's analysis of relevant policies and processes, the template in Table C has two parts, which prompt businesses to consider:

1. The status of relevant regulations and business compliance.

To complete this section, the company should ask: What are the legal requirements with respect to child protection in the countries in which we operate?

2. The status of management's current practices.

To complete this section, companies should ask: How are we ensuring that we meet our family-friendly policy commitments and requirements?

TABLE C. MAPPING THE COMPANY'S COMPLIANCE AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Regulatory frameworks and legal compliance			
Countries of operation	Legal provisions	Regulations	Compliance status
Country A			
Country B			
Country C			
Comparison countries			
Country A (role model)			
Country B (similar socio-economic status)			
International requirements	Legal provisions	Regulations	Compliance status
International Labour Organization (ILO)			
World Health Organization (WHO)			
Other _____			
Industry or sector codes	Legal provisions	Regulations	Compliance status
(To be added for each business)			

Management practices		
Governance	Does the company have a governance structure to manage the company's approach to family/child support?	
	How is family/child support understood at the senior leadership level within the organization?	
Policy	Does the company have a stand-alone family-friendly workplace policy?	
	Does the company include family-friendly workplace practices/requirements in its employee or vendor code of conduct?	
	What expectations regarding family/child support are placed on business partners?	
Management	Does the company take adequate measures to implement its family-friendly workplace policy?	
	Does the company provide training on family-friendly workplace policy and practices to all workers?	
	Does the company have a process to report and respond to family/child support concerns raised by workers and third parties?	

APPENDIX IV: METHODS AND EXAMPLES FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

Tracking quantitative metrics

A large portion of project monitoring is focused on hard facts, such as the money being spent, workforce statistics and work hours/resources being used. These are key quantitative metrics and need to be tracked in a systematic and effective way, providing a ready snapshot of where the project is at any point in time. Projects can be tracked in a variety of ways, including:.

✓ Spreadsheets

Spreadsheets are a good method for tracking key metrics. All relevant data can be listed with values set against each important metric. This includes timelines with acceptable delays, projected budgets with expected increases, projected work hours with expected increases, team members and their backups in case of any emergency.

✓ Project applications

If the project being worked on is very large, with complex interrelationships and many sub-projects, then a spreadsheet may not be sophisticated enough to offer streamlined tracking and reporting. In such cases, a tracking application such as project management software is the right way to go.

Tracking qualitative metrics

An equal focus needs to be given to qualitative monitoring, finding the answers to such questions as: Are stakeholders happy with the progress? Are their expectations being met? Is the project meeting the needs it set out to? Some methods to achieve this are described below.

✓ Questionnaires or surveys

Conducting a survey is a good way to reach a representative cross-section of stakeholders or a specific group. Whether the format is online, on paper or in person, effective surveys need to be carefully prepared and administered. Requirements include being sure the results will provide the most objective answers possible, and offering flexibility/privacy so that respondents can choose to withhold certain information while still participating. Once data are received, the information needs to be collated and analysed critically.

Table D offers a sample template to help jump-start the process. As with all the handbook tools, it is designed to be adapted to your company's context. You might also consider contracting a specialist in developing and administering questionnaires.



TABLE D. SAMPLE MONITORING SURVEY

Current status of family-friendly policies and programmes

1. Does your company or organization have family-friendly policies? Yes No

If yes, please list the names of these policies below

2. What specific family-friendly programmes or practices has your company or organization implemented?

Check all that apply:

Flexible working arrangements Paid parental leave Paid paternal leave

Paid maternity leave

Support for pregnant and nursing women: paid breaks; breastfeeding facilities; job protection.

Affordable and accessible quality childcare Child benefits

Other (please list) _____

If you have additional notes or comments, we welcome you to list them here:

When were the family-friendly policies most recently reviewed and revised?

What are the advantages and disadvantages of current family-friendly policies?

What are the company's objectives for family-friendly programmes?

Are the agreed objectives communicated at all levels in the company?

What is the duration of the existing family-family programmes/practices in your company?

What is the timeline for revising existing programmes or implementing new family-friendly programmes?

What are the resources needed and available and act to fill any gap for implementing the family-friendly programmes?

What are the output measurements and methods that will be used in family-friendly programme monitoring and evaluation?

How many staff will be assigned in the implementation team for family-friendly programmes?

What are their roles?

Awareness-raising and training

How many management and supervisor briefings have been conducted for the family-friendly policies and programmes?

How many staff orientation sessions have been conducted for the family-friendly policies and programmes?

How many managers and staff participate in training on the family-friendly policies and programmes?

Please describe the family-friendly activities the business offers:

What is the plan to manage stakeholders' expectations throughout the family-friendly programmes?

continued

continued

Evaluation and reporting
What is the ongoing monitoring and evaluation plan for family-friendly programmes?
What are the indicators and methods needed for the end-line evaluation of family-friendly programmes?
When were the family-friendly programmes most recently evaluated?
How are the family-friendly programme findings reported and recommendations made to the company's senior level?
What is the plan to communicate family-friendly programmes and good practices both internally and externally?
What is the plan to continue the family-friendly practice?

✓ Interviews

As with all of the methods mentioned in this appendix, interviews require preparation before they are conducted. The interviewer needs to

have questions ready and should be able to probe for relevant information. Though most effective in person, interviews can also be conducted over the phone. Sample questions for interviewing management appear in Table E.

TABLE E. QUESTIONS FOR AN INTERVIEW WITH MANAGEMENT

Question	Answer
What is your position in the company?	
What are the family-friendly policies and programmes presence in the company?	
What areas are covered by family-friendly policies?	
Why did you decide to focus on such selected areas?	
What is your role and responsibility in regard to implementing family-friendly policies and programmes?	
How do you communicate with management and staff about the family-friendly policies and programmes implementation?	
What are the difficulties/challenges for the family-friendly policies and programmes' implementation? How do you tackle such challenges?	
What are the issues or questions staff raise during the family-friendly policies and programmes implementation? How do you solve these issues?	
In your opinion, what elements and resources are important for the implement of family-friendly policies and programmes? Why?	
What are the benefits/positive impacts of family-friendly policies and programmes to the factory?	
Are there any improvements needed for the current family-friendly policies and programmes?	
Do you think family-friendly policies and programmes are well known to management? Staff? The public?	
Do you have any good practices or a case that generated from family-friendly policies and programme implementation?	
Will the company continue to implement the family-friendly policies and programmes in the long term? Why and how?	

✓ Focus groups

Another way of gathering first-hand information is to bring stakeholders together for a structured discussion, leading with some pointed questions but largely offering participants the opportunity to speak freely and spark new ideas with each other.

A group conversation can tend to go off track, so it is important for the facilitator to steer the conversation in the right direction and also to allow all opinions to be voiced freely. Table F offers a sample script for a focus group discussion among staff.

TABLE F. SAMPLE SCRIPT FOR STAFF FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Opening dialogue for facilitators

Thank you for participating in this focus group discussion. My name is _____ and I will be facilitating this discussion.

The goals are _____.

[Briefly describe your objectives for the discussion.]

We are really interested to listen to your personal opinion about your company's family-friendly policies and programmes.

[Explain how information will be used] Information obtained through this discussion will be anonymous, and will be used to improve the family-friendly policies and programmes. [Note how the discussion is being recorded, e.g., a designated note-taker, video or audio.] With your permission, we will be taking notes on the topics and answers, but they will not be connected to a specific person.

[Share the basic rules] There is no right or wrong answer to the questions we discuss, only opinions according to your personal experience. Please be respectful when someone is speaking. Everyone will have a chance to talk, while the rest of the participants should listen and respond carefully.

Now, we would like to each of you introduce yourself. Let's go around the room and share your name, job title in the company, and why you are interested in policies and programmes for a family-friendly workplace.

Questions for discussion

Have you ever heard of a family-friendly policy or programme at your workplace?

If yes, can you describe it?

Have you ever participated in any of the family-friendly programmes?

If no, what were the reasons you did not participate?

If yes, can you describe the programme?

Do you think the family-friendly programme you have participated in meets your needs and provides adequate support? Is it well-organized and easy to access?

What is the thing you like the most about the company's family-friendly facilities and programmes?

How do you think the current facilities and programmes can be improved?

What positive impact and negative impacts do family-friendly policies and programmes bring about for your children, yourselves and the company?

What are your expectations for family-friendly policies and programmes in the long term?

