

*An annotated bibliography of literature on  
childcare policy change*

*Maria Stavropoulou*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Using the format of an annotated bibliography, this paper identifies and presents key sources on childcare policy change. Its primary aim is to support the writing up of the related report, commissioned by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, on childcare provision across the world. It also aims to provide research support to all other efforts to strengthen evidence-informed policy and programming in this area.

The paper includes 39 sources published since 2008, with two exceptions – a book and a flagship report both published in 2006, whose inclusion was considered important. It presents different types of resources, ranging from books, academic journal articles and systematic reviews to international agencies' reports and assessments of projects implemented by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), using a variety of methodologies from participatory approaches to quantitative research methods.

It is organised into three sections:

### 1) How childcare policy change looks

Since the 1970s feminist economists have tried to measure women's unpaid care work, make it visible and valued and include it in the macro-economy – yet mainstream development policy and practice have persistently neglected the issue. In recent years, though, considerable progress has been taking place. International agreements and national laws have acknowledged the role of unpaid care work and worked on gender inequality, generation of statistical data and increasing research, policy and programming across the world, including in low- and middle-income countries (Eyben, 2013). Care, and particularly childcare, is thus no longer invisible in development discourse and practice but attracts the attention of international organisations, donors and development agencies (Esquivel, 2013).

Care has been framed as a key issue for child development, human wellbeing, women's empowerment and gender equality, economic growth and, more recently, human rights and social justice (Sepúlveda Carmona, 2013) or men's right to 'an involved fatherhood' (Levtov et al., 2015). Apart from feminist economists and their focus on the 'care economy', feminist philosophers emphasise care relationships while social policy analysts speak of the 'care regime' and the 'social organisation of care' and analyse state responsibility for care provision. Thanks to their contributions, the concept has evolved, debates have deepened our understanding of the social construction of care needs and responsibilities, different tools and approaches to measure care with their own strengths and weaknesses have been developed and the 3Rs framework (Recognition, Reduction and Redistribution) has been established to inform research analysis and policy change (Esquivel, 2013).

Indeed, research on women's unpaid care work is growing, with NGOs and research institutions implementing projects using participatory methodologies to raise awareness of the value of this work and to support women and their communities to demand better public services, often as part of women's empowerment objectives (ActionAid, 2013). On the other hand, quantitative studies have revealed the importance of investing in basic infrastructure such as electricity, water, cook-stoves, transport and roads, particularly in rural areas: rural electrification primarily benefits women as it reduces time spent on domestic and care work and increases their paid employment (Dinkelman, 2010); likewise, water infrastructure can improve school enrolment for girls and boys (Koolwal and van de Walle, 2009); and access to modern cooking fuel and improved cook-stoves has significant health, economic and social benefits for women and their children (Malla and Timilsina, 2014).

International organisations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), UN Women and the World Bank recognise the critical role of women's unpaid care work on gender gaps in labour force participation, wages and job quality, along with the underlying discriminatory social norms. They recommend investment in time-saving technology and infrastructure; access to quality public childcare services; family-friendly policies such as parental leave and flexible working arrangements; fiscal policies that do not tax working mothers more and provide for healthcare and girls' education; and initiatives to transform gender norms (Ferrant et al., 2014; Gonzales et al., 2015a, 2015b; UN Women, 2015; World Bank, 2011).

Social protection measures such as cash transfers and public works are particularly important for the vast majority of women in informal employment (UN Women, 2015). Domestic workers who also provide childcare, and their right to a minimum wage and adequate working conditions, have inspired a global movement that, along with trade unions and the International Labour Organization (ILO), has made some progress visible in terms of international agreements and national regulations. Particular attention is paid to child domestic workers, mostly girls; in collaboration with other UN agencies, civil society organisations and unions, ILO has worked to estimate the extent of the problem, document its effects in diverse contexts and demand solutions (ILO/IPEC, 2013).

The issue of financing policies and measures to address women's unpaid care work is also attracting attention. Several options have been put forward, including reallocation of resources in the national budget and identification of new sources of domestic revenue, such as natural resource revenues to finance public service provision (ActionAid, 2013). Use of gender-responsive budgeting in developing countries has in some cases made visible the effects of unpaid care work on women and girls and influenced changes such as improved availability of time-use data and government expenditures in basic infrastructure and services (Elson and Sharp, 2010).

Development actors advocating for policy change also cite the multiple benefits of childcare investment for children, caregivers, households, communities, businesses and economies. A relatively overlooked economic benefit is that public expansion of care services through public works could generate significant employment opportunities for low-income women and contribute to poverty reduction and pro-poor growth (Antonopoulos and Kim, 2011).

## 2) How policy sector change looks

Care is multi-sectoral and can be integrated everywhere. However, there are three key sectors where childcare policy change has to take place: the labour market, social protection and early childhood care and education (ECCE).

Labour market transformation, urbanisation, migration, globalisation and new family patterns such as increased numbers of single-parent households have led to major tensions between work and family life, with serious care implications. Women's increased labour force participation, informalisation of the labour market, weakened extended family support and limited public services have led working parents, particularly mothers and those in low-income families, to struggle to balance their paid work with caring for their children (Heymann, 2006).

In high-income countries, these changes, along with fertility decline, population ageing and pressure on social security systems, have led to the introduction of work-family reconciliation measures aiming to ease tensions between the two spheres, facilitate women's economic participation, increase productivity and promote gender equality. Labour market policies for working parents include paid maternity, paternity and parental leave and benefits, breastfeeding breaks and facilities, flexible

working time arrangements, reintegration policies and care infrastructure. States play the key role in providing the enabling legislative and policy framework in collaboration with trade unions and employers (ILO, 2011). In order to retain female talent, improve productivity and reduce turnover, large companies increasingly implement parental policies (ILO, 2015). There is also need to guarantee decent working conditions for childcare workers, including domestic workers, and to provide them with training in quality childcare provision (UNICEF and ILO, 2013).

Balancing work with childcare is more challenging for women, girls and low-income families in developing countries, where the majority of women are in informal employment, spend longer time on domestic and care work, face higher time pressures owing to climate change and the HIV and AIDS epidemic, lack access to necessary infrastructure and public services and have limited financial means to afford quality care (UNICEF and ILO, 2013). Provision of accessible and affordable childcare is thus necessary so children are not left alone, taken to work or left to inappropriate and dangerous care for their health, safety and wellbeing – and girls do not miss school to look after their younger siblings (Heymann, 2006). Innovative initiatives are particularly important for women in rural areas and those in the informal economy, as evidence on how best to address their needs is still limited.

While some sources contend that working parents globally need work–family reconciliation policies (Heymann, 2006; ILO, 2011), several analysts have questioned whether these policies implemented in high-income countries could be applied in countries with different conditions and fiscal capacities. Once again, states have to support reconciliation policies adapted to local realities – that is, targeted to the special needs of informal workers and potentially developed around the household and the local community (Benería, 2008).

There is general agreement that social protection is of critical importance for those in the informal economy, especially working mothers and their children. Although a recent review in low- and middle-income countries found unpaid care concerns remained largely invisible in this sector (Chopra, 2013), reproductive and caregiving issues should be integrated into social protection policies and programmes. The establishment of national social protection floors according to national needs and priorities can provide the framework to guarantee basic child and family policies and support unpaid care work issues by extending non-contributory benefits and care services to vulnerable parents and children (ILO, 2011; UNICEF and ILO, 2013).

Social protection measures include cash transfers, old age social pensions, disability grants, childcare subsidies and public works. Cash transfers that are well targeted and complemented effectively improve child wellbeing; incorporation of early childhood development components such as parenting classes into such programmes also appears promising (Engle et al., 2011). Moreover, cash transfers and particularly those with attendance conditionalities can significantly improve girls' school enrolment and attainment (Unterhalter et al., 2014). Old age non-contributory pensions are particularly important for older women to strengthen their income security, while reforms of contributory pension systems could provide credits for unpaid care work to mothers or even fathers (ILO, 2011). Public works should be designed with the explicit objective of reducing unpaid care work and investing in the expansion of care services, while providing pro-poor employment and income growth (ibid.).

Progress in ECCE means increasing public and donor expenditures, expanding coverage, improving quality and reaching the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, including poor children, children in rural areas and disabled children. Studies have identified the multiple human, social and economic benefits of ECCE and have established that early childhood is the most effective and cost-efficient time to invest in and support children and their working parents, particularly mothers (Engle et al., 2011; UNESCO,

2006; World Bank, 2013). Such arguments can be used to prioritise ECCE on the international and national agenda and raise awareness among aid agencies, governments and families. A better understanding of the linkages between ECCE and unpaid care work is needed as a review of such programmes found unpaid care concerns were rarely incorporated (Chopra, 2013). In addition, services should expand to reach children aged under three, who have largely been neglected, and implement a holistic approach that combines all sectors involved (health, nutrition, education, social protection and child protection). Partnerships and collaboration are also crucial, with international organisations such as the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank currently working closely with governments in low- and middle-income countries to build technical capacity and improve ECCE provision (World Bank, 2013).

### 3) Actors and factors of childcare policy change

Although unpaid care work had attracted some attention in international conferences and agreements since the mid-1990s, it emerged as a policy priority within the UN system in 2009 when it became the theme of the 53rd Commission on the Status of Women, which brought together care, equal sharing of responsibility and HIV and AIDS in a coherent frame. The particular framing of care and the emphasis placed on its significance for family welfare unified a wide range of diverse actors, including feminist activists, workers' rights groups and conservative faith-based organisations that opposed other gender equality initiatives. However, in order to achieve this unanimous support, disability and new family structures, such as single-parent households and gay and lesbian couples, were left out (Bedford, 2010).

Since then, care-related issues have attracted increasing attention and support from international organisations, yet with different foci and objectives. Thus, UNESCO and UNICEF push for early childhood development policies in the name of child wellbeing; the World Bank, IMF and UN Women explicitly recognise the effects of unpaid care work on women's empowerment and advocate for measures improving women's and girls' education and labour opportunities and outcomes; and ILO focuses on work-family reconciliation policies, domestic workers' labour rights, including the care needs of their own children, and new labour statistical methodologies that include unpaid care work (Budlender, 2015; Razavi, 2015). UN agencies have also undertaken significant research on care issues, moving the policy debate further, such as a research project on the political and social economy of care and different care regimes by the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) (Razavi, 2015).

Donors also increasingly invest in care policy and research. At the forefront of these efforts, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation has been supporting several projects, such as the Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) programme on women's economic empowerment, gender equality and growth in low-income countries in collaboration with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID); the Counting Women's Work Project of the Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU) at the University of Cape Town; and another research initiative at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) with the involvement of international NGOs (INGOs) and partners in developing countries (Budlender, 2015).

International NGOs (such as ActionAid and Oxfam) have also been involved in research, advocacy and programming to raise awareness of unpaid care work and improve the situation of vulnerable groups of women, such as poor rural women, by helping them demand appropriate policy change. Others have been working with men and boys to transform gender ideals and promote men's caregiving, while children's rights organisations and children's rights advocates have further promoted childcare

policies (Budlender, 2015; Razavi, 2015) and groups and networks such as Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) advocate for the labour rights of poor women informal workers, including domestic workers, as well as their need for childcare (Budlender, 2015).

Many governments have politically committed to tackling gender inequality and discriminatory norms, ratified international agreements and established legal and policy frameworks providing paternal leave and childcare services. They have also promoted the incorporation of care work into national accounts and have taken action to recognise and address the rights of domestic workers. Although more research is needed, governments often appear to be influenced to adopt such policy changes by international agencies such as UNICEF or the World Bank or international and national champions, adhering to international agreements and goals such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) or in accordance with the ideological and institutional history of the country (Chopra, 2013).

Regarding the role of women's movements and collective action, some analysts have argued that women appear to be very little mobilised around the care issue in developing countries as compared with other issues such as violence against women, and care policies appear to be imposed more from above and not in response to bottom-up claims. The often-cited reason is that middle-class women benefit from the availability of inexpensive domestic labour and thus have no interest in mobilising and asking for public solutions. However, evidence from several settings suggests this may not be always true: research in Latin America found movements linked to women's economic independence and left-wing mobilisation asking for care policy change (Razavi, 2015).

Cross-national research over a period of 30 years on the factors prompting governments to provide paternal leave and childcare found women's movements played a key role in pushing for childcare policies but not for parental leave. While national wealth and fiscal capacity may be enabling factors, women in government positions, left parties and being signatory to international agreements are all positively associated with the introduction of paid parental leave; on the other hand, more than any other factor, women's movements have a strong positive association with national childcare policies (Htun and Weldon, 2014). However, state capacity also influences women's mobilisation for childcare policies. In states with weak capacity, elite women's groups are unlikely to push for parental leave or childcare as they are well aware these policies are financially costly and their enforcement difficult. In such contexts, women's movements prefer to push for policies with fewer costs, less challenging implementation or a more symbolical significance (Htun and Weldon, 2010). Specific historical and political conjunctures, such as elected left-wing governments and feminists in positions of power, or democratisation and decentralisation processes opening new spaces for women to mobilise and push for policy change, also appear to be important (Razavi, 2015; UNRISD, 2015b).

In the case of domestic workers' rights, their mobilisation and development of grassroots, local, national, regional and global groups and networks, campaigning to raise awareness of their rights and lobbying for labour law reforms led to their increasing influence and a ground-breaking ILO convention. Domestic workers have been able to make considerable progress in terms of protection from exploitation, employment regulation and child domestic labour prevention, yet more remains to be done in terms of national legal and policy reforms and their effective enforcement (IDWN et al., 2013). Reaching and organising domestic workers by building a collective identity and raising their awareness about their rights is often a challenge, with women initially coming together to tackle practical issues to improve their daily lives (Kabeer et al., 2013). A recent UNRISD project researching how women's mobilisation in India and Indonesia has been able to influence policy change on the issues of violence against women and domestic workers' rights found that, while in the former case women successfully pushed for change, in the latter they were less effective. Apart from context-

specific factors such as a shorter history of mobilisation or a smaller support base, researchers attributed this difference to the fact that domestic workers belong to disadvantaged social groups; their issue applies to only a group of women and is seen as a class problem; their mobilisation is difficult owing to heavy workloads; and they often fall through the cracks between women's and labour movements (UNRISD, 2015a, 2015b).

Other factors also hinder childcare-related policy change. The rhetoric of international organisations and development agencies is not always translated into action. Development projects may pay limited attention to childcare issues: a review of World Bank projects in four key sectors – agriculture, education, infrastructure and private sector development – found their design and implementation had largely failed to recognise and address women's unequal care burden; none included public childcare provision for women participants (Bibler and Zuckerman, 2013). Moreover, while they may invest in infrastructure or aim to improve women's economic participation, interventions may also avoid challenging the traditional intra-household division of labour and related norms in the name of not interfering in the private sphere and showing disrespect to local cultural values (Brickell, 2011).

States may also explicitly reinforce gendered ideas about women's natural roles as wives and mothers and encourage them to look after their husbands and children in the name of family welfare (Brickell, 2011). In countries with religious conservatism, women are expected to stay at home and care for their family, with childcare framed as an issue of the private sphere going beyond the scope of policy intervention (Eyben, 2013). Even when governments enact laws and organise campaigns for gender equality at home, they may fail to challenge deeply entrenched norms and practices as national-level action and stronger policy capacity are necessary to bring about transformative change (Brickell, 2011).

Despite growing policy attention paid to childcare, some feminist analysts have pointed out that this has not substantially promoted women's rights and gender equality, as social movements and policymakers have framed and enacted such change differently. While women mobilise around gender equality, governments influenced by social investment ideas focus on child welfare; or promote childcare to facilitate women's employment and economic growth instead of aiming to change gender relations at home and at work (Williams, 2010). In the case of developing countries, feminist analysts have criticised the social investment approach that led to important child anti-poverty policies, including cash transfers and service expansion, on the grounds of side-lining gender equality objectives (Razavi, 2015) and reinforcing gender and class inequalities at the expense of low-income women (Williams, 2010). Several sources have pointed out that care work has a distinct class dimension and thus better-off women may benefit from inexpensive domestic labour; this thus contributes to the invisibility of the problem and the devaluation of care work (Debusscher and Ansoms, 2013). However, others have argued that, although this policy concern for children has not promoted gender equality, it has created opportunities for women to make claims (Razavi, 2015).

Finally, there is limited evidence on policy change for parents of disabled children. This may be attributed to disability scholarship and activism, which dismisses mainstream care approaches as oppressive and disempowering, treating the disabled person as a passive object and a care burden; using a human rights framework, it focuses on the person's need to control her life and have a voice in care policies that affect her (Bedford, 2010). Parents with disabled children appear to be a more distinct group, often mobilising along with other unpaid carers around their need for support and making their own claims (Williams, 2010).

Although the evidence base for childcare policy change is growing, there is a clear need for more research in the following areas:

- Although accessible and affordable childcare services are particularly important for poor women in rural areas and those in informal employment, evidence on how best to address their needs is limited.
- In line with the traditional gender division of labour within the household, girls often have to help with domestic and care work. These responsibilities shape girls' time-use patterns and affect their school enrolment, participation and attainment as well as their leisure time. However, these costs continue to be largely hidden and comparable data across developing countries are rare.
- With the exception of the literature on the effects of the HIV and AIDS epidemic on family structures in Sub-Saharan African and households headed by children or grandparents, there is limited evidence on the caregiving roles of children and grandparents in different settings and on policies that recognise and address them.
- Existing literature has neglected the needs of parents caring for their disabled children in developing countries, the particular challenges they face and best measures to improve their situation in diverse contexts.
- Given that detailed evidence on the actors and factors of childcare policy change is limited, more political economy analysis is necessary to investigate and identify the ideas, interests and institutions that push or hinder progress, particularly in contexts where gender and class inequalities are strong.
- People's voices and their views on what they need remain largely absent and participatory research and assessments of childcare policy interventions are needed.
- More research is needed on women's mobilisation and collective action to address unpaid care work in low- and middle-income countries in relation to specific historical and political conjunctures.

## 2. HOW CHILDCARE POLICY CHANGE LOOKS

Positive change in childcare policy consists of several steps undertaken to improve the evidence base in low- and middle-income countries and refine our understanding of the extent and the nature of the problem, the contributory factors and the best ways to address them. This entails more qualitative and quantitative research on childcare provision, its consequences for children and both unpaid and paid caregivers, with particular attention paid to their concerns and views, and its benefits for individuals, households and societies. It also involves changes in the legal and policy framework and proliferation of programmes to improve the situation, including labour market interventions for working parents and paid caregivers, social protection measures and early childhood education initiatives, as well as investment in basic infrastructure and services and efforts to address underlying discriminatory gender norms and promote more equal sharing of care between women and men, girls and boys, households, communities and states. It also involves cost-effectiveness analyses of care investment as well as options for financing care and use of gender-responsive budgeting to integrate care issues into government expenditure.

### **ActionAid. 2013. *Making Care Visible: Women's Unpaid Care Work in Nepal, Nigeria, Uganda and Kenya*, Johannesburg: ActionAid.**

This comprehensive report presents the findings of an ActionAid programme on women's unpaid care work in Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Nepal. Using a participatory methodology, the programme aimed to change perceptions about care, to support women, their families and communities to recognise and value women's unpaid care work and to demand more public services from local and national authorities.

The programme was designed and implemented in line with ActionAid's commitment in its 2012-2017 strategy to make women's unpaid care work central to demands for quality public services financed through progressive domestic resource mobilisation. Its particular aim was to change beliefs about unpaid care work as being women's work, make that work visible and valued, support women to demand more relevant public services and help their households provide better-quality care. The ultimate aim of the programme was women's individual and collective empowerment. Its design was informed by the 3Rs framework and the need to redistribute care work from women to men, the community and the government and to encourage greater collective responsibility and accountability in order to respect, protect and fulfil women's rights.

ActionAid uses participatory methodologies in its programmes and in this one chose the Reflect (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowerment Community Technique) methodology. This is a participatory learning process that helps people analyse critically their environments and supports them in working out political solutions to their collective problems. Indeed, Reflect enabled participant women in all four countries to learn basic literacy and numeracy skills. At the same time, it provided them with spaces to discuss and challenge the local realities and power inequalities that affected their lives, thus facilitating their empowerment.

The programme involved 107 women in Kenya, 42 in Nigeria, 84 in Uganda and 100 in Nepal living in one rural and one urban or peri-urban community in each country, with the exception of Nepal, where the programme included only rural communities. Women participants were of a different age and marital status, such as young mothers and older widows. In each community, the programme started with a Reflect circle of about 25 women organised by a Reflect facilitator; meetings took place according to women's availability. In these meetings, women discussed their activities and identified

available public services and infrastructure, using community maps. Then the facilitator introduced the time diary tool, which women filled, and helped them visualise and understand how they spent their time and what impact their workload had on this. Using 11 pre-specified types of activities to be marked with an X, women had to think what they had done every hour of the previous day. These 11 types of activities were categorised into work included in gross domestic product calculations; unpaid care work; and non-work activities. Men were later asked also to complete time diaries to allow comparisons with women and help both of them realise the time and energy unpaid care work requires and the effect it has on women's rights and wellbeing.

The time diaries revealed that poor women in both rural and urban settings worked longer hours than men, spent more time on unpaid care work and subsistence agriculture and has less time for paid work and social activities. Using these findings, the programme aimed to raise women's awareness of the value of their unpaid care work and to encourage them to take collective action and demand a more equitable redistribution of care responsibilities within the household and the community. Community discussions were thus organised to enable women to push men and local leaders to recognise their unpaid care work and to demand greater male involvement in it. In some communities, women also mobilised to ask the local government to increase budget allocations towards public services supporting their unpaid care responsibilities.

After one year of implementation, the programme apparently had made some small but significant changes in women's lives, which the organisation attributes to the Reflect process, with its literacy focus and analysis of unequal power relations. After one year in the programme, women in all countries spoke of their unpaid care work as work or an activity taking up time and energy. They also had improved their literacy and numeracy skills. Community discussions and the comparison of time diaries had contributed to changing some men's perspectives about care work; in Nigeria and Uganda, women reported that men were helping them with tasks such as water collection or looking after the children, which they had not done previously. Some women had also become willing to see their husbands help them with their care work. Yet many men still resisted helping with housework and overall there was no evidence of a change in household power relations. Meanwhile, women could also get more involved in local decision-making processes, such as community discussions with local authorities or building alliances with men to support their demands for improved infrastructure and public service delivery. Yet community discussions had also become spaces where men and community leaders reaffirmed their power and voiced their resistance to women's requests.

As part of the programme, women Reflect participants were linked to national-level platforms on care. In Kenya, Nigeria and Nepal, women met with government officials and civil society organisations to increase the visibility of the issue and push for national policy change, using the 3Rs framework to guide their action. Apart from the programme, significant developments were underway in the programme countries. A first step in national policy change involves increasing the visibility of unpaid care work in policy circles; yet, even where time-use surveys have been conducted, their information is rarely used in policy. In Kenya, Nigeria and Nepal, civil society organisations were negotiating with the national statistical bureau to put the collection of relevant data on their agenda. In Nepal, ActionAid and local partners had approached women's groups and other civil society organisations and attempted to make women's care work more visible while building alliances with these groups. In Kenya, after successful advocacy by ActionAid Kenya according to the report, the Women's National Charter recognised and noted that unpaid care work was linked to women's equal right to employment and demanded government legislative and policy action.

In terms of reducing and redistributing unpaid care work, the report points out that such change requires multiple policies, including investment in basic infrastructure, early childhood education,

healthcare and social protection. What emerged from the programme was women's demand for national policy change, particularly around access to water, childcare services and social protection schemes. Demand for improved access to water, especially for rural women, was clear in all four countries, as was demand for childcare centres for young children under three years of age, whom national early childhood education policies in all countries but Nigeria do not target. Meanwhile, even when policies exist, they are not implemented. In Nepal, where there are multiple social protection schemes, women's rights groups were especially interested in such schemes that recognise and redistribute care responsibilities between women and men.

In all four countries, ActionAid identified the need for care-related services and underlined problems related to inadequate availability, accessibility and quality. The report clearly states that lack of such services not only increases women's responsibility for unpaid care work but also exacerbates their poverty and social exclusion and violates their right to healthcare and education. Financing for public services is an important issue. The report notes that, in all four countries, the necessary policies regarding water provision, early childhood education and social protection already exist. They just require additional government funds for their full implementation – though changes can be made to their design without significantly increasing budget costs.

What is required is the reallocation of government resources from one part of the national budget to another and the identification of new sources of revenue to scale up public provision. Budget analysis could help reveal the extent to which each government invests in services that support poor women and men to meet their care needs and realise their rights. International aid could represent some initial support, although developing country governments have to increasingly rely on their own resources and ramp up the amount of domestic revenue to finance public services. For example, each of the countries in the programme relies on the wealth of its natural resources, such as the large oil reserves in Nigeria, new oil reserves in Kenya and Uganda and hydropower in Nepal. Revenues from these natural resources are substantial and the corporate taxation and royalties paid by extractive companies could provide additional revenue to governments to expand public services and redistribute care work more equitably.

**Antonopoulos, R. and Kim, K. 2011. *Public Job-creation Programs: The Economic Benefits of Investing in Social Care Case Studies in South Africa and the United States*, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY: Levy Economics Institute.**

Using a quantitative methodology, Antonopoulos and Kim investigate the economic benefits of social care expansion through public works in South Africa and the US. Their *ex-ante* policy simulation finds public investment in early childhood development (ECD) and home-based healthcare schemes can generate significant employment opportunities for those most marginalised in the labour market and contribute to pro-poor income growth much more than investment in other types of projects can. This shift of care work from the unpaid into the paid domain can particularly benefit women and promote gender equality, as the majority of care workers are low-income women.

Public job creation programmes, also known as public works or employment guarantee schemes, have emerged as government initiatives to address unemployment or underemployment and poverty by providing minimum pay employment opportunities to the poor who are willing but unable to find work. There are several well-known and large-scale public work programmes, including those introduced in the US as part of the New Deal measures following the 1929 Great Depression and more

recently the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) in South Africa and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act in India.

Public work schemes usually offer employment in physical infrastructure projects. However, they can also include social care provision with positive effects, as they fill the gaps in care services for the young, the elderly, the sick, the chronically ill and the severely disabled and thus contribute to their wellbeing; and because they also promote gender equality by reducing the unpaid care burden women and girls shoulder and by enabling them to access paid work and increase their productivity, while they also expand and supplement income-earning opportunities, particularly for poor women.

Antonopoulos and Kim focus on the expansion of public works programmes that provide social care and analyse the benefits in terms of pro-poor and economy-wide employment outcomes. Existing literature usually points out that social care investment is important for human wellbeing and women's empowerment: ECD programmes improve the cognitive and non-cognitive skills of children; caring for the elderly and chronically ill patients at their homes is more cost-effective than providing institutional care; and both programmes increase women's chances of paid employment. However, the authors stress that social care provisioning through public works can also contribute to pro-poor growth, a topic that, according to them, has so far been overlooked. Therefore, in two country case studies – of South Africa and the US – they investigate the employment, income distribution and poverty reduction results of an expansion of social care services. Using an *ex-ante* simulation, they evaluate the impacts of the proposed expansion and also explore whether they are superior to those of a comparable investment in less labour-intensive physical infrastructure.

Structural unemployment has characterised the South African labour market, with deeply structural factors excluding around 25% of the population from access to work opportunities. In 2004, the government introduced the EPWP in response to persistent high unemployment. The programme provided job opportunities in labour-intensive projects to unemployed, unskilled, poor individuals at a minimum wage. Job opportunities were created in three sectors: labour-intensive physical infrastructure such as building roads, bridges and irrigation systems; public environmental improvement; and social service provision with a focus on home- and community-based care (HCBC) and ECD. The EPWP-HCBC provided in-home health and social services to people in need, particularly those suffering from tuberculosis and HIV and AIDS. The EPWP-ECD programme provided temporary jobs, skills-training and accreditation to 19,800 practitioners over five years, enabling them to earn an income while receiving training to improve the care and learning environment of children. Targeted workers in both schemes had previously been unpaid volunteers, unemployed or underemployed parents and caregivers.

Antonopoulos and Kim propose a massive scaling-up of the EPWP's ECD and HCBC schemes and the creation of full-time, year-round, employment for childcare and community health workers. The scale of the proposed expansion is R9.3 billion, roughly 1% of South Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000 prices. This scale would cover the ECD needs of all children living in poor households and the home-based care needs of about 20% of the population, mostly HIV and AIDS patients. Likewise, the authors propose an expansion of community-based social care services in the US, which would also include ECD and home-based health care. The policy simulation assumes an investment of \$50 billion on projects increasing social care provisioning, divided equally between ECD for children aged under five and home-based health care. In both cases, the authors stress that they propose a permanent expansion of public services and not a short-term public sector employment to address temporary problems. Given that women constitute the majority of those hired in care work, they would benefit the most from such an expansion.

The authors use a quantitative methodology, including a social accounting matrix (SAM)-based multiplier analysis, an input–output analysis and micro-simulation, to analyse the employment effects of public investment in care, including distributional issues. This means considering who receives the jobs created, how much income is earned and whether the employment opportunities created directly and indirectly as a result of the expansion of social care will reach those most disadvantaged in the labour market – that is, women, the less educated and poor households. Antonopoulos and Kim calculate income and distribution changes across the non-poor, poor and ultra-poor household groups. They also compare the results of investing in care with those of infrastructure investment in order to identify the more cost-effective and equitable way to create jobs for disadvantaged groups in the labour market.

In South Africa, their simulation shows the injection of an equivalent to 1% of GDP into the social care sector would directly generate 571,505 new jobs in the sector, while its linkages to other sectors and households would generate 193,783 additional jobs. That is, for every three jobs created as a result of the social care expansion, one additional job opens up within the economy. Overall, this public investment would create 765,288 new direct and indirect jobs. The majority of direct jobs (over 545,000) would be allocated to unskilled workers, with a 20.7 unskilled to one skilled job ratio. Women would benefit more from the jobs generated: in particular, the majority of direct jobs go to unskilled women (317,007) – that is, 55.5% of all direct jobs. Public investment in infrastructure expansion of the same scale would generate 262,405 direct new jobs and 138,842 indirect ones (overall, 401,247 new jobs) with a direct-to-indirect job ratio of 1.9. Most of the created jobs would target unskilled workers, yet the majority of participants would be unskilled men (over 218,000), with only a small number of unskilled women workers (5,201). The distribution of employment by household-level poverty status shows that ultra-poor workers, who have a higher unemployment rate at baseline, would receive most of the EPWP direct jobs, followed by poor workers (448,701 and 96,776, respectively); yet over 88% of indirect jobs would go to workers from non-poor households. In infrastructure projects, those benefiting more are again those from ultra-poor households (almost 184,000), while those benefiting from indirect jobs are again the non-poor.

In the US country case, a 50% expansion of the social care sector equivalent to \$50 billion would generate approximately 1.2 million jobs, of which eight out of 10 would be within the care sector. An equivalent expansion of infrastructure construction and maintenance would generate only half a million jobs, with six out of 10 in the construction sector. While over 90% of jobs in the social sector investment would go to women, over 88% of jobs created by infrastructure investment would go to men. In addition, in the first case, over 42% of new jobs would go to people with less than a high school diploma, the most disadvantaged group in the labour market, compared with only 14% of new jobs in the case of infrastructure investment, where the majority of new jobs would go to workers with high school diplomas. Moreover, 45% of new jobs created through the expansion of the care sector would go to workers from households with income below the fourth decile, while half of the jobs created by infrastructure investment would go to middle-income workers.

Apart from the employment effects of the proposed policy intervention, the authors also investigate its effects on income growth and inequality using the concept of pro-poor growth – that is, income growth that is higher for the poor than for the non-poor. Overall, even when indirect job creation is included into the calculations, the South African EPWP expansion allocates jobs in a way that results in pro-poor growth. In the US country case, the composition of workers in the care sector – largely low-income women – accounts for the pro-poor nature of the investment.

In South Africa, Kim and Antonopoulos find higher income growth rates for the ultra-poor and the poor (16.4% and 2.6%, respectively) compared with a 1.3% rise for non-poor households. Although a

public investment of 1% of GDP may not bring a significant change in total income distribution, it has to be kept in mind that overall income growth for the ultra-poor and poor households in the infrastructure expansion is around a half the level in the social care expansion. Moreover, the authors find this 1% of the GDP investment in social care produces an extra 0.8% GDP growth, while the infrastructure expansion sees a lower 0.68%. It also increases tax revenue by 1.5% – that is, over R3 billion, which is equivalent to over a third of overall spending on the social care expansion. The infrastructure investment would provide R2.9 billion, raising tax revenue growth by 1.3%. It thus appears that social care expansion would be a significant tool not only to address care gaps and unemployment among the poor but also to improve macroeconomic conditions.

In the US country case, the median and mean earnings of least educated workers increase the most, yet infrastructure investment appears to raise their earnings more than social care investment does, given the much higher hourly wage rates of construction workers. The counterargument is that social care provisioning generates far more jobs for workers with the least education than infrastructure does, thus workers from the poorest households receive the largest increase in earnings: a more than 200% increase from both types of investment. The low wage rates in the sector do not deter pro-poor growth, partly because the initial income level of poor households is so low even the small wage earnings are enough to lift their *ex-post* income higher in relative terms.

Antonopoulos and Kim thus conclude that, apart from the benefits already known, their *ex-ante* evaluation of social care expansion in these two countries demonstrates that investment in social care provisioning is an effective employment-generation policy, as it creates more jobs than infrastructure investment; a pro-poor intervention, as workers from poor households take up the majority of the new jobs; and an instrument for poverty reduction, as it contributes to the reduction of poverty directly through employment. Although a comparable expansion in infrastructure investment reduces income poverty more than that of the care sector in terms of higher wages, it creates far fewer jobs for low-income households.

**Dinkelman. T. 2010. *The Effects of Rural Electrification on Employment: New Evidence from South Africa*, Washington, DC: World Bank.**

Using a quantitative methodology, this paper examines the impact of electrification on employment growth in rural communities based on evidence from South Africa's mass rollout of electricity to rural households in the post-apartheid era. The author finds that the new infrastructure, with its rapid rollout in rural low-capacity households, increased women's employment within five years by releasing them from home production and enabling their self-employment and micro-enterprising.

Lack of access to electricity still affects over 1 billion people globally and so far there is little knowledge about how access to modern energy technology impacts particular development outcomes, such as labour markets in poor areas. In general, access to such technology can change the nature of work in the home and the amount and type of work performed in the market.

In 1993, over two-thirds of households in South Africa lacked access to electricity and more than 80% relied on wood to cook and on candles to light their homes. Towns, commercial farms and economic entities of the white population had electricity but many black households, particularly those in designated homeland areas, were denied access to basic services. The government that emerged from the first democratic elections in 1994 committed to basic service provision for all of its citizens, including universal electrification. A National Electrification Programme started being implemented and offering fully subsidised new connections. Between 1993 and 2003, about \$1.4 billion was spent

providing households with a minimum level of service, which enabled them to power a few basic appliances. While all households in a selected area received the basic connection, connection costs and local political pressures influenced community-level selection.

Dinkelman explores the impact of an electricity project between 1996 and 2001. Available data show that, within these five years, there was a three-fold increase in the number of rural households using electricity to cook, while the number of those using electric lighting more than tripled. A major shift that occurred was that, instead of using wood at home, households in electrified communities used electric cooking and lighting and thus household electrification operated 'as a labor-saving technology shock to home production in rural areas, releasing female time from home to market work'. Comparing rural communities that benefited from the project to those that did not in terms of employment, hours of work, wages and earnings, Dinkelman finds that the advent of electricity largely benefited those responsible for home production – that is, women. Female employment increased by 9.5 percentage points, or by 35% from baseline, and 15,000 more women were able to participate in the labour force, representing 0.75% of the estimated new jobs created across the country over this period. The project also increased hours of work for women by 3.5%, although it reduced female wages and increased male earnings (as it did not lead to rural industrialisation and a large increase in labour demand) and migration behaviour. It also increased male employment and hours of work but less than for women.

**Elson, D. and Sharp, R. 2010. 'Gender-responsive Budgeting and Women's Poverty', in S. Chant (ed.) *The International Handbook of Gender and Poverty: Concepts, Research and Policy*, Chapter 80, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.**

Using examples from several developing and developed countries, Elson and Sharp explore the potential of gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) to improve the daily lives of poor women and girls by focusing on how it can affect three key budget dimensions: decision-making, expenditure and revenue. A considerable strength of GRB initiatives is that they bring into focus issues that conventional budget analysis and decision-making usually overlook, including unpaid care work and its effects on women and girls.

Gender-responsive budgeting highlights how government budgets affect women and men, girls and boys, and can influence changes in budgetary processes and policies so expenditures and revenues reduce gender inequalities. Often, GRB focuses on gender equality and poverty. Over the past two decades or so, various development actors, including governments, non-governmental organisations, international organisations, aid agencies, researchers and activists, have supported GRB initiatives and adapted relevant strategies and tools to local contexts. An often cited example is the Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), which, since 1997, has been using a gender and poverty lens to analyse the government budget and has successfully influenced the government to introduce gender analysis into its budget planning process and improve availability of poverty-related sex-disaggregated data, including incorporation of a time-use survey into the Integrated Labour Force Survey in order to make women's unpaid care work visible.

Regarding the importance of GRB initiatives for budget decision-making processes, Elson and Sharp point out that they can help elected representatives apply a gender lens to the budget; increase the capacity of poor women representatives to play an active role in budget formulation; and facilitate the participation of grassroots activists in planning processes. For example, the Ugandan women's budget group produced briefings that helped MPs look at the budget through the lens of poor women.

In India, the Karnataka Women's Information and Resource Centre, supported by the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), provided training to poor women councillors so they could develop their own priorities for village-level expenditure; evidence from India shows that, where women councillors were able to influence budget decisions, they changed local expenditure patterns to meet their priorities. And in Latin American countries, participatory budgeting enabled poor women to get involved in budget decision-making and have a say over the use of funds for local infrastructure improvement. Increased participation of grassroots women in planning processes can make for positive changes in the lives of poor women when planning and budgeting are closely linked. Gender-responsive budgeting can also introduce mechanisms into budgeting processes that require those making decisions, such as ministers, to consider the needs of poor women and ensure they are adequately resourced.

Such initiatives can also contribute to poverty alleviation for women and girls by improving the quantity and effectiveness of government expenditures in infrastructure, services, income transfers and employment generation. Investment in infrastructure, such as energy, water or roads, can reduce the unpaid care work of women and girls. In Tanzania, the TGNP collaborated with the Ministry of Water to institutionalise gender analysis in its budget processes and advocated for more resources for water, with allocations expanding from 3% to 6% of the budget. In some countries, GRB initiatives have improved service delivery and funding. In Indonesia, the Women's Research Institute, a non-governmental organisation, promoted the use of GRB in maternal health services, and this led to an increased budget allocation to maternal services in South Lombok. Gender-responsive budgeting initiatives can also help with income transfers: in South Africa, such initiatives played an important role in the introduction of the Child Support Grant. Again in South Africa, GRB helped improve targeting and women's participation in the Community-based Public Works Programme in the 1990s.

Finally, GRB initiatives can help reveal the impact of taxation and user fees on poor women and demand better tax measures. The South African Women's Budget Initiative succeeded in reducing VAT to zero for paraffin, which poor women use to cook and to light and heat their homes. The Initiative argued that the annual government revenue loss would be small while it would largely benefit poor households. In countries with welfare states, benefits are usually delivered through the tax system, often in the form of tax credits, and GRB efforts have played an important role so that changes do not harm low-income mothers. In countries that charge user fees for public services, thus making it difficult for poor people to access them, GRB initiatives can also contribute to positive changes. In Mexico, academics working on the impact of user fee policies on women found through a gender budget analysis that both the poorest and the richest women were those accessing services that required a user fee less; the richest were able to pay for private childcare services, the poorest could not afford any. These efforts enabled women and their organisations to voice their concerns and hold governments accountable.

In their conclusion, Elson and Sharp emphasise that, although GRB initiatives can undeniably benefit poor women and improve various aspects of their lives, their achievements should not be exaggerated and their weaknesses should be acknowledged. In some countries, they are just training exercises supported by donors with little effect; in other countries, their potential has been compromised by an overemphasis on identifying expenditures targeted to women and girls, which are a very small proportion of total expenditure; and in all countries, such initiatives face pressure to keep expenditure and taxation low. However, and ending on a positive note, the authors agree GRB 'has the potential to be a key element of a package of strategies to end women's poverty'.

**Esquivel, V. 2013. 'Care in Households and Communities. Background Paper on Conceptual Issues', Research Report, Oxford: Oxfam International.**

Part of Oxfam's initiative 'Innovations in Care',<sup>1</sup> this paper acknowledges care as a critical issue for women's human rights and empowerment and for tackling poverty and inequality. It presents key conceptual issues and debates, including the increasing importance of care in international development discourse, the evolution of the concept, the 3Rs framework and measurement tools, in order to improve understanding and engagement in relevant policy and programming.

Feminist scholars were the first to challenge the idea that care is a natural responsibility of women. In recent years, care has attracted increasing attention from international development actors, including UN agencies, multilateral institutions and donors. For example, the 2009 Commission on the Status of Women chose as its annual priority theme the equal sharing of care responsibilities between women and men, thus increasing visibility of the issue within the UN system while also supporting various stakeholders to mobilise around care. Since then, care has emerged on the international development agenda as a public policy issue. However, there are different conceptualisations of care, which accordingly inform different policy agendas and may even harm development efforts to promote care issues. For example, while for those with a social justice perspective care is a right, for those with a social perspective care is an issue linked to poverty or employment. Where the challenge appears to lie is in designing a care agenda that appeals to and unites organisations and individuals working on different policy areas, including macroeconomic policy, so care issues are heard and tackled effectively.

With this paper, Esquivel aims at exploring and clarifying the different understandings of care that reflect the evolution of the concept over the past four decades. She looks at care (and its narrower and broader definitions), unpaid care work, care of persons, housework, unpaid community work, the care economy (based on the idea that unpaid care work produces value), social care, care regimes, the care diamond, care policies, social organisation of care and care workers. It thus becomes evident that there exists a wide range of care-related concepts, which different actors with different agendas use. For example, Esquivel notes that feminist economists prefer using the term 'care economy', whereas social policy analysts from the North use 'care regime' and social scientists from the South 'social organisation of care', first used by Latin American feminists and focusing on the role of the state in shaping access to care. Care concepts and debates have evolved and in general have moved from focusing on the invisibility of care within the household to its economic importance and the need to measure it, and to its significance for human wellbeing. However, care also entails serious costs for the wellbeing of those who are disproportionately responsible for it; these costs have significant gender and class implications, as it is women and particularly poor women who perform more unpaid care work.

Understanding that care has costs raises distributive justice considerations. Therefore, a more just distribution of these costs is required, involving redistribution between women and men; within households and between households; and within society. Put forward by D. Elson, the 3Rs framework is an approach to guide the redistribution of care costs and support policy action. It has three key components/stages: recognition, reduction and redistribution of care work, which can accordingly inform actions that involve families, communities, states, non-governmental organisations and markets. Recognition is of the nature, extent and role of unpaid care work in any given context, and also entails considering and understanding the role of social norms, gender stereotypes and power

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<sup>1</sup> The initiative aimed to support development work on care issues and to promote good practices for a more just and gender-equitable distribution of care.

relations and discourses. Reduction refers to identifying ways to change the unjust situation and the disproportionate costs of care by investing in household and public infrastructure (transport, water, electricity, food processing, cooking stoves) and integrating care concerns into planning and implementation of labour-saving infrastructure investment projects. Redistribution of care work includes challenging gender stereotypes and the norms, customary law and institutions in which they are embedded; and changing economic incentives because, within a context of limited jobs and gender wage gaps, the opportunity costs for women in assuming unpaid care roles will remain lower than those for men. Redistribution involves the state and markets, for example through the provision of public childcare services for working parents, work–family reconciliation policies and elimination of gender discrimination in the labour place. When markets play a key role in care provision, distribution of care typically reflects and exacerbates income inequalities; on the other hand, social policies can also reinforce gender inequalities when mothers are expected to comply with cash transfers’ child conditionalities. Thus Esquivel stresses that redistribution of care in a just way depends on the institutions, policies and interventions in place, which can choose to support more egalitarian distribution of care or reinforce the injustice.

Measurement of care is particularly important in order to understand the extent and nature of care work and to inform appropriate policy change; as such, it is part of the recognition component of the 3Rs framework for analysis and policy action. There are several approaches to measuring care, all with their own strengths and weaknesses. The general rule is that a clear understanding is needed of what is to be measured, how and why. The best-known tool is time-use surveys (TUS) measuring material dimensions of care. These became increasingly used after the Beijing Platform for Action (BfPA) appealed to countries to conduct regular time-use studies in order to make visible the full extent of women’s contribution to economic development. Indeed, the majority of TUS in the South aim at making visible the contribution of women’s unpaid work to the economy, yet they also tackle issues of particular interest in national or regional contexts, such as care work for the sick owing to the HIV and AIDS epidemic or child domestic labour.

Other instruments include 24-hour activity diaries where respondents record their activities in each hour; stylised diaries are an alternative form of activity diaries used for rural or illiterate populations. Time-use data enable valuation exercises and the compilation of household sector satellite accounts, which can reveal the economic value of unpaid care work. They thus provide evidence for policy design and can also be used to inform measurements of wellbeing and to develop better understandings of time and income poverty. The concept of time poverty is attracting increasing attention among development actors, who call for a more nuanced and holistic understanding of poverty, with households being poor in terms of income but also in care when they face time deficits. Finally, a complete understanding of care work in each context requires a mapping of care services and time-saving infrastructure outside of the household, and an understanding of who gains access to what is available, and how.

In the paper’s annex, Esquivel provides a fascinating account of the conceptual evolution of care and highlights the various meanings, strengths and weaknesses of care concepts and the related agendas of their proponents. She notes that, during this evolution from ‘reproductive work’ to ‘unpaid care work’, analyses became increasingly refined. Esquivel locates the origins of the current debates on care work in the ‘domestic labour debate’ in the 1970s that sought to understand the relationship between capitalism and the sexual division of labour, with men conceptualised as the ruling household class and housewives as the subordinate class forced to provide their domestic labour and to be exploited by men and the capitalist system. The debate made visible the issue of women’s domestic labour, yet it failed to address women’s unpaid care labour and to consider the role of women’s wage

labour. Despite its weaknesses, the domestic labour debate paved the way for feminist economics by establishing the household as a site of production and challenging the sexual division of labour.

The debate then moved from exploitation in the home as a requirement of capitalism to the conditions of social reproduction. Reproductive work was understood as necessary for the daily reproduction of the labour force. As reproductive work refers to the operation of the whole economy, it is a macroeconomic category. Reproductive work takes place within the household, thus the household contributes not only to consumption but also to production by reproducing the labour force through women's unpaid work that remains invisible in standard economic measures and of low value. Measuring, making visible, valuing and incorporating women's reproductive work into macroeconomic modelling are therefore necessary steps. In this thinking originates what Esquivel calls the 'Accounting for Women's Work' project (meaning the beginning of an explicit effort to make women's unpaid care work visible and valued), established by the BPfA in 1995.

The BPfA called countries to recognise and make visible the full extent of women's work and their contribution to the national economy, including in the unremunerated and domestic sectors, by conducting regular TUS. Second, it recommended the development of methods to assess the value of unremunerated work that is outside national accounts, with the aim of recognising women's economic contribution and making visible the unequal distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work between women and men. Esquivel points our attention to the terms used: 'unremunerated work' instead of 'reproductive work', which is a more positive term and focuses on the function of this work; and 'unremunerated' and 'domestic' sectors, which are macroeconomic concepts. The Accounting for Women's Work project derives its name from here. Third, the BPfA stressed the need for recognition and visibility. N. Fraser's work on recognition and redistribution has been very influential: claims for the recognition of care emerge from the struggles of the politics of identity against cultural injustice, while redistribution is associated with demands for economic justice. An important force for measuring and valuing unremunerated work was the Wages for Housework Campaign, active in the 1970s in a few high-income countries. This clearly connected the recognition and valuation of this work to its remuneration as compensation, a rather controversial issue at the time. Meanwhile, the terms and the framing used in the BPfA did not make any reference to wages for housework, but they did accept the 'accounting for women's work' need. They also placed the measurement and valuation of unremunerated work, and its inclusion in gross domestic product, which is an economic issue, into the cultural sphere by linking it to the need to recognise and make visible women's unremunerated work. Since then, efforts have been able to challenge the standard concept of work that excluded all unremunerated work outside the economy, including the subsistence sector, housework and care work. Thus the demand for recognition has been achieved to an extent; yet the need for redistribution still remains, particularly the inclusion of women's care work in macroeconomic policy.

Since 2000, a significant conceptual shift has taken place from unremunerated (unpaid) work to care and its importance for wellbeing. This change also suggests a shift of focus from the negative to the positive aspects of care work: the benefits it entails for care receivers. This shift to care, defined by N. Folbre (1995) as 'labour undertaken out of affection or sense of responsibility for other people, with no expectation of pecuniary monetary reward', emphasises the motivational and relational element of care work. Using Jochimsen (2003), Esquivel notes the multiple dimensions of the care relationship, the material dimension or work component, the communicative dimension or motivation component and the resource dimension or financial component. This definition of care includes both unpaid and paid work and focuses more on the labour process than the site of production or the production boundary (home versus market, system of national accounts or not), thus the new concept expands

the concept of reproductive work outside the household to include care work performed within the paid economy.

However, in another sense, this formulation narrows the focus of care to the direct care of persons, in exclusion of most household tasks. This narrowing is related to the changes taking place in developed countries, where care and home activities are increasingly concentrated in the more personal aspects of domestic life, which cannot be commodified. However, this creates conceptual dilemmas because, if care work is defined as direct care of persons, it fails to represent the bulk of unpaid work in developing countries, since women (and men) are more likely to perform housework than care work; the emphasis on the limits of care commodification might also be less relevant when a low proportion of care work is commodified.

These debates led to a definition of housework as a form of indirect care, a precondition for care of persons; to clarification that the degree of commodification of housework depends on household technology and income, thus is closely related to income inequality in developed countries and poverty in developing countries; and to acknowledgement of a developed world bias in the differentiation between housework and care work. Another weakness of the new term was that its definition of care work as activities and relations involved in meeting the needs of 'dependent adults and children' focused on the dependency between the caregiver and the care receiver, reversing the definition of the domestic labour debate, with women now becoming autonomous actors caring for dependants and not for other autonomous healthy human beings. This emphasis on the dependency of the receiver in the care relationship hides the pressures and the risks women face in providing unpaid care, while also opposing or excluding the idea that receiving care can take place in reciprocal terms or between autonomous adults.

This discussion over autonomy and dependency in the care relationship also led to a more complex understanding of the fact that care needs and responsibilities are socially constructed and not natural; this then challenges discourses and policies assigning care roles to women or sanctioning them when they are unable to meet them in relation to their class, household composition or stage in the lifecycle. The exclusion of care for non-dependants is also particularly problematic as it ignores the fact that men actually benefit from women's unpaid care and domestic work.

Thus, housework, care of persons and unpaid community work all came to be included under 'unpaid care work', the term currently used by UN agencies. Household is no longer seen as a site of work but rather as a site of care, and the term is used to emphasise the emotional and motivational content of the relationships within families and the importance it has for wellbeing. This is apart from its material and financial dimensions, which generate costs on the part of the care provider and are associated with gender and income inequalities.

Apart from feminist economists and philosophers, social policy analysts also contributed to the debate, with the introduction of the 'care regime' and the 'social organisation of care' concepts and the generation of rich analyses enabling social movements to articulate their demands around state responsibility for the provision of care. However, Esquivel argues that the social policy focus on the state tends to ignore the structural dimension of care provision, as it fails to examine and explain 'the processes by which the actual distribution of income, time and resources takes place before social policies tackle these "collateral" effects of economic performance through their redistribution' (Esquivel, 2011). This happens partly because of the economic analysis being seen as an abstract and academic issue, and partly because of the focus of the welfare regime literature on welfare variations as a result of state operation and not of their economic structures. This is influenced by the important similarities among high-income countries; yet in developing countries such comparative exercises are

not feasible, as the economic structures vary greatly and have to be considered when analysing social policies. Esquivel finishes by pointing out that restoration of the structural content of care into the debate does not require just making unpaid care work visible but also bringing the analysis of the social content of economic policies together with that of the economic content of social policies.

**Eyben, R. 2012. 'The Hegemony Cracked: The Power Guide to Getting Care onto the Development Agenda', Working Paper 411, Brighton: IDS.**

This paper explores the persistent neglect of unpaid care in international development policy and practice, despite its instrumental significance for women's empowerment and economic growth. Using the notion of hegemony and power analysis, Eyben argues that care has remained invisible because of the challenges it poses to the global economic model. She suggests a number of strategies to put care onto the development agenda through taking advantage of all emerging opportunities.

Eyben starts by discussing how care attracted the attention of feminist theory and research. She points out that, although it revealed the economic and social importance of unpaid care for women, its findings were largely and systematically ignored by development agencies. Drawing mostly on analyses in high-income countries, feminist economics challenged the traditional division of labour on which welfare state policies had been based, emphasised that women performed work that was not paid, exposed its costs and asked for unpaid care to become visible and valued through its measurement and inclusion in the system of national accounts (SNA). However, unpaid care activities were not included in the SNA on the grounds that they have limited implications for the rest of the economy; it is also difficult to place a monetary value on them, and their inclusion would adversely affect the accounts' usefulness for macroeconomic analysis.

In response, feminist economists provided further evidence of the importance of care for the market economy and particularly women's economic participation, and suggested ways to overcome the technical objections regarding measuring unpaid care as a proportion of gross domestic product and integrating it into the SNA. They showed that unpaid care work supports the private sector by lowering the costs for employers as well as the public sector, by offering social services such as water supply and childcare to the household. Thus they highlighted that the existing economic paradigm benefits from the situation at the expense of women and their wellbeing; and they argued that the global market economy depends on and exploits women's unpaid work. By asking for change and policies to address the problem, they actually challenged the global economic paradigm. Consequently, feminist efforts to make care visible and put it onto the policy agenda had only little success, even among gender equality specialists working for international development agencies; strong social norms and institutional power ultimately prevented them from using feminist arguments and findings to promote the care issue.

Using power analysis,<sup>2</sup> Eyben identifies system bias – that is, institutional rules determining what is possible to discuss without challenging dominant paradigms and power relations – as a key reason for the invisibility of care. System bias can lead to strategic ignorance, justifying ignoring issues on the grounds that the evidence is flawed or badly communicated. Such an example is the exclusion of care from the executive summary of the 2011 World Development Report and its list of major sticky gender issues, although the full report included unpaid care in the analysis. Thus care is not invisible – it 'has been made invisible'. And even development organisations that have included gender equality among

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<sup>2</sup> Power analysis aims to expose the unequal power dynamics operating throughout society and in all relationships and to investigate how they shape perceptions and action.

their core work have chosen not to make it a priority. Another factor keeping unpaid care invisible even among gender specialists in development agencies is the focus on women as producers rather than carers and the use of instrumentalist arguments – appearing to adopt the logic of the hegemonic paradigm – to establish women within the same frame as men in the market economy. Eyben also thinks personal reasons may have influenced specialists' choices, such as material interests, advancing one's career or socioeconomic/class beliefs.

Silence about care has allowed governments to continue passing its costs to families instead of financing care as a public good. The neglect of care has maintained a gendered capitalist political economy, an effect most politicians are likely to ignore, given the invisibility of the issue. For their own reasons, many gender practitioners have also chosen to ignore care and focused on other issues, such as violence against women, that challenge gender norms but 'do not touch the economic model that shapes the work of the international development sector' and that operates as hegemonic. Interestingly though, the recent economic crisis triggered a greater public debate about the viability of this model; it is during this time that unpaid care started becoming a more legitimate topic among gender specialists.

However, processes of hegemonic closure, reinforcing the current economic model and its patriarchal ideology in the international development sector and keeping care out of the agenda, continue to operate. Eyben notes as such the conservative backlash against gender equality: in countries with growing religious conservatism, care is recognised as important for society, yet it is framed in terms of women's place being in the home. In the US, care is claimed to be a private family matter and thus beyond the scope of public intervention. This argument that what happens within the families is not within the scope of development policy has also been evident in development circles, which dismissed efforts to address the division of household labour as cultural interference in family life. Eyben contends that today 'the doctrine of interference in other cultures' no longer exists in mainstream development policy and practice.

She then remarks that the ongoing invisibility of care contrasts with successful advocacy in making visible another issue of the private sphere, domestic violence, and establishing it as a highly legitimate mainstream policy topic. To an extent, the adoption of this issue is contradictory as gender equality issues are in general part of social justice development discourses that challenge the hegemonic paradigm. For example, while countries provide aid to support programmes against gender-based violence, this support contradicts their support for neoliberal policies that ignore the gendered nature of the economy and reinforce inequalities. However, these contradictions provide opportunities for progressive change.

Eyben argues that these contradictions – hegemony's dilemmas in which solutions to one problem create conditions that intensify or produce other problems – create cracks that provide openings to be exploited – that is, opportunities to shift discourse and institutional arrangements towards greater social justice. Such cracks that make care more visible include the contradiction of encouraging women's employment without adequate attention to who provides care within the context of an ageing population in middle- and high-income countries, and the subsequent increased demand for domestic workers who also claim labour rights and further increase care visibility. In certain contexts, the visibility of care is related to particular conditions: in Sub-Saharan Africa, the issue of care gained some visibility through the HIV and AIDs epidemic; food and fuel crises and natural disasters owing to climate change also made women's unpaid care more visible to development and humanitarian agencies. As noted before, the global economic model has also recently attracted criticism: the landscape of international development is changing, with the binary distinction between developed and developing countries disappearing and emerging powers such as Brazil articulating a more

progressive social agenda; and discontent about the hegemonic model is increasing in many European countries affected by austerity measures.

Within the current development environment, feminist specialists can make care more visible through the use of appropriate strategies informed by a reflexive approach and a good understanding of why care has been neglected and how they can use this knowledge to support alliance-building to widen and deepen the cracks in the hegemony that sustains the invisibility of care. They can also get care onto the agenda by exploiting any available opportunity and achieve a series of small wins paving the way for more radical changes. As care is neglected and silenced, its inclusion in policy and programming needs strategising so that, even if it gets onto the agenda, gendered structures do not block its programme uptake. Thus collective action and a reflexive approach are necessary to ensure the actions of naming, framing, claiming and programming occur simultaneously and are mutually supportive, and that they are conscious of how much room for manoeuvre within institutional rules exists.

A significant element of naming care relates to research evidence showing that this is indeed an issue of concern. All hegemonic cracks can be exploited in order to name care as much as possible, such as in relation to the impact of crises on women's work or women's economic empowerment, which is currently very popular in the development sector. Terms used are also important and should be chosen carefully – for example the 'burden' of unpaid care signifies that all care is bad and leaves out the caring aspect of the care relationship.

Care should be framed in a way that allows for engagement within the mainstream development sector without criticising the gendered global economic model; alternatively, different frames could be used for different audiences and contexts. So far, feminists have been troubled by the difficulty involved in developing a broad basis to support unpaid care beyond the women's rights movement. A relational wellbeing frame seems to have promising potential, in line with the increasing appeal of happiness measures in international circles. A more radical option would be to use an alternative conceptual relational framing focusing on processes that shape production, distribution and consumption of goods and services, and on the social norms and relations involved.

Making claims about care refers to the right to be recognised and have the state respond to these claims. Fraser's work on recognition and redistribution continues to be the most influential here: she argued that only if redistribution and recognition remain coupled together as mutually supporting elements of a progressive political agenda could justice be achieved. She later added as a third element representation to avoid misrecognition. Such ideas are in line with rights-based approaches, and there are a number of recognised rights linked to care, such as the right to receive care or the right to social security.

In terms of programming, Eyben notes that one of the reasons put forward as to why care stays invisible is that it does not fit in any specific sector and has multiple impacts. As such, it does not fit in development sectoral policies. Yet the reverse is also true, that care can accordingly be integrated everywhere and benefit from all programming opportunities. However, designing programmes to encourage the redistribution of care responsibilities includes supporting women and men's efforts to change gender norms and facilitate greater male involvement in care.

Elson's 3Rs framework has already attracted attention in informing programme design. Eyben mentions as an example Fontana's work using the 3Rs framework in World Food Programme projects and analysing their effects on unpaid care provision and distribution within families and communities. An additional feature of policymaking of particular importance for designing and implementing care

programmes refers to the use of 'techno-speak', a technical language of efficiency and effectiveness hiding values and politics.

Eyben cites a study (Eyben and Wilson, 2009) of an early childhood development (ECD) advocacy and programming initiative in the Caribbean that relied heavily on the prevailing policy discourse of returns on investment from improved human capital and less crime but failed to consider structural issues such as lack of voice and inequitable gender norms relating to child deprivation. The initiative would have been better equipped to promote ECD in the region if the advocacy and programming strategy had used efficiency arguments to seek private sector and state support and at the same time programme design had encouraged political action from within those deprived communities. Another issue is that the international development sector appears to be disconnected from the politics of local context, and citizens' voice on the importance of care remains absent, thus contributing to the neglect of care.

In her conclusions, Eyben stresses that, within the current fluid context, getting care into development policy and practice is still challenging, although windows of opportunity are opening. Feminists in the sector must engage with global movements and encourage them to recognise the importance of care for a more equitable and responsible development model. They can also work within the existing economic model to achieve a series of small wins that may over time help women and their families and contribute to changing policy ideas about the importance of care.

**Ferrant, G., Pesando, L.M. and Nowacka, K. 2014. 'Unpaid Care Work: The Missing Link in the Analysis of Gender Gaps in Labour Outcomes', Paris: OECD Development Centre.**

This Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) policy brief identifies gender inequality in unpaid care work as the missing link that influences gender gaps in labour force participation, wages and job quality; acknowledges the role of discriminatory social institutions; and recommends policies to reduce women's unequal care burden and redistribute it between women and men, family and the state.

Although there are differences between regions, household incomes and societies, time-use data demonstrate that women spend more time – two to 10 times more – on unpaid care work than men across the world. For example, in Ethiopia the proportion of women collecting water and firewood is twice that of men (71% vs. 29% and 54% vs. 28%, respectively); women also spend more time on such activities. Data from OECD's Gender, Institutions and Development database show the region with the largest differences in time spent on unpaid care work by gender is the Middle East and North Africa, followed by South Asia. There are also considerable gender differences in the allocation of time to various unpaid care activities, with women engaged mostly to housework. Time-use data also show a negative correlation between country wealth and levels of gender inequality in unpaid care work, with men in higher-income countries more engaged in care activities.

This unequal gender distribution of care responsibilities is causally involved in persistent gender gaps in the labour market. Typically, it is assumed increased female education and employability and decreased fertility rates will automatically lead to increased female participation in the labour force. Yet gender inequality in care responsibilities is responsible for women's unequal opportunities in paid employment. The amount of time spent on unpaid care work is negatively correlated with female labour force participation, with data showing a decrease in women's unpaid care work is related to a 10 percentage point increase in women's participation in the labour force. The higher the inequality, the higher the gender gaps in labour force participation. Women in countries with high female

responsibility for unpaid care work are more likely to have lower participation in income-generating activities, irrespective of gender progress in education; in these countries, although gender gaps in education may have been reduced, those in labour outcomes are persistent.

Unpaid care work also affects the quality of female employment, as the amount of time spent on it increases the likelihood of women's involvement in employment below their skills or in part-time or vulnerable employment that may enable them to reconcile their paid and care responsibilities. Gender inequality in unpaid care work is also linked to gender wage gaps, with data from a cross-country analysis indicating that, in countries where women spend a large amount of time on unpaid care, the gender gap in hourly wages is higher too. Overall, this evidence suggests that, where gender inequality is higher, women are less likely to be engaged in paid employment, and those working are more likely to be in part-time or vulnerable employment and to earn less than men.

Discriminatory social institutions, including stereotypes about gender roles and formal and informal laws, play a key role in gender inequality in unpaid care work, thus tackling them is a first step in redistributing care responsibilities. While economic and social factors such as wealth and education levels can explain some gender differences in time use, half of the difference remains unexplained. Discriminatory social institutions shape what is acceptable and unacceptable for men and women to do in a given society. The authors cite OECD's work on the Social Institutions and Gender Index (SIGI), which measures gender discrimination in social institutions: in countries with discriminatory social institutions (i.e. higher SIGI scores), women's acceptable roles focus on their reproductive and domestic functions and thus they perform more unpaid care work than men. On the contrary, low discrimination in social institutions encourages the evolution of gender roles and opens up new opportunities for a more equal sharing of unpaid care work between women and men.

The policy recommendations provided to reduce women's care burden are organised around the 3Rs framework. Thus, in order to reduce women's burden, the authors recommend investment in time-saving technology and infrastructure, including electrification and improved access to water; increased access to quality public and care services, which are essential for working mothers and allow a better work-life balance; and provision of longer school days or expansion of preschool hours. Redistribution requires family-friendly working policies, including maternity leave in line with International Labour Organization standards – in Morocco the increase from 12 to 14 weeks in maternity leave was linked to an increased share of working mothers; equal amounts of maternity and paternity leave, with a use it or lose it system encouraging an equal sharing of childcare responsibilities; and family-friendly working conditions, allowing parents to balance work with childcare. Redistribution also requires tackling discriminatory social institutions to 'de-feminise' caring and transform norms that prevent men from getting involved in care. It also requires adopting a care lens in all public policy areas and designing suitable fiscal policies that do not tax working women in couples more than they do single individuals, discouraging their participation in the labour force. Finally, recognition of the economic contribution of unpaid care work requires measuring it using time-use surveys and relevant modules within household surveys.

The authors also mention an online discussion organised in October 2014 by Wiki-gender on the issue of unpaid care work within the post-2015 agenda. The topics that emerged as important include perceptions of unpaid care as a universal issue; the need for tools and research to measure unpaid care work and help implement context-specific public policies; the role of states in encouraging more equal distribution of unpaid care work at national policy level and shifting organisational structures; and strategies to address the issue at community level and to promote attitudinal change.

**Gonzales, C., Jain-Chandra, S., Kochhar, K. and Newiak. 2015. 'Fair Play: More Equal Laws Boost Female Labor Force Participation', Staff Discussion Note SDN/15/02, Washington, DC: IMF.**

Published in the Staff Discussion Notes series, which showcases International Monetary Fund (IMF) policy-related analysis and research, this study investigates the effect of gender-based legal restrictions and other policies on female labour force participation. Using a quantitative methodology and a large dataset, it finds that such restrictions are strongly associated with large gender gaps in labour force participation, which have a critical impact on national gross domestic product (GDP). It thus recommends the removal of obstacles that prevent women's economic participation, and the promotion of equal gender opportunities.

According to a growing body of literature, women's labour force participation is crucial for economic growth and stability. The authors write that many other studies 'rightly' note the importance of the value added to the economy of women engaged in family-related activities not measured in the GDP. Examining the factors that increase women's labour force participation, they provide a brief overview of empirical studies showing that fertility decline, increased education attainment and family-friendly policies increase women's participation. In particular, changes in fiscal policy with positive effects include tax credits or benefits for low-wage earners: a switch from family income to individual income taxation that reduces the tax burden for secondary earners – largely women – can increase their labour force participation. Better access to affordable and quality childcare also frees up women's time to participate in formal employment.

The authors mention that a 50% reduction in childcare price could be associated with an increase of between 6.5% and 10% in the labour participation of young mothers. The importance of public infrastructure is also documented: Norando (2010) find that a large part of the difference in female labour force participation rates in the 1990s between the US, and Brazil and Mexico on the other side, can be explained by the availability of electricity and running water. Another recent study (Ghani et al., 2013) points out that inadequate infrastructure affects women's participation more than that of men as women bear greater responsibility for household activities. Finally, availability of maternity leave can encourage women's greater participation, although the effects vary depending on its duration and employers' discrimination. Discriminatory social institutions can also impede women's economic participation, while women in political positions may have a positive effect by providing role models for women and combating gendered stereotypes.

Using available indicators from the World Bank's Women, Business and the Law Database for 100 countries over a 50-year period (1960-2010), this study empirically examines the role of legal gender-based restrictions in women's economic participation. It finds that less legal discrimination against women is strongly associated with their higher labour force participation. Although progress has been taking place, the data suggest almost 90% of the economies have at least one such restriction in place, while Middle East and North African, Sub-Saharan African and South Asian countries have a higher number of restrictions. The study estimates that, in half of the countries that legally granted equity, women's participation increased by 5 percentage points in the following five years. In emerging markets and developing countries, legal equality reduces the gender participation gap by 1.3 percentage points. In their conclusions, the authors stress the need for policies that create equal economic opportunities for women and men. Such policies should eliminate legal and other obstacles to women reaching their full economic potential.

**Gonzales, C., Jain-Chandra, S., Kochhar, K., Newiak, M. and Zeinullayev, T. 2015. 'Catalyst for Change: Empowering Women and Tackling Income Inequality', Staff Discussion Note SDN/15/20, Washington, DC: IMF.**

In this more recent paper (October 2015) in the same series, the authors use a quantitative methodology to document the links between gender inequality in outcomes and opportunities and income inequality. They find that gender inequality is strongly associated with income inequality based on data from almost 140 countries covering 20 years. These results hold for countries across all levels of economic development; however, whereas for advanced countries income inequality arises mostly through gender gaps in economic participation, in emerging economies and low-income countries gender gaps in education and health appear to be the main obstacle to more equal income distribution. As gender equality is associated with higher economic growth (a 0.1 reduction in the UN Gender Inequality Index is associated with almost 1 percentage point higher economic growth), this study also recommends removing legal and other obstacles to enable women to reach their full economic potential. The authors explicitly recommend the removal of gender-based legal restrictions; the creation of fiscal space for priority expenditures on girls' education (conditional cash transfers), on infrastructure (roads, electricity and water) and transportation to free up women's time and facilitate their labour force participation and on health services to reduce women's time-consuming informal healthcare; the revision of tax policies to reduce the tax burden for women as secondary earners; the implementation of well-designed family benefits such as parental leave, flexible work arrangements and affordable childcare; gender-responsive budgeting; and making finance accessible to women.

**ILO (International Labour Office)/IPEC (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour). 2013. *Ending Child Labour in Domestic Work and Protecting Young Workers from Abusive Working Conditions*, Geneva: ILO-IPEC.**

This report focuses on the issue of child domestic work and provides an overview of the global situation, the main aspects of the problem and the key policy responses, with the aim of promoting decent work for child domestic workers. This means underage (under 15 years) children are not employed and those legally permitted to work do so in age-suitable and decent conditions where their dignity and rights, particularly their right to education, are respected.

An estimated 15.5 million children are involved in domestic work – remunerated or not – in the home of a third party or employer. Not all of them are in child labour. Isolation, dependency and lack of rights make these children highly vulnerable to child labour. Thus it is estimated that two-thirds of children in domestic work (10.5 million) are in child labour and experience unacceptable situations, either because they are below the legal minimum working age or because they are working under hazardous or slavery conditions. One-third of these children are younger than 12 years. Girls far outnumber boys: 7.5 million girls compared with 3 million boys are engaged in child domestic labour. Apart from gender, several other factors, such as age, socioeconomic status, ethnic origin and relationship with the employer, increase child vulnerability. As is the case with adult domestic workers, child domestic workers are overworked, underpaid and unprotected.

International agencies, trade unions and civil society have played an important role in highlighting the problem and pushing for solutions. Over the past two decades, the International Labour Organization (ILO) has been working to expose and eliminate the problem of child domestic workers. These efforts have benefited from initiatives focusing on child labour and others on domestic work. In the late 1990s, recognition of the need for concerted international action on child labour led to two important

developments: an ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) programme for child labour statistics and an interagency research programme led by ILO, the UN Children's Fund and the World Bank.

To a large extent, attention to the problem then grew in relation to the increasing importance of the need to regulate the domestic sector and promote decent working conditions in the informal economy. In 2006, the ILO Workers' Group, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Union of Food Workers (IUF) launched a campaign demanding ILO develop a new convention protecting domestic workers. With IPEC, ILO included in this the issue of child labour in domestic work. In 2004, World Day against Child Labour was dedicated to this specific issue, and in 2006, IPEC organised an interregional workshop on Child Domestic Labour and Trade Unions, which created increased interest in child domestic workers. In 2010, ILO-IPEC published for the first time global estimates of children in domestic work, using data from national household surveys.

In addition, civil society organisations and social partners undertook evidence-based research in diverse contexts revealing the factors forcing children to engage in domestic work and the detrimental impact on their wellbeing. Most children involved come from poor and disadvantaged families and communities and are sent to work either to supplement the income of their family or to lessen its financial strain. Lack of educational opportunities, social exclusion and discrimination, conflict and displacement or health crises such as the HIV and AIDS epidemic also push children into domestic work. Social norms also appear important: in some contexts, child domestic work is regarded as a positive cultural and socially acceptable practice. In West Africa, for example, there is a long established tradition of placing children with wealthier extended family members.

In general, child domestic workers find themselves in a blurred unequal relationship with their employer, as they are often not considered workers but more family members, even though they are not treated as such. The ambiguity of the working relationship, the discrimination and isolation, the multiple hazards and risks to health and education and children's vulnerability to violence and abuse are common violations of child and labour rights and threaten their development and wellbeing. In cases where children have to migrate for domestic work, they are also vulnerable to trafficking. Child domestic work is thus defined as a social development priority, a human rights concern and a gender equality challenge.

A number of international conventions provide the framework for ending child labour in domestic work. The report focuses on ILO Convention 138 on the minimum age for admission to employment, Convention 182 (and Recommendation 190) on the worst forms of child labour and Convention 189 (and Recommendation 201) on decent work for domestic workers. States ratifying them are obliged to protect children from child labour in domestic work.

In terms of policy action, governments, international agencies and civil society have recognised the need to join efforts at national and international levels to eliminate child domestic labour. Appropriate policy action cuts across several sectors and includes national legislation and enforcement, clearly setting a minimum age, prohibiting types of harmful activities for children and regulating working conditions; social protection to ensure basic income security for poor households; education and vocational training as an alternative option; interventions to improve the functioning of the labour market; and strategic communication and advocacy to strengthen family awareness of the risks of child labour and the benefits of schooling and to change harmful norms accepting child labour. Institutional capacity-building at national and local levels is also critical to tackle the problem, and again ILO is providing support.

Some encouraging developments have already taken place: in Côte d'Ivoire and South Africa, national legislation sets a minimum age for admission to domestic work; in Côte d'Ivoire and Togo, legislation classifies work as hazardous to children and regulates it accordingly; in Cambodia, legislation imposes limitations on the working time of young domestic workers; and in West Africa, some countries have put in place community-based child labour monitoring systems to identify child domestic workers and assist them.

Civil society and trade unions can and have also played a significant role. A particularly significant development has been the self-organisation of domestic workers in their own organisations or as part of wider sectoral trade unions and the emergence of the global domestic workers' movement and a coordinating body, the International Domestic Workers' Network (IDWN). Established in 2009, the latter is a network of around 100 domestic worker and trade union organisations coordinating advocacy efforts to promote decent work for domestic workers; it is also supported by Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). It was in response to a long campaign by the international trade union movement that the ILO Governing Body placed an instrument for the protection of domestic workers on the agenda of the International Labour Conference for 2010 and 2011, which paved the way for the landmark Convention 189, developed with the involvement of ITUC, IUF, IDWN and their member organisations. The Convention has further benefited the domestic workers' movement as it has encouraged trade unions to take up the issue and facilitated linkages between domestic workers' and other organisations.

These international trade unions collaborate with national unions and organisations to organise campaigns and support initiatives mobilising domestic workers to push their governments to ratify the Convention, reform labour laws or reach collective bargaining agreements. Apart from domestic worker groups, migrant right groups and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) sharing the objective of establishing labour rights for domestic workers are also involved. With regard to the particular problem of child domestic labour, trade unions and workers' organisations have taken a wide range of actions, including awareness-raising, campaigning, education provision, counselling and rehabilitation schemes, monitoring and legal action. Often, they work with 'responsible employer' associations and encourage businesses to develop and implement codes of conduct for labour supply agencies. For example, in Indonesia, with ILO's assistance, employers' groups helped the Association of Domestic Worker Suppliers – representing agencies supplying domestic workers to private households in Greater Jakarta – adopt a policy of non-recruitment of children younger than 15 years, despite large demand. Establishment of employers' organisations appears to facilitate social dialogue and collective bargaining agreements, a reality the ILO Convention recognises.

Currently, in both developed and developing countries, there are many domestic workers' organisations not officially recognised as trade unions that are pushing for solutions, using diverse approaches. Although child domestic workers also have the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, in some countries there are legal restrictions on trade unions operating in the informal economy or accepting workers below the age of 18 but above the minimum age for employment, leaving child domestic workers without protection. Several initiatives have tried to address this problem of organising such children to enable them to claim their rights. Examples include the creation of local forums for young workers by the Malawi Congress of Trade Unions so they can meet and discuss issues of interest; these forums also operate as watchdogs for underage child workers and for individual contract agreements between workers and employers to improve their working conditions. In South Africa, leaders of the country's Domestic Service and Allied Workers' Union also organise meetings with younger workers to improve their negotiation skills.

With a wide range of activities tailored to the specific context, international and local non-governmental organisations (such as Human Rights Watch and Anti-Slavery International, with a focus on migrant domestic work, child labour and trafficking) and community-based organisations – as well as international networks such as WIEGO – play an important role in reaching and helping child domestic workers; influencing parents and employers to allow children to reduce their isolation and participate in training and education activities; and changing social norms and attitudes.

The report makes a number of recommendations for a holistic approach to eliminating the problem: improve statistical data on child domestic work to better capture the problem and inform appropriate policies; increase advocacy to challenge the assumption that child workers are more family members than workers and promote the use of written contracts; promote ratification of relevant conventions; take legislative and policy action; enhance the role of social partners; extend freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining; engage with employers of young workers to improve their work conditions; support child domestic workers and promote their agency and awareness of their rights so they are empowered to change their lives; support the establishment and strengthening of domestic workers' organisations and encourage organisations working on relevant issues to take up the issue of child labour in domestic work; develop strong country-level partnerships between UN agencies and promote cooperation with the civil society; and work to improve understanding of the problem and change attitudes towards it.

**Koolwal, G. and van de Walle D. 2009. *Access to Water, Women's Work And Child Outcomes*, Washington, DC: World Bank.**

Using a quantitative methodology, Koolwal and van de Walle investigate the effects of improved water access for women and children in nine developing countries and find positive change in child education and health. It is generally believed that, in the developing world, women's primary responsibility for time-consuming domestic and care activities, including water and firewood collection, does not allow them much time to engage in market employment. Improving water infrastructure could thus reduce the time spent on chores and enable women, particularly rural women, to participate in income-generating activities, with important development outcomes. Such infrastructure could also free up children's domestic labour time and enable them to attend school.

Empirical evidence on these issues and the extent to which infrastructure is a key constraint to women's labour force participation is growing but still limited. In the case of water infrastructure and its effects, such questions are methodologically difficult to explore, because of several serious endogeneity and selection issues. Koolwal and van de Walle propose a new methodology to deal with these issues and to explore the effects of improved water infrastructure on women's labour force participation and child wellbeing.

They start with a review of the existing limited literature. Women are primarily responsible for water collection across all developing regions; for example, data from 18 African countries show women are five times more likely than men to be responsible. One possible reason for this is that access to water affects several domestic tasks, such as cooking, cleaning, washing and caring for children. However, water collection is a very time-consuming activity, perhaps as water has very few alternatives, unlike fuel, and is often limited to natural sources or public standpipes in rural areas. Data show rural women in African and South Asian countries spend at least an hour a day fetching water for household needs, and this increases in cases of water shortage and uneven supply.

The few quantitative studies that have investigated the impact of better water infrastructure on women's market-based activities find mixed effects. In Pakistan, greater distance to a water source lowers women's participation, yet women in households with private water source are more likely to spend time on leisure than on market work (Ilahi and Grimard, 2000). In Georgia, improvements in rural water supply did not significantly affect women's wage employment, although they did significantly reduce incidence of waterborne diseases (Lokshin and Yemtsov, 2005).

Koolwal and van de Walle use national household survey data from nine developing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Madagascar, Malawi, Rwanda and Uganda), South Asia (India, Nepal, Pakistan), and the Middle East and North Africa (Morocco, Yemen). In all these countries, data confirm that access to water is poor; women spend considerable time collecting water on a daily basis, albeit with significant variations across and within countries; and they participate much less in off-farm work activities compared with men. Using the new methodology and several explanatory variables, including individual (such as age or marital status) but also household variables, geography and seasonality, the authors then investigate the effects of improved access to water.

They do not find improved water access and the subsequent reduction in time spent collecting it increase women's off-farm work, but they do improve school enrolment for both boys and girls in non-Sub-Saharan African countries with substantial gender gaps (Morocco, Yemen, Nepal, Pakistan). A one-hour reduction in time to water would increase girls' and boys' enrolment by about 10% in Yemen and 15% in Pakistan. The reason that effects are similar for boys and girls is a combination of existing large gender gaps and substantial room for improvement in enrolments for both boys and girls. There is also some evidence of positive effects on child health, indicated by an improvement in long-term child anthropometric indicators in Yemen.

**Levtov, R., van der Gaag, N., Greene, M., Kaufman, M. and Barker, G. 2015. *State of the World's Fathers: A MenCare Advocacy Publication 2015*, Washington, DC: Promundo, Rutgers, Save the Children, Sonke Gender Justice and the MenEngage Alliance.**

Produced by MenCare, a global campaign to promote men and boys' involvement in positive parenting, equitable caregiving and violence prevention, this is the first State of the World's Fathers report. It aims at filling the gap in men's role in care and domestic work and recommending changes in policies, public services, gender norms and social attitudes.

The report notes that, although around 80% of men will become biological fathers at some point in their lives, and their participation in care and domestic work is changing as a result of changes in the workplace and households, their involvement has 'too often been missed' from public policies, systematic data collection, research and efforts promoting women's empowerment. Thus the focus of this report is on men as partners and fathers, and its explicit aim is to break the invisibility and lack of priority given to men's caregiving and to enhance understanding of its benefits. The report argues there is a need to promote 'an involved fatherhood', a more equal sharing of responsibility between men and women – even if it means men have to give up their privileges – with the support of governments, employers and families, on the grounds that it is a key component of promoting family wellbeing and achieving gender equality. The timing is right: issues of care work, parental leave and fatherhood are increasingly in the news and policy discussions, attracting attention from government, employers and the media, while new research on the evolution of men's paternal roles is being published and programmes supporting fathers are being implemented.

Although in recent decades women have increased their labour force participation, men's participation in care and domestic work has not increased accordingly. However, in studies across the world, many fathers say they want to become more involved in caregiving. Data from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) show the majority of fathers said they would work less if they could spend more time with their children. In particular, younger generations of men, perhaps because of higher education or access to a more open world, spend more time in care and domestic work. Findings from IMAGES also show exposure to such positive role models, and particularly having caring fathers, also influences men's willingness to get involved in care and domestic work. Conditions of employment and relevant policies, such as parental leave, and participation in programmes transforming gender roles also appear to increase male involvement in caregiving.

The report briefly notes the key international conventions and moments when the issue of care emerged in international discussions: the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo and its Programme of Action, the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing and the Beijing Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals and the particular goal on gender equality. Regarding the International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions on parental leave, the report mentions the 1981 Convention 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities and accompanying Recommendation 165 as well as the 2000 Convention on Maternity Protection and accompanying Recommendation 191.

Using research and policy findings, the report investigates men's participation in five areas: caregiving; sexual and reproductive health and rights; maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH); violence and violence prevention; and child development. So far, most relevant research, policies and programmes have taken place in high-income countries in Western Europe, North America and Australia, as well as in countries with low fertility concerns such as Japan and Singapore. Interest in fatherhood in low- and middle-income countries is more recent and has been framed more as an entry point to improving reproductive health and preventing violence. Overall, evidence suggests men's participation in each of these areas is beneficial for children, women and men themselves.

Fathers' involvement is linked to better child cognitive development and school achievement, improved mental health for boys and girls and lower rates of delinquency in sons. It also allows women and girls to reach their full potential and can transform traditional gender stereotypes: women can participate more in the labour force and advance their careers and girls can continue and improve their schooling. Research in low- and middle-income countries found male involvement in MNCH was significantly associated with improved skilled birth attendance, utilisation of post-natal care and improved maternal and infant health. Women and children's lives become safer owing to a reduction in violence perpetrated by men. Sons are exposed to equal sharing of parental responsibilities and are more likely to get involved in housework; daughters are more likely to aspire to less traditional jobs. Men's involvement in caregiving also challenges underlying norms about violent masculinities across generations. It also enhances men's sense of purpose and fulfilment and improves their emotional and physical wellbeing as they report being happier and healthier.

The report makes particular reference to leave offered to fathers as the policy attracting most attention and seemingly beneficial for children, women and men. There are the two types of such leave – paternity and parental leave – but so far there are no ILO standards for either of them, only a number of non-binding recommendations accompanying some conventions and resolutions. While maternity leave is offered in almost all countries, only 92 countries offer paternity leave, and in half of these it is less than three weeks. Parental leave exists in 66 out of 169 countries with ILO data, but in 10 of these it is offered only to mothers. This leave type is less common in developing countries –

only three Asian, five Middle Eastern and five African countries offer parental leave that fathers can also use. Fifty-four countries provide parents with paid leave to care specifically for children's health and three provide leave for their educational needs. Overall, there are significant design variations, including universal coverage, collective financing mechanisms and non-transferable quotas.

Leave offered to fathers signals recognition of the importance of sharing childcare responsibilities. According to evidence almost exclusively from high-income countries, fathers' leave indeed promotes equity of household labour division, supports women's employment and can increase their income, while also improving maternal and child wellbeing. Paid parental leave also improves employee retention, increases productivity and reduces absenteeism and training costs.

Men's greater involvement in care work is also important for the economy in terms of facilitating women's labour market participation, increasing family income and boosting economies. To highlight this, the report uses several statistics, especially a number of estimations linking women's employment to economic growth: the International Monetary Fund argues that, if women participate in the labour market at the same rates as men do, national gross domestic product will increase in the US by 5% and in Egypt by 34%. Research by ActionAid suggests that if women have the same access to jobs as men and are paid equal wages, they could be \$9 trillion better off. Another estimation, by ILO, claims that reducing the employment gap between men and women would generate an additional \$1.6 trillion globally; yet, at current rates of progress, ILO estimates it will take 75 years before women and men achieve equal pay for work. Paternity leave increases women's income: in Sweden, a study found that every month fathers took paternity leave increased maternal income by 6.7% as measured four years later. In the US, home responsibilities cause highly skilled women to lose over \$230,000 in lifetime wages and women with less education \$49,000.

Despite its multiple benefits, men's involvement in caregiving faces considerable obstacles. Traditional gender norms around care as women's work shape men as women's behaviour: women may also accept and reinforce norms on the traditional division of labour within the household as they believe that in this way they can exert some power and control within the private sphere. Boys and men who appear to help are often ridiculed by their peers. Economic and workplace realities and norms also affect men's care involvement and, of course, women's. Poverty and economic instability often force men to allocate all their time to providing for their family. Even when policies are in place, these can reinforce the unequal distribution of care and have a negative impact. The decline of trade union power and the increase of informal employment also do not allow for generous family-work reconciliation policies, and restrictive government agendas also challenge the collective responsibility for care. The twin ideologies of individual responsibility and reduced government involvement have justified cuts in social services and policies. In low-income countries, the state often cannot offer any such policies and, even when it does, they benefit only a small minority working on the formal economy.

The report recommends changes in policies, programmes, systems and institutions, data collection and research analysis: formulation of international and national multi-sectoral action plans (gender equality, child rights, health, education, violence prevention, labour rights, economic development); promotion of an involved and non-violent fatherhood and the equal sharing of unpaid care work between women and men, girls and boys; investments in basic social services and infrastructure, including childcare, training for service providers and parent training programmes; implementation of equal, paid and non-transferable parental leave policies and other relevant policies that allow women's equal participation in the labour force and men's equal care participation, including cash transfers and social insurance systems; support for data collection and analysis of men's involvement; support for the transformation of discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes about

masculinity and fatherhood through formal education, advocacy initiatives and programmes with men and boys (such as MenCare's Program P to engage men in active fatherhood), women and girls; and recognition of the diverse forms of men's caregiving and support of their needs, including single parents, foster parents, non-resident fathers, gay fathers, adolescent fathers and extended families, as in many countries in Asia, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa and South America more than 40% of children live in households with other adults as well as their parents.

**Malla, S. and Timilsina, G.R. 2014. 'Household Cooking Fuel Choice and Adoption of Improved Cookstoves in Developing Countries: A Review', Policy Research Working Paper 6903, Washington, DC: World Bank.**

This paper focuses on cooking energy in the developing world and reviews existing literature on household choices of cooking fuels, economic assessments of household cooking energy transitions and empirical studies on the costs and benefits linked to cooking fuel choice. Although gender is not the key focus, the paper includes several interesting findings on the gender effects of using traditional biomass for cooking and the relevant benefits of access to improved technology.

More than 1.2 billion people lack access to electricity and 2.6 billion people still rely on traditional biomass (including fuelwood, charcoal, dung and agricultural residues) for cooking, the majority living in rural areas. Policies and programmes to improve access to modern and affordable cooking energy are important for poverty alleviation and economic development but also for human health and sustainable environment. Using solid fuels such as fuelwood and coal for cooking can cause serious health problems or even death and environmental problems such as forest and land degradation, and contribute to climate change.

The problems related to using solid fuels for cooking have attracted increasing attention for more than 30 years, and there are currently several global and regional initiatives to promote fuel switching and clean cooking. However, the perceived health and financial benefits of adopting improved fuel and stoves among low-income households in rural areas tend to be outweighed by the financial costs of this improved technology. Unless major policy interventions take place, projections claim that the number of people without clean cooking facilities could remain almost unchanged until 2030. Alarmed by such predictions, governments, international organisations and non-governmental organisations have started implementing various biomass energy programmes and testing several financing mechanisms, so that poor rural communities can benefit from affordable and reliable modern cooking energy services.

Malla and Timilsina focus on developing countries where traditional biomass is still the dominant cooking fuel. They identify a wide range of factors influencing household cooking fuel choice, including socioeconomic factors such as financial costs and fuel prices, income, education, behavioural, cultural and external factors, as well as the challenges empirical studies encounter in estimating the opportunity costs of biomass fuel collection. They also identify the key benefits of access to modern cooking energy. For users, benefits include health benefits, as indoor air pollutant emissions decline; economic benefits, as time used for fuel collection is reduced along with fuel cost savings; and social benefits, such as improved status. For suppliers, benefits include environmental benefits such as forest reserves preservation and black carbon emissions reduction as well as economic benefits including market development.

Regarding the gender effects of using traditional biomass for cooking, women are those mostly affected. Women and young children, particularly in Sub-Saharan and South Asia, are those exposed

to indoor toxic smoke, with adverse health consequences. As women are responsible for fuelwood collection, they spent a considerable amount of their daily time on this activity. In Lao PDR, rural women spend between one and three hours daily collecting fuelwood. In India, women spend on average 40 minutes collecting fuels and almost three hours cooking every day; in Himachal Pradesh, India, women walk on average 30 km each month, spending 2.7 hours per trip for fuelwood collection, equivalent to three to seven days per month of workdays lost. In rural Ethiopia, households spend on average between 11 and 12 hours weekly collecting fuelwood and dung, with women aged between 18 and 59 years mainly responsible for their collection; it has been estimated that these households lose on average \$0.06 for each hour spent on fuelwood collection – that is, \$0.47 daily; the government minimum daily wage is about \$0.62 (Gwavuya et al., 2012).

The literature also reveals that fuel switching entails significant time and health benefits for women: evidence from Kenya, Nepal and Sudan shows modern cooking system interventions have improved household health, reduced treatment costs and saved time owing to fewer days spent ill or having to care for a sick child (Malla et al., 2011). In northern Viet Nam, women saved on average 1.8 hours a day by using biogas (ADB, 2009). Use of biogas by smallholder Chinese farmers reduced the time women spent collecting fuelwood and improved their respiratory health (Christiaensen and Heltberg, 2012). In western Kenya, a similar shift led to a reduction of cooking time (Djedje, 2009). In China, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, women used the time saved for income-generating activities, spending time with their children or relaxing (Ramani and Heijndermans, 2003).

**Sepúlveda Carmona, M. 2013. 'Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights: Unpaid Care Work, Poverty and Women's Human Rights', UN General Assembly, 68th Session, UN A/68/293, New York: UN.**

This UN report conceptualises unpaid care as a major human rights issue<sup>3</sup>, identifies the human rights implications it has for women and girls and calls on Member States to recognise care as a social and collective responsibility and adequately fund, provide and regulate it in line with their fundamental human rights obligations.

Unpaid care includes both domestic work (meal preparation, cleaning, washing clothes, water and fuel collection) and direct care of persons, including children. Across the world, women bear the lion's share of unpaid care work. The report notes that, despite its importance – its monetary value is estimated to be between 10% and over 50% of gross domestic product – domestic and care work remains undervalued and largely invisible in statistics, policy and political discourse, including human rights advocacy. While care is undeniably crucial for human wellbeing, social development and economic growth, the report adds an additional important dimension: it 'also has an enormous impact on the enjoyment of human rights of both caregivers and care receivers'. In line with its special mandate, the Rapporteur focuses on unpaid caregivers' rights, particularly the human rights of poor women and girls who provide unpaid care and the implications it has throughout their lifecycle. The unequal distribution and invisibility of unpaid care work 'undermines the dignity of women caregivers, obstructs their enjoyment of several human rights on an equal basis with men, undermines progress towards gender equality and entrenches their disproportionate vulnerability to poverty

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<sup>3</sup> The report mentions that it benefited from an expert meeting of Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights OHCHR with UN Women and from consultations with civil society organisations and national human rights institutions. The influence of the report is evident in the UN Women 2015 flagship report, also framed around a women's human rights perspective.

across their lifetime'. The situation is even worse for women who face social exclusion and discrimination on grounds of race, ethnicity, etc.

The Rapporteur first provides a brief overview of international human rights treaties that highlighted the problem, starting with the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which identified the need to address the unequal distribution of paid and unpaid work between women and men as an essential step towards gender equality, and asked states to act for the equal sharing of childcare responsibilities between women and men and not to dismiss redistribution as a matter for the private sphere. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities all establish state obligations to address the issue of unpaid care. In addition, a number of International Labour Organization conventions, including Convention 156 on workers with family responsibilities, Convention 183 on maternity protection and Convention 189 on decent work for domestic workers, also have care-related provisions.

However, women in both developed and developing countries are still responsible for unpaid care, which is undervalued. Women and girls in poor households are worst affected as they have to spend more time doing unpaid work than their non-poor counterparts in all countries, owing to lack of adequate infrastructure, limited access to public services and lack of resources to pay for services or technology. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, 71% of the burden of collecting water for the household falls on women and girls, who overall spend 40 billion hours collecting water annually, equivalent to a year's worth of labour by the entire French workforce. And in the Democratic Republic of Congo, women using traditional stoves work as much as 52 hours per week more than would be needed if they had fuel-efficient stoves. Overall, the unequal gender distribution of unpaid care work affects enjoyment of several women's human rights, including:

- The right to work – that is, the right to paid work – as women's unpaid care burden imposes barriers to their labour force participation and provides fewer opportunities for advancement, lower wages and higher levels of informal and insecure employment;
- Rights at work, including remuneration and working conditions, such as the right to minimum wage, equal pay for equal work, safe working conditions, rest and periodic holidays with pay;
- The right to education and training, as girls are often taken out of school to perform unpaid care work or have less time to study or socialise because of their care responsibilities;
- The right to health, as women and girls are overburdened with care at the expense of their own physical and mental health;
- The right to social security – that is, the right to enjoy adequate protection from social risks and contingencies through contributory (social insurance) or non-contributory (social assistance) schemes. Yet women are often forced into informal employment, as it allows them to combine earning a wage with their care work, and are thus not covered by social insurance while remaining dependent on men. Even women in formal employment may have interrupted participation and inadequate contributions to be entitled to a pension. Given their unequal and unpaid care burden, older women are more likely than men to live in poverty;
- The right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress – that is, to have access to infrastructure and technology, including water and sanitation facilities and electricity and domestic appliances, which is particularly important for women and girls in deprived and remote areas;
- The right to participation, as caregivers isolated in the private sphere are unable to participate in social, cultural and political life.

The Rapporteur acknowledges that addressing care at this time is particularly urgent because caregiving arrangements are under great pressure as more women than ever before are participating in the labour force and have difficulty meeting their unchangeable care responsibilities. Moreover, water, fuel and food shortages, climate change, health crises and migration have intensified care needs, especially in developing countries. Particular attention is paid to the impacts of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, global migration and austerity measures on unpaid care work of poor women and girls. The HIV and AIDS epidemic has increased unpaid care work, with grandmothers, aunts and older girls forced to fill the care deficit; the emphasis placed by many states on home-based care, undertaken by family or community members, has shifted responsibility from public institutions to poor women and girls. Likewise, increased South–North migration of women and the creation of the so-called global care chain have created care deficits in poor countries, which older women and girls who stay behind fill. In this way, global care chains ‘reflect and [...] exacerbate enormous inequalities in terms of class, gender and ethnicity’. Finally, austerity measures implemented across the world have increased poor women’s unpaid care burden owing to massive expenditure cuts in public services and social benefits.

For all these reasons, the report calls Member States to fulfil their obligations and embrace a transformative approach that recognises, reduces and redistributes unpaid care work so women are able to enjoy their rights equally with men. In such a way, a human rights framework aims to pursue substantive and not just formal equality. First and foremost, Member States should recognise care as a social and collective responsibility and treat unpaid caregivers and care receivers as rights-holders. The report makes a number of recommendations in line with its focus on women and girls living in poverty. It thus makes clear that all Member States, irrespective of their economic development level, must act and provide accessible and quality public services and infrastructure in the most disadvantaged areas. On the other hand, the report chooses not to focus on parental leave and flexible work arrangements, measures that are deemed important but in contexts of high informal employment, especially in low-income countries, cannot benefit poor women. Member States must choose the most relevant policy options in line with the challenges they face and ensure these policies include participatory and accountability mechanisms.

The key policy recommendations include:

- Establishment of a consistent and comprehensive legal and policy framework: various laws should be in place, including employment law, anti-discrimination law, family law, legislation on caregivers’ rights and inclusion of informal workers and ratification of international conventions;
- Measurement of unpaid care work, including regular time-use surveys with data disaggregated by sex and age, crucial to inform gender-sensitive policies;
- Integration of a care perspective into policymaking in all relevant sectors, including fiscal and macroeconomic policies. States need to ensure funds for care-relevant policies, thus they may have to design appropriate tax systems and implement food and fuel price stabilisation policies. Expenditure cuts should consider and thus avoid increasing unpaid care work for women. Public work programmes should include unpaid care concerns. All sector policies should challenge gender stereotypes linked to unpaid care work distribution. Financial support to carers should be paid to the primary caregiver irrespective of sex, biological relationship or family form, and should not increase women’s workload or reinforce their maternal roles. For older women, Member States must provide universal and adequate social pensions or introduce care credits in pension systems. And Member States should pay attention to care issues in migration policy, protect the rights of migrant domestic workers and support the care needs of those left behind. Member States should also consider incorporating unpaid care work into development planning and programming, including the Sustainable Development Goals;

- Reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work, with the latter taking place between women and men, from households to states, and including redistribution of time and resources towards poorer families. For the first form of redistribution, Member States should particularly facilitate, incentivise and support men's caring not only through providing equal rights to parental leave but also through education and training that challenge gender stereotypes and promote the concept of shared family responsibility. The other two forms can be achieved through public quality services (including water and sanitation, transport, education, healthcare) and relevant infrastructure (water infrastructure, roads, solar and water energy, school and healthcare facilities, fuel-efficient stoves), particularly in disadvantaged and marginalised areas. Innovative approaches, such as mobile crèches, should also be considered. Member States should also promote the empowerment of unpaid caregivers, financially support women's organisations and men's groups challenging gendered care norms and build the capacity of caregivers to participate in decision-making processes and increase awareness about their rights and available services. Finally, the Rapporteur urges national human rights institutions to include unpaid care work in their research, policy, advocacy and programming efforts and to apply a human rights and gender equality perspective to this.

**UN Women. 2015. *Progress of the World's Women 2015-2016: Transforming Economies, Realizing Rights*, New York: UN Women.**

The 2015 UN Women's flagship report with S. Razavi as its research director focuses on the economic and social dimensions of gender equality and proposes a comprehensive agenda to move from formal to substantive gender equality and to make human rights a reality for all women and girls through public action. The report pays particular attention to women's socioeconomic disadvantage, its causal factors and best strategies to address it. Therefore, it emphasises three factors that need to be redressed, including breaking down occupational segregation, reducing gender pay gaps and, first and foremost, reorganising unpaid care and domestic work. It also advocates for women's right to decent jobs and gender-sensitive social protection and services, and for macroeconomic policies that put human beings and their welfare in the centre in order to transform economies and realise women's rights.

The report distinguishes between formal and substantive equality and notes that international treaties, laws and legal reforms offer an important basis to demand equality. However, moving from formal to substantive gender equality requires addressing discriminatory policies and patterns of growth, tackling harmful practices and entrenched social norms and strengthening women's agency, voice and participation through appropriate economic and social policies, and systems that measure progress in terms of including poor and marginalised women and girls. The report acknowledges significant gaps between rich and poor women, with gender discrimination compounding multiple sources of disadvantage such as socioeconomic status, geographic location, ethnicity, caste or race, disability and sexuality.

Despite considerable progress in many areas, gender inequalities persist. Women's have increased their labour force participation and thus relevant gender gaps have declined from 28 to 26 percentage points globally. Yet three-quarters of working-age men participate in the labour force whereas only half of their female counterparts do so, with wider disparities in some regions (less than a quarter of women in the Middle East and North Africa and one-third in South Asia are in the labour force). Current economic policies across the world have been unable to generate enough decent jobs; for example, more than 75% of all jobs in Sub-Saharan Africa and South and South-East Asia are informal.

The vast majority of women workers are in informal employment; women also account for nearly two-thirds of contributing family workers.

Labour markets are also characterised by gender occupational segregation. Women are disproportionately represented in low-paid, poor quality jobs; for example, 83% of the 53 million domestic workers globally are women, with almost 30% of them deprived of any labour rights and more than half not entitled to earn a minimum wage. Apart from domestic work, women also dominate care-related occupations such as teaching, nursing and social work. A study in 12 countries (including two developing ones) found paid care work entailed a wage penalty – that is to say, it is undervalued and underpaid. Gender differentials in education, discrimination but also social norms and unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work are part of the problem. Social norms and gender stereotypes related to appropriate roles and tasks are causally involved in the traditional division of labour within the household, the devaluation of women's work, occupational segregation in the labour market and gender pay differentials, with men earning more and women less and thus reinforcing a division of labour where men focus on paid work and women on homemaking. Women do receive lower pay for work of equal value – globally, women's earnings are 24% less than men's – and are less likely than men to receive a pension.

Despite the increase in women's labour force participation in all regions, women continue to bear a disproportionate burden of unpaid domestic and care work. Although gender gaps in unpaid work are narrowing in developed countries, on average women do almost two and a half times as much unpaid domestic and care work as men. If paid and unpaid work are combined, women typically work more than men globally. Women's unequal responsibility for such work, which is critical for the reproduction of the labour force, affects and constrains the types of work they can undertake in both the developed and the developing world. It also has serious implications for their segregation into service sector jobs and informal employment that enable them to combine paid and unpaid work. It is not a coincidence that gender gaps in labour force participation increase sharply in the years when women have children. However, there are significant country variations depending on the extent and coverage of public services, which also affect the quality of provided care – survey data from 31 developing countries show 39% of working women with young children have to mind them at their workplace – and variations within countries among women depending on age, income, location and presence of young children in the household. In many countries, better-off women have taken advantage of the availability of cheap domestic labour to improve their own job prospects while deepening class inequality between women.

The report speaks about the right to care. The international human rights framework has little to say on this right, although the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child explicitly recognises it. Feminists have advocated for the rights to give and receive care to be recognised as human rights. A positive recent development, indicative of the growing interest in unpaid care and domestic work and their impact on women within the UN system, is the landmark report by the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights. The right to care is inextricably linked to care policies and services, which are important for both those who need care but also those providing it, especially women. Care should be accessible, affordable, of appropriate quality and respectful of the rights and dignity of both caregivers and care receivers. This is not the current situation.

Social policies necessary to improve the situation include income support, childcare services and parental leave. Social transfers include family allowances and child benefits. In 2012, more than half of Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries with available data provided universal family benefits yet a growing preference for targeted benefits in response to austerity cuts is noted. In the developing world, child benefits are increasingly popular. South Africa's Child Support

Grant cash transfer facilitates women's access to paid employment. The gender-sensitive pilot conditional cash transfer scheme in Ain El-Sira slum in Cairo, the product of the collaboration between feminist activists, academics and state officials. It does not focus on women's roles as mothers, but its design encourages women's participation in paid employment, transfers payments directly into women's bank accounts, provides self-monitored tools to enable women to monitor their compliance with conditions and includes sessions to support beneficiary involvement in programme governance and facilitate women's collective action.

Other innovative social policies noted include public work programmes with gender-sensitive design features, such as the Indian Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme; the Ethiopian Productive Safety Net Programme (provision of community-based childcare services, reduced working time for mothers, direct support to women before and after childbirth and work projects that reduce women's burden); and the South African Expanded Public Works Programme, which provided childcare and home-based care for people living with HIV. The report recommends mandatory provision of on-site childcare and other basic services, along with their enforcement and monitoring.

Governments in developing countries should also invest in basic social services and time-saving infrastructure, including childcare services according to parental needs but also health care, water and sanitation and electricity and energy infrastructure, such as clean cook-stoves. So far, childcare services globally have uneven coverage and quality. East Asia and Latin America are the regions where pre-primary child enrolment expanded significantly between 1999 and 2012 – by 30 and 21 percentage points, respectively. Data from OECD countries show coverage of early childhood education and care (ECEC) services for children aged up to two years, when the care burden on women is the largest, is much lower than coverage for children three to five years. Coverage for the latter age group is above 70% in most OECD countries but only about 33% for the former group, with significant country variations. Coverage is particularly low in Eastern European countries, where the transition to a market economy led to a dramatic decline in public support for family-friendly policies. However, public investment in ECEC services is attracting attention from policymakers in both developed and developing countries. In many countries, preschool services and day-care services have developed in parallel; whereas the former tends to be part-time, the latter aims to enable parental employment and child protection. The former is offered to all children, whereas the latter tends to target children from low-income households.

Parental leave policies are also necessary to help women and men share their care responsibilities and enable women to enter and remain in the labour market when they become mothers. Evidence from high-income countries with parental leave policies and childcare services in place shows higher rates of women's participation. While every country in the world has adopted some form of maternity protection legislation, only 63 countries comply with International Labour Organization minimum standards. Moreover, even when laws are in place, their implementation is problematic, thus only 28% of employed women globally enjoy paid maternity leave in practice.

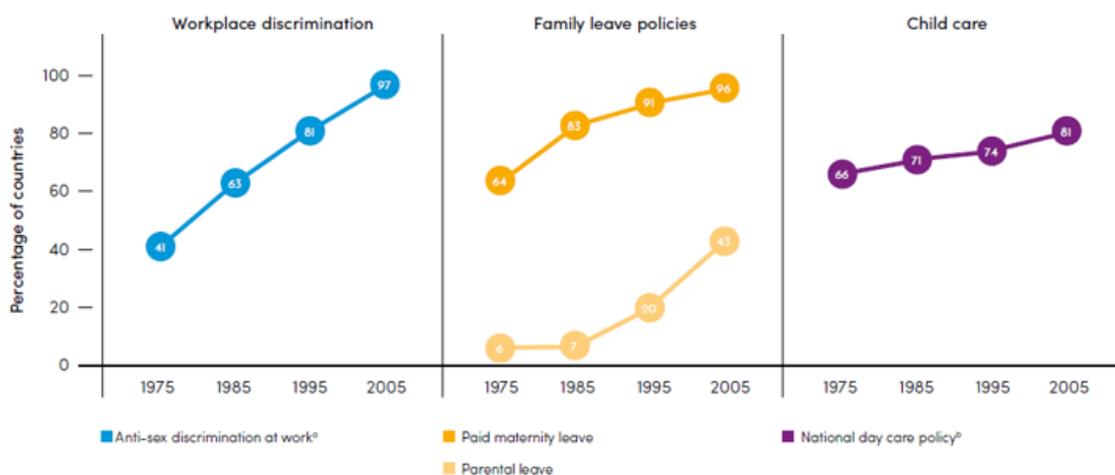
In 2013, paternity leave existed in 80 countries and parental leave in 66 countries, yet entitlements tend to be limited and variable. Parental leave provisions are actually in place in high-income countries ('developed regions'), Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, yet they are rare in other regions and, even if they exist, they are usually unpaid. Some countries also have provisions extending maternity, paternity and parental leave entitlements to informal workers. Moreover, even where parental leave policies exist, mothers take the majority of leave; according to studies, fathers are stigmatised and considered less worthy of promotion if they take it.

Financial issues are also important: high replacement rates encourage men to take up their entitlement and signal that care work is socially valued. In general, financing parental leave is a critical issue in the implementation of such policies. Collective financing through general taxation or social insurance systems is preferable to employer-mandated financing, as the latter would make employers reluctant to hire women of reproductive age. Yet, in most countries in the Middle East and North Africa and South Asia, employers are responsible for funding maternity leave and women’s labour force participation is very low. Globally, maternity leave is funded through social security contributions in 58% of countries, by employers in 26% and through a mix of government and employer contributions in the rest.

The report cites the findings of Htun and Weldon’s (2014) research on policies reforming women’s legal status at work, parental leave and childcare in 70 countries over 30 years, and the uneven progress the authors identify in these three areas. By 2005, most countries had outlawed workplace gender discrimination and provided paid maternity leave and public childcare. Women’s movements played the key role in pushing for women’s legal rights and childcare policies.

**Percentage of countries with legal provisions and policies, 1975–2005**

→ An increasing number of countries have introduced laws and policies to equalize women’s status at work and provide maternity leave and childcare services



Source: Htun and Weldon 2014.

Note: Based on a study of legal provisions and policies in 70 countries. Definitions, methodology and sample size differ from data used in Annex 3 (see statistical notes in the Annex).

<sup>a</sup>Measures whether there are laws in place that prohibit discrimination in the workplace, for instance, in hiring, pay, termination of employment, access to training, and equal participation in workplace governance/unions. <sup>b</sup>Measures whether a national or federal day care policy exists.

The labour market structure also needs to change, as it is founded on assumptions of uninterrupted, lifelong and full-time employment and thus ignores and penalises women’s unpaid domestic and care burden. Reforms of contributory pension systems are required. Care credits for mothers are used in developed countries and have recently been introduced in the developing world. These recognise women’s interrupted employment owing to childbearing and compensate for lost contributions. In Latin American countries, such credits increased women’s average pensions by up to 20% on average.

Care credits are useful to improve women’s pensions and tackle vulnerability in old age in contributory systems but are less relevant in countries with low contributory coverage and high levels of informal employment. In these countries, women can benefit more from the introduction of universal and adequate social pensions, which are increasingly attracting the interest of policymakers and strong advocacy and support from non-governmental organisations such as HelpAge International and older people’s associations. HelpAge International notes that by 2014 there were more than 100 such schemes around the world, with variations in design, scope and impact. Women benefit more from

such schemes because of their longer life expectancy and their exclusion from contributory pension schemes. Given their importance, mobilising older women and women's rights activists in pension reform efforts can be very promising.

The report calls for economic and social policies that place women's rights at the heart of their design and, among its 10 priorities, includes:

- Generation of more and decent work for women, which can be the foundation for substantive equality on condition that it is combined with the equal sharing of domestic and care responsibility between women and men;
- Recognition of the economic value of unpaid care and domestic work and its reduction and redistribution between women and men and between households and society. Measuring it is critical. While systems of national accounts (SNAs) define most unpaid care and domestic work at household level as self-contained activity, the collection of firewood and water has officially been part of the SNA production boundary since 1993. Yet it is rarely included in practice. A positive development in making unpaid domestic and care work visible and measurable is the 2013 agreement of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians to include a redefinition of work and a narrower definition of employment to cover only those engaged in activities that are mainly for pay or profit. This would mean unpaid care and domestic work would be categorised as work and be measured;
- Extension of labour rights and protection to women in informal employment (domestic and home-based workers), including the minimum wage to ensure an adequate standard of living. In particular, regulation and standards in the care industry should be improved, along with investment in professional skills for care workers. The aforementioned study on paid care work in 12 countries found that, in countries with low levels of income inequality, high union density and generous public spending on care, care providers were properly paid for their work. The report also proposes the expansion of public sector employment in paid care jobs, aiming to reduce women's unpaid work and provide decent employment to others;
- Provision of gender-responsive social protection policies that include social transfers, such as family allowances to help families and single mothers meet the costs of raising children, but also old age pensions to strengthen women's income security throughout the lifecycle;
- Introduction of comprehensive paid leave systems, including maternity leave of at least 14 weeks, paternity leave and parental leave that can be shared between parents; extension of coverage to informal workers; leave paid at a minimum of two-thirds of previous earnings and financed through collective mechanisms; and provision of incentives to fathers to take up their entitlement, such as 'use-or-lose' quotas;
- Investment in more and quality social services, particularly childcare but also water and sanitation, electricity and public transport. Low-income countries with service deficits may focus on the provision of such basic services to address women and girls' time poverty before investing in work/family reconciliation policies such as parental leave;
- Support to women's organisations to claim rights and influence policy agendas. Women's collective action is a crucial factor in substantive gender equality, especially when powerful actors hear their claims, when there are mechanisms such as parliamentary committees through which they can legitimately articulate their demands and when their movements build broader alliances with other social justice movements and with political parties, bureaucracies, international organisations and research institutions;
- Use of human rights standards to bridge the gap between global human rights standards and policies to advance women's rights;

- Generation of evidence assessing progress to fill existing data gaps.

The report makes specific reference to national social protection floors (SPFs), which include basic income security for children, working-age adults, older people and people with disabilities, along with the extension of basic social services to all, and therefore can be very important for women's rights. The report recommends a thorough assessment of care needs (including those of caregivers and care receivers) to inform the design of national SPFs and ensure they contribute to the recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care and domestic work.

Regarding the issue of funding such policies, the report notes that it is possible. It is estimated that the introduction of universal social pensions would cost around 1% of gross domestic product per year in most Sub-Saharan countries; for low-income countries, these measures would have to be implemented gradually. Yet their benefits are far more important for the economy in the long run and outweigh immediate costs.

Current macroeconomic policies appear to be 'gender-neutral' but so far have not supported substantive equality for women; on the contrary, they affect their care burden through their impact on employment, income and living standards. At some point, the report even notes that, despite the importance of gender equality for economic development, some growth patterns 'are premised on maintaining gender inequalities in conditions of work and earnings and enforcing unequal patterns of unpaid work that consign women to domestic drudgery'. Gender bias in macroeconomic policies is exacerbated by the global system of global governance and the unequal power relations that characterise the interactions of global institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank with the governments of the poorest countries. Using a human rights framework, the report identifies the need for macroeconomic policies to broaden their scope and include social objectives that in practice would mean expanding monetary policy targets to generate decent work opportunities; mobilising resources for investment in social protection and services; and facilitating the participation of civil society and women's movements in macroeconomic decision-making. In addition, the report emphasises that new mechanisms of global economic governance are needed to improve international coordination and accountability and to promote economic and social rights.

The report also argues countries could raise the necessary fiscal sources through several options, including enforcing existing tax obligations, reprioritising expenditure and expanding the tax base, or through international borrowing and development assistance. Some countries, such as Cambodia and Sri Lanka, reduced security and defence expenditure to increase social spending. Others, such as Botswana, used revenues from natural source extraction to finance their social protection policies. Although social spending is considered consumption expenditure and not investment, unlike infrastructure, it is actually investment in future human capabilities thus can raise productivity and stimulate growth in the longer term.

Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB) can influence and assess spending decisions; the most cited example is that of a Tanzanian women's rights organisation (former Tanzania Gender Networking Programme, currently TGNP Mtandao). The organisation started the Gender Budget Initiative in 1996 in response to the declining quality of public social services owing to the structural adjustment policies of the 1980s. The aim was to make policy processes more democratic and responsive to women's needs. The organisation works closely with the Ministries of Finance and Planning, provides inputs into budget guidelines, sensitises budget planners and MPs on the importance of gender-responsive resource allocation, organises courses on gender budgeting and macroeconomic policy and runs media campaigns to inform the public. The government has endorsed GRB and included more sex-disaggregated data and gender analysis in its reports and budgets; unpaid care and domestic work is

measured as part of the official Labour Force Survey; grassroots activists are more aware of the importance of budget processes and have strengthened capacity to hold elected representatives accountable; and policy changes have taken place, including abolition of primary school fees. This success has transformed the initiative into a GRB model for other African countries.

**World Bank. 2011. *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development*, Washington, DC: World Bank.**

The World Bank dedicated its 2012 flagship report to gender equality on the grounds that it is a core development objective in its own right but also because it is smart economics, as it can enhance labour productivity, improve child development outcomes and make decision-making more representative. The report stresses that some gender gaps persist despite progress made. To understand this, it examines the mutually reinforcing interactions of market, institutions – formal and informal – and households. On women’s economic empowerment and persistent disparities in productivity and earnings, the report identifies as a key factor gender differences in time use and related social norms about domestic and care work, as well as discriminatory practices of markets and formal institutions, including labour laws and regulations. Childcare services, parental leave and infrastructure improvements are the measures the Bank recommends to tackle the problem.

Women and men allocate different amounts of time to domestic and care work, and this is one key factor driving labour market segregation and the consequent gender earnings gaps. There are three main gender differences in time use: women overall work more than men if all their productive activities (housework, care and market) are added; women bear the brunt of housework and care while men bear the brunt of market work; and family formation, marriage and particularly the presence of young children under five years of age largely drive gender differences in time use. Thus, women tend to favour flexible work arrangements or work options that allow for easy entry and exit from the labour market – yet such choices can be of lower quality and weaken women’s labour market attachment and progress.

In high-income countries, flexibility is equated with part-time formal employment that allows women to combine employment with care; there is also the option of career interruptions for new mothers. However, both options may ultimately harm women and lead to lower wages and wage growth. In developing countries, where most people work in the informal sector, flexibility means informality and self-employment, which translate into economic insecurity and low access to pensions in old age. Lack of childcare options may even push mothers from formal into informal employment, according to evidence from Botswana, Guatemala and Viet Nam; force them to take their children to work as, 40% of working mothers report doing in Pakistan, Peru and 10 African countries; or leave them in the care of older siblings, particularly older girls. As education and income increase female and male time use converges for market work, but gender differences in unpaid care work persist, ‘and in the end, gender trumps money’.

Deep-rooted social norms define appropriate gender roles and accordingly distribute domestic and care responsibilities within the household but are often reinforced by the market and institutions, which are also gendered and discriminatory, and by lack of appropriate services such as childcare. A qualitative study on gender and economic choice for the report found the definition of a ‘good man’ and a ‘good woman’ had evolved little over the past decade, with women’s value still linked to their domestic role and remarks that such perceptions most likely influence children’s aspirations and parents’ investment in their human capital according to their gender. In Gaza, a good wife is one who

‘spends most of her time in housework and also the education of children’. In Afghanistan, she ‘is busy at home with tasks and looks after her children at home and does not have other tasks’.

The need to effectively tackle gender gaps is recognised as a policy priority at both domestic and international level, with partnerships made between governments, development agencies, civil society and the private sector. This explicitly includes closing gender gaps in productivity and earnings through a combination of policies addressing the various constraints that narrow women’s economic opportunities. Policies to address gendered norms and beliefs work around these norms rather than trying to change them. The report identifies childcare services, parental leave, basic infrastructure improvements and interventions that reduce time associated with accessing market as key measures to free up women’s time and increase their labour force participation.

Childcare policies and provision by the state or local government, or by the private sector or non-governmental organisations (NGOs), possibly with public subsidies and regulation, are of the utmost importance for women. Evidence mainly from high-income European countries indicates such schemes increase the number of hours women work and lead them into formal employment. In low-income countries, accessible and affordable childcare is particularly important for women in the informal sector and rural women. Yet evidence on how best to address their needs is limited and often from NGO-led programmes; this is an area for further innovation and learning.

As positive examples, the report notes the case of the Indian NGO Mobile Crèches, which provides childcare for women in the rural informal sector and in public works programmes, with encouraging effects. The NGO was also involved in the creation of home-based centres and community programmes providing training to local women and of centres in remote rural areas, following discussions with local women about their needs. Similarly, the Self-Employed Women’s Association provides day-care centres for children aged up to six years of its members who work in the informal sector. In some cases, employers provide day-care centres to their employees, as is the case with a large export coffee producer in Kenya that provides crèches and nurseries at each of its plantations for both regular and seasonal workers. Other options include lengthening the school day (as happened in Viet Nam) or lowering the age at which children enter school.

Parental leave policies have been implemented mainly in high-income countries, and typically take the form of maternity leave, which appears to increase women’s labour force participation. For such policies to be effective, their costs should be borne by the state and not employers; they should cover a sufficient proportion of regular wages – an important incentive for men to take paternity leave; and they should be of adequate length – not too short or too long. Policies that provide both maternity and paternity leave and make the latter mandatory are preferable, as they help shift the underlying social norms about childcare. However, such policies may be difficult to apply in developing countries, as they can be used only in the formal sector, which represents a very small fraction of employment in low-income countries. Fiscal capacity in low-income economies does not allow for provision of paternity and maternity leave, and, if employers are obliged to finance part or all of the maternity leave, this will make hiring women of child-bearing age less attractive.

Infrastructure improvements, especially in electricity and water, can significantly reduce women’s time spent on domestic and care tasks. An electrification programme in rural South Africa increased women’s labour force participation. In Bangladesh, a similar project increased their leisure time. In Pakistan, water sources closer to home increased time allocated to market work and in other cases time to leisure. So far, few studies on water improvement exist, and evidence remains limited and context-specific. Finally, interventions that reduce time associated with accessing the markets are also

necessary, including better and more effective transport options that reduce travel time and enable women to manage more effectively their multiple responsibilities.

Additional measures include the removal of discriminatory labour laws and regulations to promote women's economic opportunities. The report particularly stresses as a priority the removal of the ban on part-time work in some countries. It admits, though, that part-time and flexible work often leads to lower wages, fewer promotions and lower likelihood of full-time employment; in developing countries with high rates of informal employment, relevant evidence is limited. Globalisation also appears as a positive force that, among other effects, can reshape norms and attitudes among women and men on gender relations and encourage countries to promote gender equality. The report also points out that increasing women's political representation can promote women's interests. For example, in India, the introduction of gender quotas enabled women to access power at local level and was linked to increased provision of public goods, such as water and sanitation, as these were particularly important for women's daily life.

### 3. HOW SECTORAL POLICY CHANGE LOOKS

Although care is multi-sectoral, there are three key sectors where policy change has to take place. The first relates to labour market policies, which include work–family reconciliation measures such as parental leave and benefits, breastfeeding breaks and facilities, flexible working time arrangements and workplace solutions for childcare but also policies and measures to protect care and domestic workers' labour rights. Second, social protection strategies and measures include the establishment of national social protection floors guaranteeing basic child and family policies to vulnerable parents, particularly those in the informal economy; they also include a range of interventions, such as cash transfers, including those targeting girls and helping them enrol and complete their schooling, old age social pensions, disability grants, childcare subsidies and public works, which integrate unpaid care concerns and invest in childcare service expansion. And third is early childhood care and education, which needs to be built around a multi-sectoral approach that combines health, nutrition, education, social protection and child protection and to expand to reach the most disadvantaged, including disabled, children while its quality is improved.

**Benería, L. 2008. 'The Crisis of Care, International Migration, and Public Policy', *Feminist Economics*, 14(3): 1-21.**

Although its research focus is on Latin American countries, this paper provides useful insights on whether work/family reconciliation policies introduced in European countries could be applied to the Global South and particularly to countries with significant migrant populations. Benería argues that the different conditions prevailing in Southern countries would influence their effectiveness. Using the capabilities approach, she outlines other kinds of public policies that could be useful in developing reconciliation policies relevant to realities in the Global South.

Women's increased labour force participation has challenged the traditional division of labour in the household and, within the context of globalisation and neoliberal policies that has weakened the notion of the state's central role in welfare provision, has contributed to a 'crisis of care'. Moreover, fertility decline, population ageing and pressure on social security systems in the Global North have attracted the attention of policymakers, who have responded with measures to facilitate women's economic participation and increase productivity but also to promote equal treatment between women and men workers. The reconciliation policies that have emerged, such as paid maternity and parental leave, childcare services and flexible work, are provided by employers and aim to balance market and family work in line with the transformation of gender roles and the sharing of care work between women and men. International institutions, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, have supported reconciliation policies as an instrument primarily to promote employment and growth, and much less gender equity.

On the other hand, in the Global South debates around reconciliation issues have begun but appear less urgent or intense, given the different realities that accordingly require to some extent different policies to balance different types of work. Benería identifies three key differences: (i) the availability of inexpensive domestic services to middle and upper classes, whose members are those most likely to get involved in the reconciliation debate and push for appropriate legislation. These classes are able to balance paid market work and their household responsibilities by accessing paid domestic service abundantly supplied by women willing to perform such work at a very low wage and within poor working conditions; (ii) the extent and nature of the informal economy; and (iii) South–North international migration.

Choosing to focus on the last two, Benería stresses that, although globalisation and neoliberal policies have contributed to labour market informalisation globally, there are differences between the North and the South. The majority of the population in the South works in the informal economy (not in the informal sector, as it was termed in the 1970s, given its expansion since then), and this has different implications for how market and family work can be reconciled. Informal employment includes a wide range of informal activities, in general characterised by precarious and unstable conditions, lack of regulation and little or no protection, although it also includes forms of wage labour and self-employment often linked to more formal levels of activity. Thus it is characterised by a high degree of fluidity and heterogeneity, which generates different degrees of insecurity and vulnerability. This is even more so for women in the informal economy, whose involvement is often shaped by their domestic and care responsibilities. Within such conditions, Northern reconciliation policies can hardly be implemented in the Southern informal economy, where there is no fixed workplace and the most stable working reference is the household; flexible work policies are also irrelevant, given the high flexibility of informal employment.

The second difference relates to the feminisation of international migration since the 1990s. Women migrate in large numbers from the South to the North to work as domestic workers and carers, with the consequent globalisation of care issues and the creation of transnational families also with their own care needs. Both demand and supply factors are responsible: the crisis of care in Northern countries, owing to increased women's labour force participation, life expectancy increases, an ageing population and public service gaps; and growing inequalities between high- and low-income countries, poverty, instability, unemployment and gender issues influencing Southern women's decision to migrate, often leaving behind their own children for other female family members or their fathers to take care of and to benefit from the remittances sent back home as a key element of transnational mothering. Female migration has implications for reconciliation policies in both host and home countries. In the former, it contributes to the privatisation of social reproduction and deepening inequality between those who can afford to pay and low-income households; it can also delay collective efforts for public solutions to care needs. In the latter, reconciliation policies are necessary for the female relatives who tend to assume responsibility in the migrant household.

Benería uses the capabilities approach and empirical evidence from Bolivia and Ecuador to identify appropriate policies that can balance market and family work with a gender equity focus and thus expand women's individual capabilities and wellbeing. Public reconciliation policies should be developed around the household and include neighbourhood day-care centres, schools, health centres, community services, improved public transportation, streets and water services saving women's time and family subsidies. Responding to the inevitable question of funding such policies, Benería stresses the central role of the state but also puts forward the option of using remittances from transnational migrants as a source of funding for care services in regions with high rates of female international migration; or imposing a tax on remittances and on the profits of the financial institutions that handle remittances, which could be used for the provision of such services. Host countries could complement these funds by including such an objective in their aid programmes.

**Chopra, D. 2013. 'A Feminist Political Economy Analysis of Public Policies Related to Care: A Thematic Review', Evidence Report 9, Brighton: IDS.**

Informed by a feminist political economy analysis, this working paper<sup>4</sup> reviews secondary material to investigate where, why, when and how unpaid care concerns become more visible on national policy agendas, and to identify the processes and factors involved, including actors, institutions, interests, social norms and values and key policy moments for policy design, implementation and evaluation within specific contexts. Using the 3Rs framework, success in incorporating unpaid care into national public policy agenda is assessed in terms of recognising the role of women and girls in unpaid care work; reducing the drudgery of unpaid care; and redistributing it from women to men and from the family to the community and the state as a crucial condition for true gender equality. Focusing on public policies in social protection and early childhood development (ECD) in low- and middle-income countries, the paper finds unpaid care concerns remain largely invisible in both sectors.

There is large and robust evidence on the importance of unpaid care work for the economy, human development outcomes and women and girls' empowerment. Its multiple significance for development makes it 'a development super-sector: it cuts across all major economic and social sectors, adding value (albeit as yet unmeasured) throughout the economy and development process'. Feminist economists have produced much of this evidence, and mainstream development research, international agencies such as the World Bank and non-governmental organisations no longer overlook the issue. On the contrary, unpaid care issues are becoming more visible in public policy, with new laws recognising the rights of unpaid and paid care workers, pro-reproductive sector tax reforms, gender-responsive public financial management reforms and official statistical systems that are sensitive to the care economy. Despite such progress, Chopra argues core concerns are not yet incorporated on the mainstream policy agenda globally and nationally.

In her review, Chopra chooses to focus on public policies in two sectors, social protection and ECD policies and programmes in low- and middle-income countries for the past two decades, and assesses their success at three junctures: intent, implementation and outcomes. These two sectors are chosen because they are most likely to include unpaid care concerns, as care issues seem to be visible in both sectors, they are more directly relevant to the wellbeing of the poor and there is a considerable body of literature on policy processes in both sectors.

She finds that in these two sectors unpaid care concerns are still invisible in public policies. Only 23 out of 149 national social protection policies (conditional and unconditional cash transfers (C/UCTs, social transfers and public works) in 53 countries address unpaid care concerns, with their main aim being the redistribution of care responsibilities from the family to the state. No such policy aims to redistribute them from women to men, and only two provide support in terms of advice and training or aim to reduce the drudgery of unpaid care. Almost half of the CCTs reviewed address women as mothers, thus reinforcing the traditional division of labour within the household. The vast majority of public works programmes ignore care issues. Yet three public works programmes have been successful in incorporating provisions for maternity leave for women workers, gender-disaggregated data collection, inclusion of women in needs assessments, equal wages for equal work, work quotas and worksite crèches.

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<sup>4</sup> This paper is part of research undertaken by the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) under the Empowerment of Women and Girls theme, which explicitly includes the issue of unpaid care work.

Moreover, Chopra finds only little information on how, why and who advocated for the policy inclusion of such concerns. Contextual factors such as changing demographics, the regional spread of ideas and shared discourses about gender roles and the presence of champions appear to play an important role. Yet there is a lack of detailed information on the specific contexts, actors and discourses and thus it is difficult to draw conclusions. Evidence appears in some Masters or PhD theses, impact evaluation documents and media articles, which reflects the fact that unpaid care concerns remain largely invisible in policy research.

In a few cases, mainly from Sub-Saharan Africa, such concerns appear in response to demographic changes and the HIV and AIDS epidemic, which has created a large number of orphans and vulnerable children. Other contextual factors include the devastating impact of war or financial crisis on population welfare, which requires care-related policies. International agencies such as the UN Children's Fund, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Bank appear to play an important role, and there is government adherence to international frameworks such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Chopra identifies two key factors that account for the incorporation of unpaid care concerns into national social protection policies: the institutional and ideological history of the country; and individuals who become champions of unpaid care, such as the influential Egyptian gender academics who designed the country's pilot cash transfer scheme. Interestingly, though, evidence on the benefits of incorporating unpaid care concerns into social protection policies does not appear to be a significant factor. Information on the implementation and the outcomes of the 23 successful policies with care intent is also limited, reflecting a lack of interest in monitoring outcomes or implementation problems with respect to care provision. Empirical material on beneficiary perceptions of policy benefits are also not analysed through the lens of unpaid care. It thus appears that unpaid care concerns remain largely invisible at all policy stages and among the main actors involved: government officials, donors and researchers.

Similarly, only 40 out of 263 ECD policies in 142 countries include intent to address unpaid care concerns and to redistribute it to men as fathers and to the state. Some policies explicitly recognise the need to free up women's time and enable them to work outside the home. Only two policies recognise children's role as caregivers. No such policy aims to reduce unpaid care drudgery, assumedly because of the nature of the sector.

Information on the incorporation of such concerns into ECD policies is again very limited, and points to the role of regional spread, donor-led initiatives and ECD champions. Chopra identifies four main factors that appear to be important in the incorporation of unpaid care concerns into ECD policy intent: ideological and institutional history, such as in Viet Nam, a country with a strong history in recognising the responsibility of the socialist state for the welfare of working mothers; spontaneous/community-led response; external context-driven recognition in the context of fulfilling the MDGs and broad education plans, such as in Rwanda, where the ECD policy was developed through consultative workshops, with women asking for more community ECD centres in areas with large numbers of working mothers, and under the influence of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, to which Rwanda is a signatory; and influential international and national champions, whose interest and motivations remain unknown. Overall, existing information is partial and incomplete, with external context-driven recognition emerging as the biggest factor. Likewise, information on implementation and outcomes of such policies is limited.

Thus, Chopra concludes that unpaid care concerns remain largely invisible to policy actors in both sectors, especially in relation to the implementation of policy intents around unpaid care and their

outcomes. More research is needed using a feminist political economy lens to identify success factors and actors of public policies that address unpaid care work concerns.

In one of the Annexes of the paper, Chopra presents three types of cases with a decreasing trend in government policy intervention in recent years. In the former Soviet Union countries, the collapse of communism and the transition to market economy put an end to public financing of childcare facilities that had been promoted to enable women's labour force participation. The shifting of responsibility from the state to the family led to a significant decline in women's employment. China represents a neo-liberalisation of care: in the Maoist era the country established a public system to care for children from the earliest months of their lives until primary school. Market reforms brought about two main changes in childcare policy: publicly subsidised programmes do not cover young children aged up to two years and childcare support by the government and employers has been cut back, which has created a poorly regulated domestic and care service market that contributes to socioeconomic inequality among middle-class women who can pay and poor care workers with poor wages and low status. Finally, in Iran, declining female labour force participation after the Revolution and a fertility decline in recent years have led to a surplus of primary school teachers. The government has thus worked with parents to establish kindergarten classes in public schools and expanded early childhood education programmes, which has led to high preschool enrolment rates.

**Engle, P.L., Fernald, L.C.H., Alderman, H., Behrman, J., O'Gara, C., Yousafzai, A., Cabral de Mello, M., Hidrobo, M., Ulkuer, N., Ertem, I., Iltus, S. and the Global Child Development Steering Group. 2011. 'Strategies for Reducing Inequalities and Improving Developmental Outcomes for Young Children in Low-income and Middle-income Countries', *Lancet* 378: 1339-1353.**

This is one of the few studies that focus on early childhood development (ECD) interventions in low- and middle-income countries across the world. It includes a systematic review of 42 effectiveness trials and programme assessments of early childhood interventions, assesses the effectiveness of the main types of such interventions to identify the most promising ones and estimates the costs of not investing in ECD.

The World Health Organization Commission on the Social Determinants of Health highlights that ECD policies can reduce inequalities in children's development perpetuated by poverty, poor nutrition and restricted learning opportunities and enable children to develop their full potential. Despite evidence on the effectiveness of early childhood interventions, policymakers have problems designing large-scale interventions. Major differences exist in preschool attendance not only between countries but also within countries, with children in the highest income quintile more than twice as likely to attend preschool and more likely to have higher quality stimulation at home and thus better language performance compared with children in the lowest quintile.

This study reviews existing literature on five types of early childhood interventions in low- and middle-income countries, including parenting support and education, preschool centres, conditional cash transfer (CCT) programmes, educational media for children and interventions for children at high risk. It finds that parenting interventions – that is, interventions that promote parent-child interactions, education and support – are effective in improving children's cognitive and psychosocial development. Effects are larger when there are systematic curricula and training opportunities for workers and parents, and when there are active strategies to promote caregiving behaviours. Likewise, preschool programmes usually improve children's cognitive outcomes, including school performance later in life. In both types of interventions, effects are larger for higher-risk or more disadvantaged children

compared with lower-risk or less disadvantaged children, and as a result of higher-quality programmes.

The review also identifies as promising interventions children's educational media, including radio and television (e.g. Sesame Street is available in more than 120 countries, and one study assesses the Bangladeshi Sesame Street and finds greater benefits for poorer children) as well as CCT programmes with ECD components. Given that poverty is the root cause of poor childhood development, some approaches aim at improving ECD through poverty alleviation schemes, including CCTs. Available evidence is limited and comes from Latin American programmes, with some CCTs experimenting with the inclusion of programme requirements that involve promotion of child development such as required parental participation in weekly parenting classes. The effectiveness of interventions for high-risk children, such as children with developmental disabilities, those with severe malnutrition and those affected and infected by HIV and AIDS, is not established so far, partly because of lack of robust assessments.

While most studies reviewed report positive effects, results from assessments of scaled-up programmes vary considerably. Expanding coverage and maintaining quality is a key issue and requires capacity development. Reaching the poorest is also a challenge. For example, in the Philippines, 86% of villages have publicly funded childcare centres, yet coverage reaches only 39% of the eligible population. Another challenge involves creating a mechanism for integrated ECD interventions across sectors. Maximising quality, incorporating families and communities as programme owners, promoting multi-sectoral integration, prioritising monitoring and assessment and emphasising policy action are key conditions for the development and expansion of national programmes.

To justify investment in ECD, the authors use as a proxy the potential economic benefits of increasing investment in preschool enrolment, which is only one component of ECD interventions. They estimate the effect of preschool enrolment on the gap between the schooling attainment of the wealthiest quintile of youth (aged 15-19 years) compared with youth in the other wealth quintiles for 73 low- and middle-income countries with a total population of 2.69 billion people. They find that, for every percentage point increase in preschool enrolment, the schooling gap for those aged 15-19 years declines 0.026 grades. Calculations of the loss in dollars from the schooling gap show a total loss of \$166 billion in present annual productivity owing to fewer years of schooling; benefits from the reduction of the schooling gap range from \$10.6 billion with an increase of preschool enrolment to 25% in each country to \$33.7 billion with an increase to 50%. Benefit-to-cost ratios range from 6.4 to 17.6. Early childhood is indeed the most effective and cost-efficient time to ensure all children develop their full potential. This can be used as a powerful argument to increase funding for ECD programmes, as governments do not allocate enough funds: governments of Kenya, Nepal and Tajikistan spend just 0.1% of gross national product and that of Senegal less than 0.02%. Funding has to increase, quality has to improve and targeting has to reach the poorest, otherwise existing disparities will continue and even widen. More relevant research in low- and middle-income countries is also needed, particularly on the scaling-up of these programmes.

**Heymann, J. 2006. *Forgotten Families: Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working Parents in the Global Economy*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.**

In her book Heymann presents the findings of the extensive Global Working Families project, which investigated how changing social and work conditions around the world had affected the ability of working parents to care about their children across countries and socioeconomic classes. As a result

of the current model of globalisation promoting corporal interests and low labour standards, working parents trying to balance earning enough money for their family's survival with caring for those they love are forced to choose, often leaving their children in dangerous conditions. Heymann's aim is to provide a better understanding of the hard choices parents make when they have to care for preschool children, school-age children and sick children, the impact these choices have on gender and class inequalities and what happens during and in the aftermath of crises.

Her project uses a combination of research methods, including data from international organisations (e.g. the World Bank, World Health Organization, International Labour Organization (ILO), UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, among others) covering more than 180 countries to map transitions in family size and structure, and work. Depending on data availability, Heymann and her colleagues try to identify historical trends over the past 40 years. They also analyse data from national household surveys of more than 55,000 people in five regions and seven countries (Brazil, Botswana, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, the US and Viet Nam) in order to understand the experiences of working men and women. These data are supplemented by large surveys at national levels and within diverse urban areas.

The research team also carried out interviews with families using in-depth, open-ended approaches, and looked at available public policies to meet the needs of working families. They thus examined how 180 countries have tried to improve working conditions and help struggling families to meet the basic needs of their children and other family members, such as elderly parents. In particular, they examined the extent to which basic rights are guaranteed in the workplace and the availability of community support, through primary analysis of legislation available from 128 countries, analysis of data on social security systems from 160 countries and a review of educational and social service data from UN agencies and other intergovernmental organisations. These findings are used to construct a policy index<sup>5</sup> of 20 items: the Work, Family and Equity Index.

Heymann's key argument is that, during the past 50 years, the combined action of three forces – labour transformation, urbanisation and globalisation – has led to major changes in family life with serious care implications. In theory, each one of these forces has the potential either to lift families out of poverty or to create more obstacles to caregiving and place children at increased risk. In reality, increased labour force participation of parents, both fathers and particularly mothers, has led to a substantial increase in the number of children in households where all adults are in the workforce. A conservative estimate is that 340 million of the world's children under six live in households in which all adults work for pay, albeit with considerable country variations, ranging from 68% of households with young children in Viet Nam to 29% in Botswana. Urbanisation and change in residence have also weakened extended family support. At the same time, economic globalisation has brought access to lower-cost goods and services but reduced ability to bargain for decent wages and benefits: it has so far promoted corporate interests and not the human and economic interests of labourers who face lower wages and poor working conditions and standards.

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<sup>5</sup> Among these 20 items, the research team included paid leave for childbearing and childrearing; infant and toddler care; early childhood care and education; working adults' availability to provide routine care for children; educational opportunities and supervision for school-age children throughout the day; educational opportunities and supervision for school-age children throughout the year; paid leave and flexibility for children's educational needs; paid leave and flexibility for children's health needs; access of children with special needs and disabilities to equal educational opportunities; health support for children with special needs and disabilities; access of adults with disabilities to equal employment opportunities; health support for disabled adults; access of older adults to equal employment opportunities; and paid leave and flexibility for personal health needs.

Thus the simultaneous occurrence of these three ‘major historical shifts’ has provided ‘a perfect storm’ for working families: the current form of globalisation eroded the ability of these families to bargain for decent working conditions at the exact time that such conditions became critical to their ability to adequately care for their children, while it also decreased the ability of the public sector to provide solutions to families and children. Moreover, although work–family tensions affect working families globally in both high- and low-income countries, families in low-income countries have significantly higher caregiving burdens and fewer resources to meet their needs, in terms of not only lower family income but also lower public investment in social services.

Although the typical assumption is that extended family members, especially grandmothers, take care of their grandchildren while parents work, the study finds the situation is often different. Many women lose their formal sector jobs and turn to informal employment so they can care for their children. When they cannot afford to do so, they resort to other solutions. Parents in the informal sector are the least likely to have access to formal childcare, and thus opt for cheap informal care as quality care is unaffordable. On average, low-income parents interviewed were concerned with the quality and commitment of the childcare provider they used and with the supervision this provider received. Despite their voiced concerns, their low wages finally forced them to hire low-skilled adults providing poor-quality care. Even when extended family members were responsible, if they were overburdened or had diminishing capacities they also provided poor-quality care that was dangerous for child health and wellbeing.

Informal care was often provided by another child for a small wage or by an older sibling. Poor parents and parents with the least education were the most likely to have to leave their preschool children in the care of another child. Alternatively, children were left home alone. Poor parents unable to pay for childcare, parents with limited education and thus fewer job opportunities and parents facing penalties at work for caring for their children were more likely to leave children home alone regularly or occasionally. The study found 46% of those who had lost pay because of caregiving responsibilities ended up having to leave children home alone. Overall, the research revealed that 10% to 40% of parents of preschool children left their young children home alone at least some of the time. The lowest number of children left alone was reported in Viet Nam, where public early childhood care is more widely available. In total, 36% of interviewed parents reported leaving a young child home alone, 39% left a sick child home alone or sent them to school or day-care sick and 23% reported taking children to work. The poorer the family, the more likely the children were to be left alone or in the care of other children, particularly when access to formal childcare was limited. Single-parent families faced greater difficulty, with almost 78% of single parents having to leave a child alone compared with 30% of parents with a spouse. Preschool children in the poorest families were more likely to be taken to work and exposed to unsafe informal work environments.

Poor-quality informal care or no care can have negative consequences for young children’s health and development, as it increases the likelihood of injuries, accidents, illness and malnutrition. The nature of injuries varies; in the poorest regions, where families depend on firewood for cooking, burns among children are far more common. Children left alone are also at increased risk of becoming victims of violence. In two of three families where parents had to leave children alone or in the care of an unpaid child, children suffered from increased rates of injury, including severe burns, trauma from falls, injury from knives and assaults. In addition, parents reported increased rates of infectious diseases, particularly diarrhoea as a result of drinking unsafe water. In more than a third of cases where children were left home alone or in the care of another child, they also suffered developmental or behavioural problems. At the same time, older siblings were pulled out of school on a short- or long-term basis to care for younger children when no other care was available.

Heymann stresses that interviewed working parents with young children did not neglect their children's needs. They did care about their health, development and safety, and the majority preferred formal early childhood education for their children when such services were publicly provided, subsidised through work or made affordable in other ways. However, as the gap between available care services and the number of families that needed them was often enormous, parents had to pay themselves. When the cost was more than their wages, they faced significant dilemmas and had to make hard choices.

School-age children were also at risk of being left home alone during after-school hours as well as of being pulled out of school to provide care for other children and adults. An analysis of data from large national household surveys found presence of those under five in the home was associated with a lower probability of school attendance by those aged between six and 14 in single working parent and dual earner parents' households in Botswana, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and Viet Nam. Children in poor households and children in single-parent families were the most severely affected.

Working parents also faced particular difficulty meeting the health needs of children and disabled adults. Many working mothers were unable to breastfeed, despite the importance of this for the child's health and survival. Breastfeeding prevents two of the four leading causes of death of children – that is, diarrhoeal diseases and respiratory infections; and breastfed children are one and a half to five times less likely to die prematurely. However, women may lack adequate maternity leave, or are not allowed to take breaks to breastfeed.

Caring for sick children also requires time, and parents reported leaving sick children alone in the home sometimes in order not to lose their jobs. On average, 17% of parents in the studied countries did so but with country variations (the proportion was 28% in Botswana). Parents often had little or no choice as they could lose pay, face difficulty retaining their job or lose job promotions. Once again, poor parents were the most likely to face difficult decisions when their children got sick. Two-thirds of poor parents left children home alone sick or lost needed pay to care for their children. The only alternatives were to send children to school or the day-care centre or to bring them to work. The 'cruel choices' parents were often forced to make between caring for a sick child and earning an income were exacerbated when a child had a disability or a chronic medical condition.

Although both men and women in formal and informal employment were forced to make difficult choices, the burden was disproportionately borne by women and girls. Not only did they continue to have a double workload but also they were more likely than men to be forced to give up or lose a job in order to care for children. Women participating in the project were one and a half times as likely as men to lose pay to care for a sick child and six times as likely to lose job promotions or to have difficulty keeping their job. Women also faced more frequent tensions between paid and caregiving work as they experienced worse working conditions and had less paid leave and less flexibility than men. Apart from accentuating gender inequality, such care gaps also increased poverty, as low-income parents faced poor working conditions and more difficult choices.

The project also examined the effects of different types of crises on working families, including the AIDS epidemic (and the subsequent higher caregiving burden for sick adults and children but also for orphaned children), natural disasters and war. Crises further challenge families' ability to survive economically while caring for children: they increase children's health needs, injuries and illnesses and economic needs in rebuilding periods and dramatically reduce the availability of support.

However, solutions and ways to effectively provide affordable quality care to working families in need do exist, even in poor settings. Heymann contends that all children should have access to early

childhood care and education. Preschool children should not be left home alone but should have access to care that promotes their health, protects their safety and supports their cognitive development. To this end, the wages of working-poor parents should increase or care services should be publicly provided or privately offered with public subsidies. This is a feasible goal on condition that countries and global institutions make the same commitment as they did with primary school education provision. If the solution is still informal care, then quality care providers with adequate supervision need to be part of this model. Indicators to measure progress are also needed. Meanwhile, school-age children are also in need of care before and after school, and their needs should not be neglected.

Well-paid jobs are also necessary to enable families to avoid destitution and hard care choices, address intergenerational poverty and reduce gender inequalities. Working conditions should also improve to allow parents to take leave from work to care for their sick children. Workplaces need to adapt with paid leave and flexible working schedules to allow adults to keep their jobs and meet their caregiving responsibilities. Adequate healthcare and childcare should be available to all. Finally, disaster relief and reconstruction efforts need to provide opportunities for work and care and to address the increased needs of children and families.

Change is feasible and affordable, and action is urgently needed so working families can survive the storm. However, Heymann identifies seven myths that feed inaction, and goes on to refute them. The first is that we do not know what works. On the contrary, she argues, there is extensive evidence demonstrating how to improve the situation. Based on the policy index the project created, she supports the provision of paid maternity and paternity leave, including workplace regulations that enable women to breastfeed, which are beneficial for mothers, children and families in terms of their health, development and economic survival but also for employers as they have considerable economic returns; high-quality, affordable, early childhood care and education, critical for children's cognitive, emotional and social development but also for the economic survival of the family; and paid parental leave to meet children's health needs, including getting children to check-ups, immunisations and other preventive health care but also caring for them when they get sick as sick children recover more rapidly when parents participate in their care.

The second myth is that improvements cannot benefit informal workers, who are actually those most in need of childcare services. Heymann responds that there are positive examples from developing countries that need to be combined with changes in the working conditions of parents. The research showed that many parents moved into informal employment because of their inability to keep formal sector jobs while caring for their children. Thus the first step would be to ensure parents in the formal sector can access basic family benefits. Moreover, working conditions in the informal sector can also improve, including through the provision of paid leave through cooperative arrangements. Governments and non-governmental and intergovernmental organisations can play an important role and commit to improve the working conditions of parents working in the sector.

The third myth is that solutions are not affordable. Once again, Heymann argues that inaction is what is unaffordable. For example, the costs of facilitating parental caregiving for family health are lower than the costs of treating diseases. Moreover, successful programmes already exist and are affordable if scaled to the cost of living in each country. Although the poorest countries may need some economic assistance to start offering early childhood care and education to all, this assistance would not exceed what the West can afford. Paid maternity leave is already legally guaranteed in many countries, and governments can afford to make relevant changes. Large manufacturing companies can also afford them, as it is estimated that improving local labour conditions would cost less than 2% of the product's

market price. Heymann is sure consumers would be willing to pay this 2% increase in order to improve labour conditions for working parents in poor countries.

The fourth myth is that action threatens bad jobs, which are better than no jobs. According to Heymann, taking action to improve working conditions in export industries should never stop. As all children have the right to be fully vaccinated, adults also deserve decent working conditions so they can adequately care for their families. All children around the world have the same basic right to grow up safe and their parents have the right to earn a decent living while caring for them.

The fifth myth is that parents can solve their problems alone, which, according to the research evidence, is totally untrue. The sixth myth is that individual countries have not much choice unless all other countries around the world take similar action. That is to say, in the current global environment, countries should compete to attract investment and jobs by offering the lowest wages and the worst working conditions. However, Heymann notes that there are examples of good labour policies in many countries. The project survey of public policies and programmes in 180 countries found countries in every region had passed laws to protect the welfare of working parents, including provision of maternity leave. Yet she admits legislation is only the first step: implementation is often still behind and covers only part of the working population and thus fails to adequately address the needs of the growing informal sector. However, legislation does demonstrate that change is feasible in family policies. In addition, countries have taken significant steps in childcare service provision.

The final myth is that there is no way to move forward globally. Action by individual countries is feasible, but in fact collective action in the context of a global economy has far more potential for change. The needs of working families must be supported and individual states are far less able to do this alone, whereas the opportunities on a global scale are increasing. Collective action would allow countries to set a humane floor on working conditions and prevent competition for capital, factories and jobs by guaranteeing inhuman conditions. However, Heymann notes several countries have agreed to promote decent labour conditions and the rights of children and their families. A number of UN declarations and treaties and ILO standards evidence this: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and ILO Conventions 1, 14, 100, 131, 132, 156, 175 and 183, with provisions for decent working conditions, paid maternity leave and care services for children. Although their enforcement is insufficient, their passage demonstrates the potential for obtaining consensus on meeting the needs of and respecting the rights of children and working parents. There are two obstacles to confront though: ensuring we are aware of the impact of our actions on others – that is, purchasing cheap clothes produced by people working up to 22 hours a day when their children are locked home alone; and creating more democratic international forums representing the interests and needs of people across all social classes and promoting more democratic global governance.

Heymann emphasises that it is time for action irrespective of the outcomes. Her book provides powerful evidence of the hard choices poor families are forced to make around the world and the need for the global community to stop ignoring them. This means expansion of public early and secondary education so all young children can access appropriate education and older children are not pulled out of school to become unpaid care workers. Governments should also enact basic job protections in terms of working hours, wages and safety conditions, and guarantee universal minimum standards for all working people, including an adequate wage guarantee – that is, the wage earned by one adult being enough for a family to live on, which is critical for single-parent families. Employers should also be held to guarantee basic human rights at work globally. Ultimately, it is the rights of

working parents and their children that should be placed at the centre of global protection strategies and not the rights of capital.

**ILO (International Labour Office). 2011. 'Work–Life Balance', ILO Governing Body 312th Session, November, GB.312/POL/4, Geneva: ILO.**

Prepared by the International Labour Organization (ILO) Conditions of Work and Employment Programme (TRAVAIL), this paper provides a review of the key issues related to work–life balance and their impact on gender equality, poverty reduction, social protection and business performance; presents some good practices; and advocates in favour of the integrated work–family policies promoted in line with a number of the ILO conventions. Although its main aim is to guide the design of measures in response to the recent global financial crisis, it also provides ILO's key framework for work–family policies.

The paper notes that, over the past 10 years, the issue of work–life balance has become visible on international and national policy agendas owing to several new challenges, including increased participation of women in the labour force, the growth of non-standard work, work intensification, ageing and new family patterns, such as increased numbers of single-parent households. Economic crisis and austerity measures have further exacerbated the difficulty in combining work and personal life responsibilities.

In line with ILO Convention 156 on workers with family responsibilities, the preferred term is the narrower 'work–family reconciliation', referring to the relationship and the tensions between paid work and family duties that affect the majority of men and women. Since 1981, the Convention has proposed a number of policy measures, including leave policies, social care services, social security, flexible working time arrangements, workforce reintegration policies and gender-responsive awareness-raising and education. In recent years, the International Labour Conference, through its 2009 and 2011 Conclusions, has also called for measures facilitating the issue of reconciliation for both working women and men, along with comprehensive care services and maternity protection. In 2010 as part of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Acceleration Framework, the UN also identified leave policies and care infrastructure as key measures for accelerating progress in attaining a number of MDGs (including those on poverty reduction, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health and HIV and AIDS and other diseases).

Thus, despite arguments that work–family reconciliation is relevant only to high-income countries, it appears it is also 'essential for improving livelihood strategies and social protection in the informal economy' and relevant to developing countries as well. The paper finds the issue is particularly integral to social protection strategies and programmes that aim to enhance the social and economic security and wellbeing of families and individuals, especially of working mothers.

Women face higher levels of work–family conflict as, despite their increased labour force participation, they continue to bear a disproportionate burden of caregiving work and have longer working days than men, with less time for training, unionisation, education, health care or leisure. The situation is worse in low-income countries as women spend longer on other unpaid work, including water and firewood collection. Other factors responsible for work–family tensions include demographic, social and environmental trends (rapidly ageing populations, health pandemics, changing family structures, migration, urbanisation and climate change); shifts in work patterns (increased non-standard employment, such as part-time employment that imposes penalties on wages, benefits and career advancement, and informal employment, with women accounting for the

majority of those in non-standard jobs with non-standard longer work schedules); inadequate or no family-supportive social policies, including the necessary infrastructure (childcare services, public transport services, electricity and water), particularly in lower-income countries, with pre-primary education coverage the lowest in poor and rural communities and in Sub-Saharan Africa; and the impact of the economic crisis and austerity measures put in place (such as cuts in jobs and in work-family expenditures). Limited or no work–family reconciliation measures in place also affect women’s employment and access to quality jobs more. Absence of state policies force households with children to rely on low-paid domestic workers, who experience the same tensions to combine work and family needs, or choose low-quality childcare arrangements, such as having older siblings take care of younger ones, leaving children unsupervised or taking them to the workplace, with negative effects on child education and behaviour.

The International Labour Organization puts forward a holistic set of work–family policies (see figure) that can provide national, community or workplace solutions and facilitate workers’ access to decent work by explicitly and systematically supporting their family needs across the life course. Selected policies need to be comprehensive and well-coordinated. Statistical evidence from 34 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries shows higher public spending on work–families policies is associated with higher female employment rates and lower child poverty. This is particularly important as women’s increased participation is linked to economic growth. And work–family reconciliation measures are also associated with several other workplace successes: productivity gains from lower absenteeism, higher worker commitment, improved performance, enhanced work organisation, skills preservation, savings from higher retention and lower turnover and health costs with healthier parents and children. Yet policy design is critical, as combined measures may have adverse effects – such as worsening gender inequalities in the labour market when such policies are directed only to women or when employers have to meet all the costs. States have to play a key role in providing the enabling legislative and policy framework in collaboration with employers and workers’ organisations. Collective bargaining can help advance work–family reconciliation, as the example of Latin America shows.

Table 1. Measures that facilitate reconciliation of work–family responsibilities, by type of workers’ challenges

Types of measures	Types of workers' challenges in reconciling work and family		
	Establishing workable routines	Coping with major family events/needs	Coping with emergencies
Leave policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ At least three working weeks' annual leave as per the ILO Holidays with Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132)</li> <li>■ Ability to choose when to take leave</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Leave for health risks during pregnancy or breastfeeding<sup>W</sup></li> <li>■ Maternity<sup>W</sup>, paternity<sup>M</sup> and parental leave<sup>W, M</sup></li> <li>■ Extra leave for multiple births, complications or maternal death<sup>W, M</sup></li> <li>■ Adoption leave<sup>W, M</sup></li> <li>■ Long-care leave</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Annual leave</li> <li>■ Sick leave that can be used for family emergencies</li> <li>■ Emergency/compassionate leave</li> <li>■ Parental leave days</li> </ul>
Social security benefits		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Maternity, paternity, parental, child or other benefits</li> <li>■ Prenatal, childbirth and postnatal health care</li> <li>■ Tax breaks</li> <li>■ Pension credits for caregivers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Infant health care</li> <li>■ Benefits during short-term leave</li> </ul>
Working time and organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduction in long hours and overtime</li> <li>■ Work schedule predictability (e.g. overtime, shift work)</li> <li>■ Part-time with pro-rata entitlements as per the ILO Part-Time Work Convention, 1994 (No. 175)</li> <li>■ Flexitime</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Flexitime and/or teleworking</li> <li>■ Ability to reduce hours temporarily</li> <li>■ Career breaks</li> <li>■ Time off for pre- and postnatal care</li> <li>■ Paid breastfeeding breaks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Flexitime or time banking scheme (workers have some control over hours)</li> <li>■ Occasional teleworking</li> </ul>
Care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Access to affordable, appropriate care services for dependants</li> <li>■ Home help and home care services</li> <li>■ Before/after-school programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Breastfeeding facilities at work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Emergency care access</li> <li>■ Ability to bring child to work in an emergency</li> <li>■ Ability to use workplace phone</li> </ul>

Labour market  
reintegration

- "Stay-in-touch" programmes
- Vocational guidance and training
- Job search assistance and in-job training
- Paid educational leave

- Reducing unpaid work
- Infrastructure (roads, water, energy, sanitation)
  - Transportation
  - Schools, health and day care centres
  - Family planning
  - Labour-saving technology, services
  - Integrated school and work hours
  - School canteens
  - Opening hours of government, medical services

Note: W = leave policies for women; M = leave policies for men.

Drawing on positive examples from around the world, the paper also provides a number of considerations for policy design. Maternity leave and job protection during and after pregnancy appear to increase women's labour participation, with potential substantial benefits for employers. Yet, in reality, many women globally do not access paid maternity leave, owing to poor enforcement of the law and the exclusion of many types of workers, including self-employed, domestic, agricultural or non-standard workers. Parental leave for both men and women can also help women remain in paid work while promoting more equal sharing of family responsibilities. Workers appear to prefer better-paid leave for shorter periods along with flexible working arrangements and childcare to extended leave periods with little compensation. There is also a need to improve the quality of part-time jobs and increase their availability. Adequate and affordable childcare services are also crucial for working parents around the world. However, when employers are mandated to meet all direct costs of such measures, they often prefer workers without family obligations. Employer liability systems are still prevalent in Africa, Asia and the Middle East and create disincentives to hiring workers with family. Workplace breastfeeding and childcare facilities are also a key component of such measures. In several countries, large enterprises use different ways of implementing these, such as public subsidies, tax breaks or reductions in social security contributions. In some cases, provision of such facilities is conditional on the number of female employees, which again may operate as a disincentive for employers to hire women.

The paper emphasises that family responsibilities are collective responsibilities and that work-family measures should be available to both men and women, thus promoting the equal sharing of family responsibilities and contributing to gender equality. In the Russian Federation, parental leave benefits can even be transferred to grandparents or other caregivers. Evidence shows that higher take-up rates are a result of combined measures that include compulsory paternity leave; flexible and well-compensated leave; a gender equality bonus in the tax system when men use parental leave; and father quotas. Another measure is the provision of career breaks to both men and women for various reasons, as is the provision of pension credits for unpaid care work (France extended pension credits to fathers in 2010). Although most of these measures and evidence come from high-income countries, there are a few positive examples from middle-income developing countries too.

The International Labour Organization also supports the integration of reproductive and caregiving issues into social protection strategies and programmes. As pregnancy and childbirth are linked to serious health and economic risks, maternity protection is critical for maternal and new-born health but also for economic security. The establishment of national social protection floors can support unpaid care workers by extending non-contributory maternity and child benefits and care services to vulnerable parents. An increasing number of low- and middle-income countries already offer such benefits to the most vulnerable population groups as part of their national social protection floors. Positive examples include Ghana and Thailand, with universal healthcare schemes that include

maternal health benefits; and India, where the 2008 Unorganised Workers Act provides minimum social security guarantees to informal workers and also includes maternity benefits. There are also several cash transfer programmes targeting poor households with children. Other countries, such as China, Jordan, Namibia and Tanzania, have extended contributory maternity benefits in line with ILO social security standards. Finally, the development and provision of affordable and adequate childcare services is a necessary measure, and among the most cost-effective to promote social protection to vulnerable groups. Their importance lies in that they promote child health and development while also strengthening the social and economic security of low-income and single parents. The Indian Integrated Child Development Services scheme provides healthcare and nutritional support to pregnant women and infants as well as preschool education to young children.

Unpaid care work concerns should also be integrated into poverty reduction and decent work creation strategies, particularly public works programmes that address seasonal, cyclical or structural unemployment for the poor. Indeed, the Ethiopian Productive Safety Net Programme provides time off for pregnancy and breastfeeding, flexible working hours and crèche facilities for mothers; similar provisions have been included in other African but also Indian public works schemes. In addition, public works can be designed with the explicit objective of reducing unpaid care work and thus invest in the expansion of community social care services while providing pro-poor employment and income growth. Such a scheme is the South African Expanded Public Works Programme. Infrastructure projects can also reduce the unequal gender care burden by creating gender-responsive road projects and transportation or low-cost labour-saving technologies for energy and water, such as the community water systems or solar pumps in Kenya.

This paper concludes that what is needed are well-designed and integrated work–family policies that can ease the tensions between the two domains, balance the unpaid care work burden between men and women at work and at home, enhance economic benefits for businesses and improve social protection and poverty reduction. In addition, the development of reliable community services and home help for care of dependants can create economies of scale and bring high returns, even during austerity times. Moreover, investment in basic public infrastructure can reduce the time burden of women and children and give them the time and energy for work and education. States, employers and workers’ organisations need to collaborate to design and apply the best policies. Nationally defined social protection floors that offer families with children income transfers and access to health and education services can also promote work–family balance for informal workers.

**ILO (International Labour Organization). 2015. *Maternity, Paternity at Work: Baby Steps Achieving Big Results*, Geneva: ILO.**

This is a policy brief prepared by the Gender, Equality and Diversity Branch of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Conditions of Work and Equality Department. It focuses on maternity and paternity policies implemented by companies around the world. Large companies use such policies in an effort to retain female talent, gradually improve the representation of women at top levels, improve their productivity and reduce turnover.

Many companies still have difficulty addressing and supporting parenthood. While ILO Convention 183 on maternity protection calls for maternity leave around childbirth, health protection at the workplace for pregnant and breastfeeding women, cash and medical benefits, employment protection and non-discrimination and breastfeeding support after their return to work, this is still not a reality for many working mothers. Yet companies should support maternity leave as it allows women employees to

return to work after childbirth and advance their career. Moreover, maternity issues are part of the problem many companies face in retaining and developing female talent and increasing the number of women business leaders. Maternity leave enables companies to retain skilled staff instead of confronting high costs of replacement and retraining. Companies typically pay about one-fifth of an employee's annual salary to replace her, while the retraining costs and loss of productivity during the training period can be relatively higher than the cost of absence during maternity leave. Inadequate maternity protection can also entail additional costs: British companies pay an estimated £183 million a year for discriminatory dismissal or forced resignation. Parenthood also enhances key skills important in a business environment, such as prioritisation and empathy.

According to ILO data, in 2013, 98 out of 185 countries and territories met ILO standards of at least 14 weeks maternity leave; 107 countries financed maternity benefits through social security; and 121 countries provided for daily nursing breaks after maternity leave. Regarding paternity leave, a statutory right to such leave was found in 78 countries (out of 167 countries with available data) and paid in 70 of these; only five high-income countries provided paternity leave of more than two weeks (Finland, Iceland, Lithuania, Portugal and Slovenia).

However, significant challenges remain in place. A large majority of women workers, around 830 million workers globally, still lack adequate maternity protection; almost 80% of them are in Africa and Asia. According to a survey of 500 managers in the UK, 40% avoid hiring young women to get around maternity leave; in Kenya, many companies require women to sign agreements that they will not become pregnant; and in the Russian Federation, the two most common types of labour legislation violations are dismissal of pregnant women and women with children and non-payment of social insurance during maternity. Many women with children end up leaving the workforce or taking a career break, with negative effects – 43% of highly qualified women with children in the US and a much higher number in Asia, given entrenched cultural norms about women's roles. In the US, only 74% of women who took time off work and wanted to return were able to do so, and only 40% were able to return full-time. In some cases, men were also penalised, in terms of lower hourly pay or demotions, for taking time off work for childcare.

This paper thus recommends that, if companies wish to avoid losing talented and productive employees, they should offer a set of policies, including adequate leave, financial coverage and transition support during maternity. Provision of adequate maternity leave is essential for both employees and employers, as it allows mothers to care for their infants, ensures economic stability and encourages women to return to their jobs; it also increases productivity, improves the morale and reduces company turnover. When Google increased its paid maternity leave to 18 weeks, the rate at which new mothers left fell by 50%. Financing maternity benefits through social security or public funds is affordable and feasible even in developing countries, according to ILO calculations.

Companies should also ensure employment protection during pregnancy and non-discrimination, and also provide health protection at the workplace to all employees, including breastfeeding provisions such as a private room. Through an ILO project in the Philippines, one of the largest tuna and sardine canning companies in the country set up an on-site breastfeeding station in 2011. In the US, companies implementing breastfeeding programmes at the workplace reported a \$3 return on every \$1 investment, as it helped reduce absenteeism, improve productivity and increase employee retention after childbirth. Companies should also develop re-entry programmes for talented women who wish to return to work after a career break. And companies should offer paternity leave, which has positive effects for the infant and the father but also for the company and for gender equality at the workplace. Although more companies globally are implementing paternity leave policies, there seems to be 'a considerable stigma' for those using it and thus take-up rates are low. Fear of discrimination and a

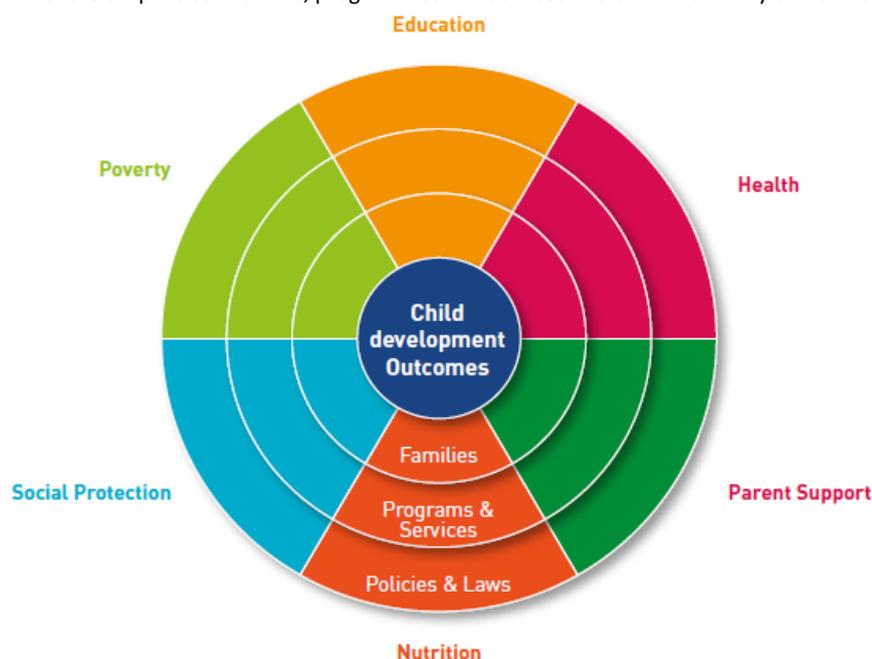
non-supportive workplace culture, with stereotypes about gender roles, appear to discourage men from taking advantage of this leave. Companies should also support flexible working arrangements, including through telework and on-site childcare facilities or subsidies for childcare. Finally, some companies are implementing maternity and paternity coaching programmes that support their employees during maternity or paternity transition while reducing related turnover. Barclays has started offering maternity coaching in the UK, the US and Asia as well as coaching sessions for new fathers; in 2013, there was a 6.6% increase in the retention rates of new parents, equalling £3.28 million in savings.

**UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). 2006. *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2007. Strong Foundations: Early Childhood Care and Education*, Paris: UNESCO.**

The 2007 UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) flagship report is dedicated to early childhood care and education (ECCE), presenting its multiple human, social and economic benefits, describing the global situation and the progress achieved, identifying supporting factors and obstacles and recommending further action.<sup>6</sup>

ECCE is the first of the six Education for All (EFA) goals set by the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action, which called all countries to expand and improve comprehensive ECCE, particularly for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children. Although there are different definitions of ECCE, UNESCO adopts a rather holistic approach that includes children’s survival, growth, development and learning from birth to entry into primary school. The care component of the term refers to health, hygiene and nutrition within a nurturing and safe environment supporting children’s cognitive and emotional wellbeing. The education component means not only preschool but also learning through stimulation,

<sup>6</sup> UNESCO continues working to promote ECCE and fill existing knowledge and policy gaps, including development of monitoring tools. Recently, in collaboration with other agencies (including the UN Children’s Fund, Save the Children, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Bank, the World Health Organization), UNESCO developed and presented the Holistic Early Childhood Development Index Framework with a set of targets and indicators for the holistic monitoring of young children’s wellbeing at national and international levels. The ecological conceptual model of the Framework includes six domains – health, education, nutrition, parental support, social protection and poverty alleviation, and three levels – policies and laws, programmes and services and child and family outcomes.



guidance and various developmental activities. Care and education are perceived to be two inseparable parts of a whole.

Thus ECCE has a complex and inter-sectoral (health, nutrition, care, education) nature, involves several actors and settings (parents, family, friends, neighbours, home-based care, centre-based programmes) and includes a wide range of programmes, from parenting programmes to community-based childcare and pre-primary education in school. Moreover, ECCE policies and programming vary according to the age and developmental needs of the child: typically, programmes target children under three as well as those from age three to primary school entry – that is, age eight. Vulnerable and disadvantaged children represent another group in need of particular attention. Such programmes can also be distinguished as formal, non-formal and informal (provided by parents or extended family) to meet children's multiple health, nutrition, cognitive and psychosocial needs.

Early childhood programmes are important as they guarantee the rights of young children according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, they can improve children's wellbeing and physical, emotional and cognitive development in the critical first years of their life. This has positive effects in future and adult life, including facilitating transition to primary school and leading to better education results (school retention, achievement, completion), thus decreasing costs for governments and households. For example, more than 95% of children attending an ECCE programme in a disadvantaged district in Nepal continued to primary school compared with 75% of non-participants. They also had lower grade repetition rate and higher marks. Controlling for gross domestic product, the higher the pre-primary enrolment ratio an African country has, the higher its primary school completion rate and the lower the primary school repetition rate, with stronger results for children from poor families.

Investment in ECCE can also be supported on the grounds that it is more cost-effective to take preventive measures and support children early instead of tackling educational and social disadvantage later in life. Moreover, it provides essential support to working parents and particularly mothers. And investment in ECCE has very high economic returns. Most rigorous evaluations of the costs and benefits of ECCE programmes come from developed countries and show returns higher than those to other educational interventions. There is a growing number of examples from developing countries too. A preschool health programme in New Delhi increased average school participation by 7.7 percentage points for girls and 3.2 for boys; as the returns to each additional year of schooling for Indian girls were estimated at 5% and at 9% for boys, this programme would increase the net present value of lifetime wages by \$29 per child while costing only \$1.70 per child, or \$2.06 if we include teacher wages. This would mean the return in the labour market would be \$14.07 per dollar spent. Early childhood programmes can also reduce social inequality and vulnerability, including gender inequality. For example, the abovementioned study in Nepal found an equal number of boys and girls in the ECCE programme were able to begin primary school compared with 39% of girls and 61% of boys who did not participate. Another argument made is that investment in ECCE could contribute to the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to the reduction of poverty, hunger, child mortality and diseases.

Within the current global context of rapid economic and social changes, including women's increased labour force participation, migration and urbanisation, and evolving family structures such as the weakening of extended families and an increased number of single-parent families, existing childcare arrangements are often disrupted. Here, ECCE policies can complement parents and other carers and provide the best start for their children. Maternal and parental leave can also improve care and young children's wellbeing. Although 80% of developing countries provide maternity leave today, though, enforcement of such provisions varies considerably.

Formal childcare arrangements first appeared in 19th century Europe and North America. After World War II, early childhood education expanded, linked mainly to women's employment. In developing countries, it largely appeared in the 1970s, with considerable regional diversity. Although pre-primary education enrolment has tripled globally since 1970, coverage remains very low in most of the developing world, especially for children aged under three, who have largely been neglected. Almost half of countries have no formal programmes for this age group. In general, developing country governments have given far less policy attention to early childhood compared with primary education and gender parity. Few countries have established national frameworks coordinating ECCE programmes. Even where ECCE has attracted attention, this has often overlooked younger and disadvantaged children.

Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific have the highest pre-primary gross enrolment ratios; Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest, followed by the Arab States. While it is the public sector that provides most ECCE services in developed, transition and Latin American countries, it is the private sector in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Arab States, the Caribbean and East Asia. Interestingly, there is near gender parity in pre-primary education in most of world, which the report attributes to the fact that it is mainly richer children enrolled in pre-primary education, among whom gender differences tend to be less pronounced. However, there are large disparities within countries, and children from poorer and rural households and socially excluded groups have significantly less access. Yet it is precisely these children who are the most likely to benefit from ECCE.

Parents and other carers continue to be children's first educators, and youngest children are often taken care of in the home. Thus, over the past 10 years, the number of parenting programmes for children under three has increased, including programmes providing training for parents as well as those providing information on how best to care for children. Local communities can also play an important role supporting young children and their families through home- or community-based childcare. For the three to six age group, centre-based ECCE provision is the most common type of programmes.

There are significant issues with financing and quality of ECCE programmes in developing countries. As ECCE is typically a low priority for governments, it fails to attract enough funding. The mix of public and private providers and lack of data make it difficult to calculate national expenditures in many countries. Even for most donors ECCE is not a priority, with almost all allocating to pre-primary education less than 10% of what they spend on primary. Moreover, ECCE staff in developing countries tend to lack appropriate education and training and are often poorly remunerated. In developed countries, highly trained ECCE professionals coexist with untrained childcare workers or part-time volunteers, often the mothers of attending children. However, most Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries provide parents with maternal and parental leave and children with access to at least two years of free ECCE before they begin primary school.

The report recommends a holistic approach that combines nutrition, health, care and education instead of narrow interventions covering just one area. Programmes should also be inclusive, respect linguistic and cultural diversity and care practices and mainstream children with special needs and disabilities. In addition, programmes should challenge traditional gender roles. They should also be characterised by quality, which includes low child/staff ratios and adequate materials.

There are signs that such a holistic approach is gaining attention, and several governments in partnership with the UN Children's Fund have begun to develop national early childhood policies that cover health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation and legal protection for young children. National legislation covering ECCE aspects or recognising children's entitlement to ECCE in line with

international laws can also be useful, often as part of education legislation defining ECCE as the first stage of the education system. However, such laws or declarations are not often enforced or supported by specific strategies and adequate public funding. In order for governments in developing countries to develop effective ECCE policies, a number of supportive political, social and economic conditions are required. A growing body of research provides evidence on the benefits of ECCE and legitimises action. Increased maternal participation in the labour force and the decline of traditional family childcare have also made some governments more open to ECCE policies. A number of national development reforms, in response to EFA plans, education and health sector reforms and poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), are increasingly paying attention to ECCE. International agencies, including UN organisations and non-governmental organisations, increasingly support ECCE projects, sometimes through strong ECCE networks. Yet some negative factors can also impose barriers: ambivalence about the role of governments in the life of families, especially for children under three years, as in some cases the public/private sphere distinction is still influential and its boundaries unclear; inadequate public awareness of the benefits of ECCE; limited financial and human resources; and competing policy priorities, especially in low-income countries.

For further progress to take place, high-level political support is necessary to put ECCE as a priority on the national and international agenda and allocate adequate resources. Moreover, broad stakeholder involvement helps promote public support of ECCE policies. Other additional positive factors include the creation of partnerships between the public and the private sector and between governments and international organisations or aid agencies; the use of public campaigns providing information to carers; the development of a national ECCE policy for children from birth until the age of eight, specifying the administrative and budgetary responsibilities of each relevant sector and government level; the designation of a lead administrative body with coordination mechanisms and detailed action plans; the promotion of data collection at national and international level and better monitoring; the development of national quality standards for ECCE provision and their enforcement; the upgrading of ECCE staff skills, remuneration and working conditions; the increase and better-targeting of public funding of ECCE so it includes poor children, children in rural areas and disabled children; the inclusion of ECCE in national budgets, sector plans and PRSPs; and the increase in donor funding and support.

**UNICEF (UN Children’s Fund) and ILO (International Labour Organization). 2013. *Supporting Workers with Family Responsibilities: Connecting Child Development and the Decent Work Agenda*, Geneva: UNICEF and ILO.**

Prepared jointly by the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) for the 2012 Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Ministerial Roundtable, this working paper advocates for support for low-income working families struggling to balance work with childcare responsibilities owing to lack of resources and limited access to quality services. Collaborating closely, the two agencies combine their two key agendas into a holistic approach linking early childhood development with decent employment and social protection floors across the lifecycle. The paper emphasises the need to prioritise social policy investment for improvements in child and family wellbeing, poverty alleviation and inclusive growth in low-income countries.

Both agencies have been providing technical support to developing countries and packages of policy tools for governments, social partners and caregivers from pregnancy and childbirth to childhood, adolescence and young people’s entry into work. While UNICEF aims at strengthening early childhood care and education (ECCE) and preschool programmes, ILO focuses on decent employment for all, extension of social security and elimination of the worst forms of child labour. The latter is through a

four-tier strategy, which includes reducing family poverty through provision of employment and income for parents, providing quality and affordable education for children, prohibiting worst forms of child labour and supporting measures for school-to-work transition. The paper also notes that the recent economic crisis had a particular negative impact on youth employment and on incidence of poverty among young working families, deteriorating conditions for early childhood care and social cohesion.

In general, working parents need to have basic rights and protections at work that allow them to care for their children, but they also need accessible and quality social services across the lifecycle. Access to such services differs according to the level of economic development and the socioeconomic status of the family or its geographical location and ethnic minority status. Despite such differences, social policies should guarantee and provide decent work opportunities; work–family measures, including paid paternity leave and parental leave for fathers; flexible working time arrangements so parents can meet their children’s health and education needs; and a range of quality services to all working families with children. These policies and services should explicitly cover maternal health, early childhood years in terms of child health, nutrition and development, transition to school and school-to-work transition.

Childcare services for children up to eight years old are a key component of such services and could also be provided in the workplace, although this solution is not that widespread. In some developing countries, companies with high numbers of female employees provide on-site childcare facilities. A good example often cited is the case of SOCFINAF, a coffee growing and exporting company in Kenya with a tradition of corporate social responsibility, which has operated child crèches and nursery schools for the children of its agricultural workers since 1950. The company finds the provision of these services is good for industrial relations, enhances its corporate image, helps attract and retain qualified committed staff and productive workers and reduces absenteeism. Workers reported being less stressed as they know their children are taken care of while they work. One coffee picker said that before she used to carry her baby on her back or place the child in the field; she always worried about the baby getting harmed or injured and thus had to interrupt her work often in order to check on the baby, with a negative impact on her productivity. The on-site service had greatly improved her work and increased her productivity and income, as she is now able to meet her daily quota.

Some countries in the roundtable reported that the Convention on the Rights of the Child could be used as an important basis for legislation to provide child protection and childcare and education services. Using a rights-based approach founded on the Convention and on Education for All (EFA) Goal 1 on the expansion and improvement of ECCE, governments could invest in integrated early childhood programmes, including healthcare, nutrition, learning, cognitive and emotional development, but also birth registration for all children, which provides them with the right to access protection and provisions under national law. Yet donors and agencies would have to assist with expenditure on quality ECCE services and prioritise co-financing and aid modalities with governments of low-income countries. Likewise, ILO conventions, such as Convention 183 on maternity protection and Convention 156 on workers with family responsibilities, could also provide the basis for national legislative and policy frameworks supporting working families. Overall, participants agreed on the need for integrated approaches, with this taking place (i) from the bottom up, with policies supporting children and families; (ii) from the top down – that is, from the UN to national governments and then families; and (iii) horizontally through interagency partnerships with employers, workers’ organisations and non-state actors. For example, employers’ organisations and trade unions should incorporate family-friendly measures into collective agreements. Such an approach could tackle

poverty and disadvantage; the interaction of childhood development and decent work policies could have a positive impact on families and society.

The paper pays particular attention to the usefulness of social protection frameworks. Both ILO and UNICEF in their strategic frameworks highlight the importance of establishing social protection floors as key elements of comprehensive and integrated social protection systems. In particular, ILO's Social Protection Floor Recommendation 202, calling for the establishment and strengthening of social protection floors (SPFs) guaranteeing basic income security and access to a nationally defined set of goods and services, could be used to provide a framework for social policy and programming at national level across the lifecycle and to ensure the expansion of coverage and the provision of minimum protection for all the population. Having a rights-based approach, SPFs can support working families, and especially low-income families in the informal economy, which are often excluded from social insurance, to access care, education and other social services.

The ILO Recommendation provides guidelines to Member States to set up their legislative and policy frameworks to implement SPFs according to their national needs and priorities in order to expand social security. SPFs are 'nationally-defined sets of basic social security guarantees which secure protection aimed at preventing or alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion'. These sets of guarantees should include 'access to a nationally defined set of goods and services, constituting essential health care, including maternity care, that meets the criteria of availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality [...] basic income security for children, at least at a nationally defined minimum level, providing access to nutrition, education, care and any other necessary goods and services'. They can also be realised through various measures, such as cash transfers, fee waivers or SPFs can play an important role in providing social services to low-income and vulnerable groups.

Establishment of SPFs is repeatedly stressed as providing a framework to guarantee basic child and family policies and a good entry point for UNICEF/ILO collaboration linked to UNICEF's Social Protection Strategic Framework. Launched in 2012, this global framework can also provide a platform to use social protection to advance children's rights based on the core principles of universality, national leadership and ownership and inclusive social protection. The agency focuses on four specific types of interventions: social transfers; programmes to ensure economic and social access to services; social support and care services; and legislation and policies ensuring equity and non-discrimination in children's and families' access to services and employment.

Good practice examples of family-focused social protection schemes cited in the roundtable include the South African Child Support Grant and the Indian Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and its provisions for women employees. Other schemes were also noted, such as the social cash transfer programmes in Malawi, which provides assistance to primary caregivers and has been successful in retaining children at school instead of them dropping out to work in tea and tobacco estates. Kenyan social protection programmes have focused on social transfers to orphans and vulnerable children and helped support caregivers, enhance early childhood care and nutrition and retain girls at school.

In the conclusions, this paper points out that the quality of economic growth – inclusive and equitable – is important. Both UNICEF<sup>7</sup> and ILO advocate for social policies to be fully integrated into

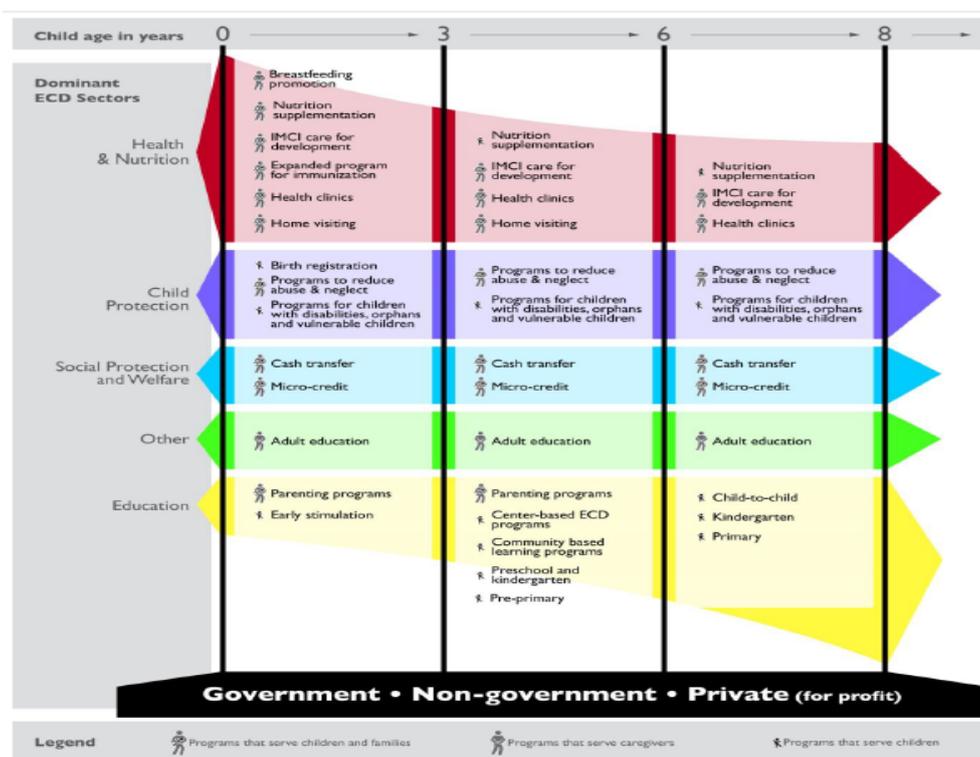
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<sup>7</sup> UNICEF continues working on various aspects of ECCE in middle- and low-income countries, including issues of quality, governance and finance of early childhood development and education (ECDE) systems and services. A working paper on ECDE governance in three low-income countries (Britto et al., 2013) provides the following figure on the structure of ECDE programmes.

macroeconomic frameworks that prioritise strong support for working families across the lifecycle. These support measures must be adequate, of good quality, affordable, accessible to all, particularly the vulnerable and disadvantaged, and gender-responsive, promoting more equal sharing of family responsibilities between women and men. What is also necessary is an environment that explicitly supports maternal health and early childhood development; provision of support to workers with family responsibilities; investment in early childhood development; establishment of social protection systems that support working families and their children; quality preschool programming; strengthening of primary school education to achieve the internationally agreed EFA goals; addressing child labour through measures tackling household poverty; active labour market policies to ensure a smooth school-to-work transition; and a partnership to support working families and their children. In terms of specific measures, this paper calls for a shift to family-focused investments within a lifecycle framework prioritising decent work, work–life balance, early childhood development and social protection. These policy measures would include maternity protection and breastfeeding breaks; incorporation of paid paternity leave and parental leave; decent working conditions for domestic workers and training on quality childcare provision; adaptation of national labour legislation and policy to support working families, given that much of what is in place was passed under different social conditions – for example most children currently live in households where all adult work; and SPFs and systems supporting parents and children across the lifecycle.

**Unterhalter E., North, A., Arnot, M., Lloyd, C., Moletsane, L., Murphy-Graham, E., Parkes, J. and Saito, M. 2014. *Education Rigorous Literature Review: Girls' Education and Gender Equality*, London: DFID.**

Based on a systematic review of research evidence, this paper investigates and identifies the interventions that can improve girls' school participation – enrolment and attendance – and learning



outcomes, and explores the relationship between expansion of girls' education, gender equality and social change.

In recent years, governments, international agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have designed and implemented a variety of interventions to improve girls' school education, including provision of financial support, school feeding programmes, construction of school facilities, private, single-sex or religious school provision, recruitment and training of teachers, gender mainstreaming, gender-sensitive curricula, recruitment of female teachers, female participation in school governance committees, community mobilisation, girl-friendly learning spaces, sex education, interventions tackling violence and work with boys and men.

This systematic review distinguishes between three types of interventions aiming to improve girls' school participation, learning and empowerment: interventions associated with provision of resources and infrastructure; those concerned with policy development and institutional change at different levels (international, national, provincial and local) of the education system, either through implementation of changes in policy and practice or through changes in the culture and social relations of institutions; and those aimed at shifting social norms and increasing inclusion of the marginalised. In each type, the review explores whether an intervention's impact is positive, limited or still unclear (in some cases promising) and thus calling for more research. It also notes, however, that in some cases positive impact in one area may have a negative impact in another. For example, evidence from India and Pakistan shows increases in girls' enrolment may come at the expense of quality education and learning outcomes.

Cash transfers that are well targeted and complemented appear to be effective and improve girls' school enrolment and attendance. Strong evidence from Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia shows that cash transfers and stipends have a positive impact when three targeting issues are fulfilled: they carefully target populations most in need (i.e. educationally under-resourced families); they target students at specific grade levels where dropout risk is most likely; and their targeting is based on transparent and objective criteria for eligibility that are understood well and are seen as fair within the communities in which they are implemented. Otherwise, these interventions may not be effective and can be expensive, as resources are spent on students who would go to school irrespective of the intervention, while they also create community tensions. In each context, their cost-effectiveness depends on finding the lowest value of the stipend that can ensure meaningful effects. Modest stipends appear to work better in poor settings. Cash transfers are also more cost-effective when introduced in areas where schools are accessible and have some quality. Comparative research undertaken in Malawi also shows that conditional cash transfers are more effective than unconditional cash transfers in improving girls' enrolment (Baird et al., 2011).

Provision of information to girls, parents and communities about employment returns to girls' education also appears to be a potentially cost-effective intervention for girls' secondary school attendance and completion. An often cited study from rural India (Jensen, 2010) found such information and anticipated higher returns increased the chances of girls aged 5-15 years being in school by 3 to 5 percentage points, with no effect on boys.

A number of other resource interventions aim to address financial constraints. These include school feeding programmes and take-home food rations for girls attending school, yet so far evidence on their effectiveness appears to be mixed, with problems of crowded classrooms and poor quality. Complementary in-kind health interventions such as deworming appear to have promising potential in terms of increasing girls' enrolment and learning. Provision of sanitary supplies to enable girls to manage menstruation and maintain school attendance has been another popular resource

intervention among policymakers. However, it still not clear whether this intervention is effective. Only one rigorous study, cited repeatedly in the literature, conducted in Nepal on the provision of menstrual cups, found no significant impact on girls' attendance rates (Oster and Thornton, 2011).

Research has also focused on the effectiveness of infrastructure interventions, which include building schools, boarding schools and sanitation facilities as well as providing water and electricity. Construction of additional schools in areas where parents and communities were concerned about girls' safety and distances to school, as in Afghanistan and Pakistan, appears to increase girls' enrolment and attendance. However, in general, there is less evidence that improved infrastructure on its own can lead to significant improvements. The effectiveness of such interventions appears to increase when they are linked with processes associated with learning and teaching. There is also some promising evidence that integrated water, sanitation and hygiene interventions can have a positive impact on girls' absenteeism. Constructing separate latrines for boys and girls in schools has attracted much policy attention, yet its significance is often questioned; only one rigorous study on the issue based on material from rural Malawi found no significant impact (Grant et al., 2013), while a systematic review (Birdthistle et al., 2011) on the provision of separate toilets for girls in primary and secondary schools found a lack of clear evidence regarding toilets and girls' education: no study assessing the impact of separate toilets on girls' enrolment/attendance could meet the review's inclusion criteria.

Under the second type of interventions, those linked to institutions and policy, the review looks at provision of good and supportive teachers; provision of quality teacher training; gender training for teachers; provision of female teachers; gender mainstreaming; private, single-sex or religious school choice provision; inclusive strategies; girl-friendly schools; group learning approaches; after-school activities; and inclusion of women in leading positions in school governance committees and in the community. It finds strong evidence that interventions improving teacher training and providing gender-sensitive pedagogy and development of attitudes of inclusion significantly reduce girls' dropout and improve their learning outcomes.

Group learning and learning outside the classroom approaches were both found to improve girls' enrolment, attendance and learning. Creation of safe spaces such as girls' clubs, where girls can discuss and reflect, appears to enable girls to become more confident and articulate; such groups could be thus improve learning among girls when they are clearly linked with formal schooling.

Studies of programmes that have an appropriate mixture of different interventions, such as financial support, girls' clubs, teacher training and community mobilisation, plus the inclusion of parents and leaders, find they can be effective in bringing girls to school. Thus there is promising evidence that a 'quality mix', a coordinated combination of interventions and approaches aiming to enhance quality and including resource and infrastructure interventions, teacher training and support, gender-sensitive pedagogy and extra-curricular work with girls, can have positive outcomes. However, it is difficult to assess the relative significance of each of these girl-friendly features.

The appointment of women to positions of power in school governance committees but also in local bodies appears promising, yet there are very few studies of long-term effects to draw definite conclusions. An often-cited study (Beaman et al., 2012) shows female leadership influences adolescent girls' career aspirations and educational achievement. Conducted in 495 villages in West Bengal, India, with the participation of adolescents aged 11-15 and their parents, the study found that, in villages where the law reserved leadership positions in village councils for women, these women leaders became visible role models shaping expectations about what women can achieve. In these

villages, the gender gap in aspirations had closed by 20% in parents and 32% in adolescents, that in educational attainment had disappeared and girls spent less time on household chores.

The review finds only promising evidence that employment of women teachers positively impacts girls' education. A number of studies show teachers' knowledge, support and attitudes are more crucial than their gender. In some cases, such as in Bangladesh and Africa, a greater number of female teachers in local schools increases the likelihood of girls' enrolment and reduces their dropout rates. The issue of school choice has also been researched, and there is only limited evidence on whether private, single-sex or religious schools have a positive impact on girls' schooling. Evidence on the effects of different types of schooling on girls' education is still inconclusive and highly contextualised.

Gender mainstreaming as an approach to changing institutional culture may have a positive impact, but it has to be supported by adequate resources (money, time, skill, support, opportunities) that go far beyond those often planned or provided. Apart from capacity, careful attention to the local context is also important. When local power structures are neglected, they may impair implementation of gender mainstreaming, while tensions may arise when trying to realise international commitments within local communities.

Among interventions focusing on shifting norms, the review includes those aiming to change norms and to include the most marginalised in education decision-making, including provision of learning spaces and girls' clubs; sex education; women's literacy programmes; interventions to tackle gender-based violence; work with boys and men to change gender norms and attitudes; engagement with faith communities; inclusion of women from marginalised groups and work to include marginalised girls; provision of support to young women to proceed to higher levels of education; and combined programmes linking gender equality in schools with adult literacy, health, economic empowerment and women's rights.

The review finds strong evidence that sex education and teaching about health, personal and social issues either in school or in complementary programmes provides knowledge, builds confidence, and may have a positive impact on girls' participation. However, it does not appear to change behaviours or gender norms when it focuses on provision of information about reproductive biology. It is those interventions that allow participants to discuss gender norms and attitudes and reflect that can contribute to a reduction of risk behaviour, and can help shift some of these norms, including those related to girls' schooling, on condition that other aspects of the school environment and culture are supportive.

There is also promising evidence that women's literacy programmes, when offering the chance for reflective discussion and development of gender awareness, can impact on girls' school participation and learning by increasing knowledge, developing skills and even changing the household work burden. A promising impact on girls' participation was also found for interventions supporting girls to proceed to higher levels of education, and those enabling marginalised girls to participate. Complementary learning spaces alongside formal schools, such as NGO-run programmes, girls' clubs or groups where girls and boys are able to meet, reflect and challenge gender norms, are increasingly attracting attention. Studies find such spaces are very effective in providing opportunities to discuss gender norms and equality, develop confidence and reduce risk-taking behaviour, especially when they are linked to services and sex education. Work with boys and men, allowing them to discuss and reflect on gender norms and attitudes, is also increasingly attracting research attention and appears to be promising. Very few interventions to tackle school-related gender-based violence have been evaluated properly, and only a relatively small number of studies (the review includes only nine) look at interventions addressing this problem.

The review also looks at interventions creating an enabling institutional environment of legislation, regulation and policy formation for girls' education, including legal reforms, such as those on minimum age of marriage, property ownership, anti-discrimination laws, state capacity to finance and implement policy, female labour market opportunities, and policy engagement of women's rights activists. Each one of them appears promising, with so far more evidence available on the role of legal reforms and women's rights activists and movements. Several studies indicate that legal frameworks on age of marriage or women's access to land and property are linked to increased girls' enrolment. Laws on age of marriage in societies with early marriage practices appear to be effective when combined with other policies. In Bangladesh, a decade before the introduction of the secondary scholarship programme, the government implemented the formalisation and feminisation of Islamic schools along with legislative change regarding the age of consent for marriage. A combination of all these factors contributed to a remarkable increase in girls' enrolment in secondary education. In other cases, laws enabling women's access to assets such as land and property are also associated with improved access to education.

In general, evidence from evaluated interventions indicates their impact is greatest when different types of interventions that provide resources, change institutions and shift social norms are combined, and when adequate attention is paid to the context in which they occur. Indeed, context appears to 'be critical to the development and impact of different forms of intervention'. Aspects of the local, national and global context in which interventions take place need to be considered carefully. These include the level of support for girls' schooling (politically, culturally, economically and socially), including international initiatives such as Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals, and the existence of complementary legal and regulatory frameworks influencing the development and implementation of interventions for girls' education but also their ability to contribute to improved gender equality with and beyond education. Timing is also important, while quick policy changes and little preparation may not have the expected outcomes.

An additional critical factor is the state's capacity to finance and implement policy, translate commitments into viable programmes and engage the widest range of stakeholders in inclusive dialogue. Gender budgeting initiatives could be helpful in identifying girls' educational needs and ensuring adequate resources to meet them. Finally, issues of diversity and the particular needs of different population groups of girls also affect the impact of interventions. Contexts or diverse aspects of context influence how interventions are implemented and experienced by different groups of girls and shape the outcomes of these interventions.

**World Bank. 2013. 'What Matters Most for Early Childhood Development: A Framework Paper', SABER Working Paper Series 5, Washington, DC: World Bank.**

The World Bank supports early childhood development (ECD) programmes as a key part of its Education Strategy 2020, whose goal 'Learning for All' is set on three pillars, Invest Early, Invest Smartly, Invest for All; and as a strong component of its health, nutrition and social protection strategies. As part of the implementation of its education strategy, the Bank has launched Systems Approach for Better Education Results (SABER) to provide guidance to and help countries in their education policies. In particular, SABER-ECD aims to provide the tools and analysis to effectively address challenges to ECD policies and programmes. As part of the SABER programme, this working paper presents the main arguments for investing in ECD policies and programmes and the key policy goals to ensure their effectiveness.

Inequalities in child development often begin before birth; by the time children enter primary school significant gaps already exist. Poverty and inadequate nutrition and learning opportunities are the key factors responsible for more than 200 million children below the age of five in low- and middle-income countries being unable to reach their developmental potential, with detrimental effects later in life. However, a growing body of literature shows remarkable returns to investments in children's early years. ECD interventions can improve child physical, cognitive, linguistic and socio-emotional development, schooling outcomes and productivity later in life. They also increase female labour force participation, benefit marginalised populations and reduce the intergenerational transfer of poverty. As such, they significantly impact the social and economic development of every country.

Arguments in favour of investing in ECD include the following: experiences in early childhood affect brain development; ECD investments can address early gaps in opportunity; ECD investments have long-lasting high returns in terms of promoting school readiness and better education outcomes, and life-longer benefits such as increased wage-earning potential and decreased criminality and reliance on social welfare; ECD investments have considerably higher results than equivalent investments made during primary or secondary school years or beyond; ECD investments can maximise both efficiency and equity as they reach and benefit marginalised children; and potential ECD benefits extend beyond children as such investment can also improve maternal health, promote female labour force participation, raise additional tax revenue and reduce social assistance expenditures and access hard-to-reach population groups and promote their social inclusion. In terms of its gender potential, such an investment increases not only female labour force participation but also girls' primary and secondary schooling rates, as older girls do not have to stay at home and look after their younger siblings. For example, a study in Kenya found increasing the availability of childcare increased primary and secondary school enrolment rates for older girls. Overall, evidence indicates that ECD potential returns far exceed costs. Cost-benefit analyses of ECD interventions in high-income countries and particularly in the US show a rate of return for a single dollar invested in ECD as high as 17:1 and a typical rate of return between 2:1 and 8:1 depending on factors such as programme focus, duration and quality.

As child development is multidimensional and sequential, ECD interventions cover five key sectors: health, nutrition, education and social and child protection. In general, ECD policies are designed to promote the survival, growth and development of young children, prevent risks and ameliorate their negative impacts. They can target the child, but also the pregnant woman, the caregiver or the family, and involve multiple stakeholders. They can be provided through centre-based approaches, home visits, group sessions or advocacy and communication campaigns. Such interventions have the greatest impact when they are multi-sectoral and integrated, and provide holistic programming to ensure all children have an equal opportunity to reach their full potential.

Despite progress, access to pre-primary education – a form of ECD provision – varies across the world. In developing countries, it ranges from 17% in Sub-Saharan Africa to 65% in Latin America and the Caribbean. Within countries, with the exception of those in South Asia, there are significant disparities between the poorest and the richest households, with children from richer households at least twice as likely in all regions to be enrolled in pre-primary school.

While there is clear evidence of the benefits of ECD investments and governments are increasingly interested in promoting ECD policies, the multi-sectoral nature of ECD and the need to reach various stakeholders appear to be particularly challenging. Although there is no consensus on how policymakers can holistically design ECD policies, there is growing evidence on what policies matter most for strong ECD systems. The following table includes the main ECD sectoral interventions.

What should be in place at the country level to promote integrated ECD interventions for young children and their families?
<b>Healthcare</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard health screenings for pregnant women</li> <li>• Skilled attendants at delivery</li> <li>• Childhood immunizations</li> <li>• Well-child visits</li> </ul>
<b>Nutrition</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breastfeeding promotion</li> <li>• Salt iodization</li> <li>• Iron fortification</li> </ul>
<b>Early Learning</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting programs (during pregnancy, after delivery and throughout early childhood)</li> <li>• High-quality and affordable childcare, especially for working parents</li> <li>• Free preprimary school (preferably at least two years with developmentally appropriate curriculum and classrooms, and quality assurance mechanisms)</li> </ul>
<b>Social Protection</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services for orphans and vulnerable children</li> <li>• Policies to protect rights of children with special needs and promote their participation and access to ECD services</li> <li>• Financial transfer mechanisms or income supports to reach the most vulnerable families (could include cash transfers, social welfare, etc)</li> </ul>
<b>Child Protection</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mandated birth registration</li> <li>• Job protection and breastfeeding breaks for new mothers</li> <li>• Specific provisions in judicial system for young children</li> <li>• Guaranteed paid parental leave of least six months</li> <li>• Domestic violence laws and enforcement</li> <li>• Tracking of child abuse (especially for young children)</li> <li>• Training for law enforcement officers in regards to the particular needs of young children</li> </ul>

The Bank identifies three key policy goals important for effective ECD systems: establishment of an enabling environment; wide implementation; and monitoring and assuring quality. Within each goal, specific policies are identified as key. However, as context is always significant, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to developing ECD policy and reaching these goals. For example, countries with decentralised systems need different solutions and approaches to those with central systems.

The first ECD policy goal is the foundation for effective ECD policies and includes three key features: developing an adequate legal and regulatory framework to support ECD provision; establishing coordination within sectors and across institutions for effective service delivery; and ensuring availability of financial sources and systems to allocate funding.

The laws and regulations relevant to ECD are diverse owing to its multi-sectoral nature and the diverse stakeholders involved; while in some countries a specific ECD law or policy is enacted, in others a set of sectoral laws and policies are in place. Universal provision of services appears to be the best way to ensure access for all children and pregnant women as ECD begins before birth. Evidence has also established what interventions work to improve maternal and child health and nutrition, which can thus be included in ECD policies. There is also evidence that families with young children face the highest poverty risk when the child is between birth and three years old, and especially in the period following birth; this primarily applies to low-income and single-parent families in countries with little or no paid policies or high informal employment levels. It is also during this period the child needs particular attention and care. Paid parental leave appears to have multiple benefits in terms of child

health and development outcomes but also women's labour force participation and career advancement. Relevant policies include job protection and breastfeeding breaks for mothers but also anti-discrimination laws, tax credits and cash transfers to support poor parents but also children with disabilities and special needs. In terms of child-protection ECD policies, birth registration is a critical element as well as legislation and services for the prevention and prosecution of domestic violence. In general, the legal framework should promote the protection of children. Young children's age and limited ability to communicate means they are particularly vulnerable to violence and exploitation, thus governments need to put in place systems to identify children at risk and interventions to protect them from violence and neglect; protection measures are particular needed for orphans, vulnerable children and those with special needs.

Coordination across sectors and institutions is also critical, including ministries and non-state providers, as in many countries civil society or the private sector provides a large proportion of ECD services. Except in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, non-state actors provide a high proportion of ECD services (75% in Arab countries). Evidence also indicates the importance of several other components for multi-sectoral ECD frameworks, including high-level political endorsement to ensure EDC is in a prominent place on the national agenda; a defined institutional anchor leading coordination; and the inclusion of stakeholders from various sectors in policy development and implementation with clear responsibilities.

Availability of financial resources is also critical, although high levels of finance do not always guarantee good outcomes. So far, the vast majority of governments do not allocate adequate funding to ECD interventions. Even within Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, there is a strong trend towards under-investment in young children – only around 25% compared with 39% for children aged 12-18. Most countries spend less on financing pre-primary education, ranging from less than 1% to less than 10% of total education spending. Levels of finance also affect service delivery and quality; an identified problem is low salaries for early childhood educators and poor training and supervision.

The goal of wide implementation refers to the degree of coverage (particularly for disadvantaged or minority populations), the scope of ECD programmes and the extent to which access is equitable. Many high-income countries have expanded universal ECD services, particularly in health and education; developing countries have also dramatically expanded access to preschool provision in the past 10 years, yet many still struggle to scale up pilot interventions. Analysis of Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 3 data from 37 low- and middle-income countries found significant inequalities in access to early learning and parenting resources by socioeconomic status, urban–rural location and maternal education levels. Children from wealthier families, in urban areas and with better educated mothers had higher participation rates in early learning programmes.

The third goal, on monitoring and quality, is increasingly recognised as important. Often, policymakers under political and budget pressures focus on expanding access to ECD services at the expense of quality. Yet evaluations of preschool programmes from various countries, including Bangladesh, Cape Verde and Guinea, reveal that quality is linked to cognitive outcomes. Thus, this goal focuses on three key issues: data availability, quality standards and compliance with these.

#### 4. ACTORS AND FACTORS OF CHIDCARE POLICY CHANGE

In recent years, childcare policy change has been promoted and supported by a wide range of actors with distinct or overlapping objectives, including international agencies, donors, various civil society organisations and social movements, as well as activists in the name of women's rights and gender equality, children's rights and wellbeing or domestic workers' labour rights. Under the influence of international agencies and in accordance with the ideological and institutional context, governments also commit to childcare service provision and a more equal sharing of responsibility between women and men. The role of women's collective action has attracted particular attention, yet the evidence base is so far mixed. On the contrary, domestic workers' mobilisation has led to a strong growing global movement and effective campaigning. Despite its critical importance, policy change for parents with disabled children appears to be very limited.

**Bedford, K. 2010. 'Harmonizing Global Care Policy? Care and the Commission on the Status of Women', Gender and Development Programme Paper 7, Geneva: UNRISD.**

Using official documentation and participant interviews, this paper examines the history (framing of the issue and policy alliances), significance and achievements of the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which placed care on the international policy agenda, and identifies its two key limitations.

The CSW is the UN 'principal norm-setting and policymaking body on issues of gender equality and the advancement of women'. Its key activity is the annual meeting at UN headquarters every March to coincide with International Women's Day. In 2009, care became the priority theme of CSW under the indicative title 'the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care-giving in the context of HIV/AIDS'. It emerged for the first time as 'a new global gender policy priority', the focus of the international policy community. Delegates of UN Member States signed the Agreed Conclusions, which as they produce 'soft law' on gender had the potential to influence international and national legislation and policies.

Arguments to legitimise the care focus built on previous UN treaties and conferences such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and the 1995 World Summit for Social Development, which identified unpaid, including care, work as an obstacle to women's participation in all spheres of life. At the time, care was becoming increasingly important because of population ageing and fertility declines in some countries and the HIV and AIDS epidemic in others. Thus the 53rd session theme expanded its focus to bring together all three – equal sharing of responsibility, care and HIV and AIDS – in a coherent and unifying frame.

The different actors involved understood each sub-theme in different ways. For example, the equal sharing of responsibilities for women's groups meant sharing of all roles, economic, political and social; for non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working with men it meant male inclusion in gender equality measures; for the International Labour Organization it related to efforts to promote work and family policies and domestic workers' labour rights; for EU Member States it was linked to their efforts on a legal framework for work-life reconciliation; for African countries it applied to their work on home-based care workers and people affected by HIV and AIDS; and for gender and development specialists it was linked to work by feminist economists, the need to measure and value unpaid work and the impact of neoliberal policies on care. What is thus interesting is that the issue of care, framed as an equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, was able to unite a wide range of diverse actors, including feminists, workers' rights advocates and conservative faith-

based organisations that had opposed other gender equality initiatives in the past. In 2009, they all agreed on the significance of care for the family across the UN system, on strong state responsibility for care provision and on the centrality of caregivers' participation in policy debates.

The key achievement of the 2009 CSW was that it placed the care issue, until then ignored, on the international policy agenda and recommended concrete actions with the widespread support of these diverse actors and Member States. Faith-based organisations mobilising for the protection of the family supported the agenda, and the Holy See urged for better protection of migrant caregivers and professional training to home-based carers. Apart from global recognition of care as a key issue under the responsibility of governments, particularly in relation to the HIV epidemic, the CSW also strengthened NGO work on care and increased the voice of caregivers in UN policy debates.

However, Bedford notes two limitations related to two issues intentionally left out at the 2009 CSW as they could threaten the widespread consensus, which she identifies as current gaps in care debates: disability and diverse family forms. Only a few references to disability issues were made in the CSW, and these framed disabled people as a care burden along with the sick and the elderly. The Agreed Conclusions mention them only alongside people with HIV and AIDS and pledge for quality public health care. This exclusion is related to the perspective of disability scholarship and activism, which challenges the assumptions of the CSW on care: while the CSW conceptualised care positively, those working on disability rights saw it as oppressive and disempowering, placing power with the caregiver and treating the disabled as a passive object and a care burden. Activists rather place emphasis on the disabled and their human rights and their need to control their lives and have a voice in care policies that affect them, including measures such as direct payments for care provision, enabling a less personal and more formal relationship.

The nuclear family unit of a woman and a man was also promoted as the universally desirable model for care provision at the expense of diverse family forms and kinship arrangements, including grandparents, female-headed households, child-headed households, extended family members and gay and lesbian couples, which would have been very troubling for the CSW to include.

**Bibler, S. and Zuckerman, E. 2013. 'The Care Connection: The World Bank and Women's Unpaid Care Work in Select sub-Saharan African Countries', Working Paper 2013/131, Helsinki: UNU-WIDER.**

Bibler and Zuckerman investigate the extent to which the World Bank includes and addresses unpaid care concerns in its sectoral projects. Using an in-depth gender analysis of 36 such projects in four low-income Sub-Saharan African countries, they find only 11 are gender-sensitive and only three incorporate care concerns. Therefore, they conclude there is a 'vast disconnect between Bank rhetoric and action on care economy issues'. They also argue it is likely that the vast majority of Bank projects also fail to acknowledge and address women's unequal care burden.

Policymakers and international development organisations increasingly recognise the urgent need to address gender inequalities, including women's greater responsibility for unpaid care work, and to improve women's employment opportunities. In particular, the Bank has acknowledged the effects unpaid care work has on gender equality and women's labour outcomes. It has twice dedicated its flagship report to gender (in 2001 and 2011) and linked women's unequal care responsibilities to gender inequalities in education, employment, poverty and welfare, calling for infrastructure projects to free up women's care time, assessments recognising gender roles and public childcare services. However, despite recognising the importance of improved infrastructure and childcare services, the 2013 World Development Report on jobs pays less attention to linkages between care work and

women's economic opportunities and takes for granted women's preference for home-based income-generating activities that allow them to balance work and childcare.<sup>8</sup>

The issue is more than ever before relevant, particularly for Sub-Saharan African countries, where women face an increased care burden owing to a combination of factors, including insufficient government expenditure on social services, a high burden of diseases such as HIV and AIDS and climate change-induced depletion of natural resources. Thus, Bibler and Zuckerman review all the Bank's projects in four low-income Sub-Saharan African countries (Malawi, Mali, Niger and Rwanda), approved in fiscal years 2008-2012 within four key sectors – agriculture, education, infrastructure (roads and water) and private sector development. Using an in-depth gender analysis of pre-approval project information documents, project appraisal documents and project implementation status and results reports, they identify how gender-sensitive each project is as well as the extent to which it incorporates unpaid care concerns.

Their analysis finds that the majority of projects do not include gender and care issues in their goals and activities: out of 36 projects, only 11 are gender-sensitive and only three explicitly aim to reduce women's care time in their design. Even when differential gender roles are acknowledged, project design often fails to integrate gender concerns, to prioritise women's equal participation in consultations, to include an assessment of women's distinct needs and tasks (e.g. time-use analysis), to collect sex-disaggregated data or to provide for any specific strategy to ensure women's participation in project activities such as training opportunities, capacity-building or community organisations. In addition, the vast majority of projects fail to address women's care constraints limiting their project participation, and do not provide for activities to tackle the traditional gendered division of labour. None of the projects reviewed includes public childcare provision.

Eleven of the projects are in the agriculture sector, as the Bank in each of the four countries promotes agricultural development to advance economic growth. African women account for the majority of agricultural workers and are often involved in agricultural activities as unpaid workers, rarely accessing basic time- and labour-saving technologies. Available time-use surveys reveal that, in all four countries, rural women bear a disproportionate unpaid care burden with negative impacts on gender equality and economic and human development. For example, the average woman in Malawi has to work 16 hours. In Mali, rural women spend 17 times the amount of time men spend on unpaid work, including care, and are unable to participate in community initiatives, agricultural trainings and capacity-building sessions. In Rwanda, where 86% of women are engaged in agriculture, women spend an average 14-17 hours daily on farming and care work, but more than half do not earn any income. In Niger, rural women work up to 18 hours daily and collect most of the fuel to meet the needs of the 96% of households that rely on wood or charcoal as cooking fuel. It would thus be expected that the Bank's agricultural projects would address women's care responsibilities and facilitate their involvement.

However, this paper finds only three projects were gender-sensitive, and the majority failed to integrate any care economy concerns. None of these projects identified the constraints care imposes on women's participation in project activities and none prioritised time-saving technologies, even though the majority aimed at increasing labour-intensive crop production, which would likely increase

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<sup>8</sup> However, it has to be acknowledged that the Bank, in its 2013 *Gender at Work: A Companion to the World Development Report on Jobs*, does recognise that women and girls are responsible for the majority of unpaid care and domestic work, with negative effects on their education and work opportunities. The Bank thus recommends legal reforms addressing gender discrimination and inequality, family-friendly policies such as parental leave and flexible work arrangements, expansion and provision of affordable childcare and early child development programmes, increased access to time-saving technology and infrastructure and initiatives to increase men's fathering roles and participation in domestic responsibilities.

women's unpaid workload. The only exception is the second phase of the Community Action Programme in Niger. This project adopts a rights-based approach, which recognises women's right to participate and benefit from project initiatives; includes participatory consultations with women; considers women's distinct needs; identifies lack of gender equity goals as a risk to project success; and recognises women's responsibility for unpaid care work as a barrier to economic development and women and girls' participation in economic activities, literacy and education.

In the case of road/transport projects, Bibler and Zuckerman again find the majority are gender-insensitive and view women as indirect project beneficiaries and decision-makers. Care issues are again left out, even though infrastructure investments can reduce women's care work. Interestingly, the Bank recognises the importance of integrating gender issues into infrastructure sector projects in order to reduce women's domestic burden and improve their access to markets. Likewise, in the water, sanitation and irrigation sector, the Bank acknowledges that poor access exacerbates women's time poverty and limits their economic opportunities. Once again, though, the majority of water-related reviewed projects lack gender sensitivity, and specific strategies to promote women's participation in project design are absent; unpaid care work is also absent.

The only exception – and the project with the strongest gender sensitivity of all – is the ongoing Shire River Basin Management Program (2012-2018) in Malawi. This project aims to improve land and water management and explicitly refers to 'women and men' and not simply 'beneficiaries'; collects sex-disaggregated data; recognises women's role as natural resource collectors and managers; identifies exclusion of women as a primary risk to project success; implements participatory consultation processes targeting women as stakeholders; and recognises that the project's output, improved water management, will improve women's income opportunities by reducing time spent on unpaid domestic work. Another gender-sensitive water-related project is Rwanda's Land Husbandry, Water Harvesting and Hillside Irrigation, which aims to improve agriculture along with improving irrigation and water harvesting infrastructure. All project activities from design to implementation require the participation and ownership of women and men. The project refers to male and female farmers, includes collection of sex-disaggregated data, explicitly recognises women as project leaders and budgets for gender activities and gender-sensitive agricultural extension services. Although it does not explicitly have care concerns, the project has the potential to reduce women's unpaid care work by reducing time spent on water collection and other labour-intensive tasks.

Five education projects were reviewed in order to explore the link between women and girls' unpaid care work and access to education and training. The Bank acknowledges that care constraints limit women's access to education and that infrastructure improvement is linked to higher enrolment rates. Yet once again care concerns are absent from project design and implementation. The project that scored highest – the Malawi Project to Improve Education Quality – provided bursary packages to girls and also included the construction of new neighbourhood schools to address girls' safety and time issues. Meanwhile, Rwanda's Skills Development Project, which aims to increase women's and men's access to vocational training, does not provide skills on demand but rather skills traditionally associated with women, in 'traditionally female occupations, such as cook, waiter, receptionist, and housekeeper'. It also fails to consider women's care constraints in accessing the training or to provide for childcare. Thus it reinforces the gendered division of labour and the perception of care work as low skilled and natural for women.

Finally, the authors reviewed 14 poverty reduction support credit (PRSC) projects with financial and private sector operations; 12 were gender-insensitive and two were weakly gender-sensitive but did not pay attention to unpaid care work and its impact on women's economic opportunities and poverty. Within private sector development, the Bank provides funding aiming at poverty reduction

and employment generation, and PRSC objectives draw on the poverty reduction strategy papers that the Bank along with the International Monetary Fund requires of poor developing countries. In theory, they can address women's care responsibilities and improve women's employment. However, the authors argue that extensive research reveals their gender insensitivity and a gender-blind, one-size-fits-all approach. Moreover, PRSCs fail to prioritise government spending on social services and tend to overlook the importance of human capital investment.

Therefore, Bibler and Zuckerman point out that, despite the Bank's rhetoric on addressing women's care burden through time-saving technologies, infrastructure investment and childcare services, project design and implementation actually overlook the issue. Although the Bank recognises the issue in its reports, it largely fails to address it in its projects, with negative effects on employment opportunities for poor women and ultimately aid effectiveness.

The authors recommend the Bank provide grants to poor countries to invest in care services for children, the disabled and the elderly; proactively engage women in all project stages from design to evaluation; use sex-disaggregated data in project design and implementation and identify gender gaps in employment and income; and use indicators to measure the time women and men spend on unpaid care work. Given the importance of care for human and economic development, government spending should increase, and natural resource rents could be used for quality care provision. Regarding sectoral projects, investments in agriculture should include gender analysis and use of time-use surveys, provide for meetings and trainings that fit women's time constraints and do not increase their daily burden and implement time-saving technologies. Infrastructure investments should also use gender analysis and time-use surveys revealing differential gender needs and informing infrastructure priorities, including the provision of public subsidies, which could enable poor women and men to access infrastructure. Investments in the education sector should include monitoring gender differences in school retention and achievement, support schemes such as school-feeding or stipends to reduce the opportunity costs of sending girls to school, promote gender-sensitive curricula and recruitment of female teachers and managers and ensure vocational training does not promote traditional gender roles. Policy investment should stop cuts in public spending on social services and introduction of user fees, as they disproportionately affect women's care burden, and promote gender budgeting and quality care policies and programming. Finally, the Bank should proactively increase the visibility, value and remuneration of unpaid care work, develop relevant project indicators and encourage men's participation in care provision.

**Brickell, K. 2011. 'The "Stubborn Stain" on Development: Gendered Meanings of Housework (Non-) Participation in Cambodia', *Journal of Development Studies* 47(9): 1353-1370.**

Using a qualitative research methodology, Brickell explores the gendered meanings of domestic and childcare work in the discourses men and women use to explain their unequal burden in male-headed households in Cambodia. Drawing on cultural values, such discourses legitimise and reinforce the traditional division of intra-household labour, with women bearing the brunt of housework, while remaining unchallenged by development interventions as part of culture that has to be respected.

Brickell argues that the persistence of gender inequality within the household is widely regarded as 'a stubborn stain' on development achievements. In the developing world, women's increased participation in income-generating activities has not been coupled with a sharing of domestic and care responsibilities between men and women. Gendered norms and cultural values stating that such responsibilities are embedded in female nature are part of the problem. In some cases, governments

explicitly reinforce such ideas, increasing the difficulty in challenging and transforming entrenched norms and practices. For example, the Malaysian government supported patriarchal initiatives such as the Happy Family campaign, which encourages traditional family values, including the idea that women take care of the home and the children. In other cases, laws are enacted and campaigns organised on gender equality at home, persistent norms may delay change.

Thus, Brickell stresses that these 'discursive domains of domestic inequality' need to be taken into serious consideration and be addressed by development programmes, otherwise gender intra-household inequality will remain intact. In addition, she calls for more academic research on men's viewpoints on housework as well as on women's motivation to accept inequality and preserve male privilege and their implications for change. While men may accept such change in principle, their actions sustain their privileged position, and women may conform to gendered norms and use housework as a negotiating strategy.

Focusing on the country case, Cambodia is currently experiencing dramatic transformations from a socialist to a market economy with increased female participation: women are regarded as 'invaluable assets' driving national economic development. Although they have significantly increased their labour force participation, though, they continue to be largely responsible for housework; they spend more than double the time men do in domestic and care responsibilities in line with the traditional division of domestic labour of the country's golden age, which was disrupted by the Khmer Rouge regime.

Research took place between 2004 and 2005 and included oral histories, discussion groups and semi-structured interviews of an equal number of men and women of different ages and backgrounds living in two communes in Siem Reap, one at the centre of the regional tourist hotspot and the other a rice farming community. Brickell accepts that both men and women are active agents of their lives and constantly make and remake the discourses they use to justify their position within the household and to identify multiple ways of being a man or a woman, more or less acceptable in comparison with a dominant normative model.

Analysing the men's discourses (including traditional proverbs and stories), she identifies three inter-linked culture-related themes justifying their non-involvement in housework: women as keepers of domestic order and national pride with their virtue and domestic skills; housework as a labour form associated with the moral system of reciprocity and the complementary but not interchangeable nature of male and female roles; and housework as a practice that embodies tradition and respect that both genders must adhere to – that is, men's non-participation in housework is deemed respectful to the Khmer tradition according to which women are those responsible for social reproduction. As expected, older men emphasise more notions of obedience and respect to traditional norms and fixed gender roles. Equal sharing of housework is in conflict with tradition and thus something to be resisted by men, who are actually doing their duty to uphold the custom. Adherence to custom, which for men means not helping, is seen as crucial for a stable marriage, wherein the husband provides the money and the woman takes care of the house and family.

In the case of women's narratives, two other – more pragmatic – themes emerged on the reasons women sustain male privilege: faced with 'a coercive situation of paternal irresponsibility', they do not have any other alternative but to accept their double burden, although they do not consider it legitimate; and housework neglect may result in their abandonment, separation or divorce in line with cultural factors, as women are those to be blamed for marital breakdown, and demographic factors, including a relative shortage of men, particularly in the 35-54 age group.

Brickell also investigates any deviation in terms of cases of men participating in housework. Indeed, two different types of such cases appear: men who are unemployed and choose to help their wife as a tactical movement as they still view housework as women's work; and those with more positive motivations, adapting to benefit their household.

Some development actors have started paying attention. For example, in a 2009 press release of a programme on female entrepreneurship and equality, the International Labour Organization promoted the positive example of a village leader who participated in housework so his wife could conduct her business unconstrained. Meanwhile, the Cambodian Men's Network has organised campaigns promoting housework as a key element of gender equality. One poster presented a couple in traditional clothes with the husband washing the dishes and the wife helping their son in his lessons: although cultural values are kept, changes in the domestic division of labour must take place. In another poster, a father holds his baby, linking paternity to household responsibilities.

Brickell supports the need for national action to tackle traditional cultural values that legitimise male non-participation and to promote a more nuanced construct of the Khmer identity; she also recommends organising workshops for young men on the benefits of active household involvement along with information campaigns. However, she criticises development agencies involved in gender analysis and policymaking for not seriously addressing such discourses, even though they impair the outcome of development work. Agencies appear to focus on providing access to financial and economic resources or investing in infrastructure to reduce women and girls' time burden, even though the traditional unequal division of labour is a key problem of gender inequality directly linked to women's paid work, as some agencies clearly acknowledge. Thus, agencies appear to prioritise technical interventions while they are particularly reluctant to intervene in the domestic sphere and its intimacies. Hence, Brickell proposes a 'domestication' of the development agenda in order to overcome the private/public dichotomy and understand and address persistent domestic discourses and practices on the grounds that the private sphere is a matter of public concern and policy.



**Budlender, D. 2015. *WIEGO Child Care Initiative: Institutional Mapping of Child Care Actors*, Cambridge, MA: Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing.**

This paper is part of the new Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) Child Care Initiative (CCI). This aims to highlight the significance of childcare for poor women's ability to engage in income-generating activities and improve their economic situation. It also explores the feasibility of a global campaign to integrate childcare as a core component of social protection, particularly for informal women workers, given that women are more likely to be in informal employment compared with men, while they also have to bear a disproportionate care burden. Based on a review of existing literature and relevant websites, Budlender identifies the key actors in childcare policy and programming and explores their positions on childcare and informal employment. She concludes there is very little literature on childcare provision for women informal workers, with the International Labour Organization the agency that has done most work on the topic. Despite the recent emergence of unpaid care work as a development issue, there are no initiatives directly focusing on childcare for informal workers.

Budlender notes that much of the literature frames childcare in terms of multi-sectoral early childhood development (ECD), early childhood care and development (ECCD) or early childhood care and education (ECCE), and covers children from conception until the age of eight. These terms are rather wide although they are often used more narrowly to refer to provision of care services for young children of preschool age, of after-care for children in school and parenting education to improve parental caring capacities, which are all related to this paper's focus.

Understanding of ECD has changed over time as children's rights have been established; brain development processes have been better understood; economists such as Nobel Laureate J. Heckman have stressed the relationship between ECD provision and economic growth; international organisations such as the World Bank and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) have started investing in and supporting ECD activities; and governments have committed to improving care and education for young and vulnerable children. However, Budlender comments on the instrumentalist use of ECD and the emphasis on brain development; she argues that the latter may emphasise the importance of education but neglect care, and focus on the later preschool years while neglecting the early years, when care is most intensive and more expensive – and it is then that women most need support if they want to work. Moreover, an emphasis on brain development and the need to stimulate children is linked to provision of parenting education, especially for poor parents, who are perceived to lack knowledge and skills – yet such education imposes further time demands on women, in terms of attending such education and occupying themselves in child stimulation.

Budlender explores the role of international actors, official development agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), donors and childcare support and advocacy agencies in ECD policy and programming. Among the key international actors are the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), European Union (EU), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), ILO, UNICEF, UN Women, World Bank and World Health Organization (WHO).

The 2009 CSW chose care and the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men as its annual theme, and its Agreed Conclusions, having the authority of soft law, called for the design, implementation and promotion of family-friendly policies and services; the provision of social protection measures such as health insurance and family allowances for all workers, including those in the informal sector; and the development of insurance schemes that recognise leave periods for caregiving. As background to the CSW, the Economic Commission for Europe commissioned a report (Addati and Cassirer, 2008). This noted that many women in the developing world are in informal and

vulnerable employment because of their family responsibilities. Increased rates of migration and urbanisation as well as changing family forms and the need to seek work mean they cannot rely on non-working kin for childcare, and their low earnings and poor social protection do not allow them to pay for such services; low government investment in these ages and lack of public services result in increased exposure to hazards for both working mothers and their young children, as they often take them to work or leave them with their older daughters at the expense of their education.

While the report identifies several good practices, these cannot be applied to informal workers; yet Budlender points out the case of the Brazilian Constitution guaranteeing preschool care for all children under six. In the case of the EU, childcare is recognised as a key obstacle to achieving full employment, with reference to women's labour force participation; accordingly, EU governments agreed on certain targets for childcare in 2002, which only a few states have met. The EU also emphasises the need for equal sharing of responsibilities and provides for adequate care services, parental leave and flexible working hours. The OECD appears to have 'an instrumentalist economic-focused approach to childcare' as a tool to increase labour force participation and growth, especially as women's increased participation in paid employment has limited their time for childcare.

ILO's attention is also in relation to women's employment but focuses as well on work-life balance. Although work-life balance discussions and evidence focus largely on formal workers, ILO publications do present the particular challenges informal workers face, including childcare. In recent years, ILO has been working on the issue of domestic workers in terms of not only the childcare they perform but also the care needs of their own children. For example, a report on workplace solutions for childcare (Hein and Cassirer, 2010) includes a few good practices for informal workers, such as early childhood services for Thai industrial employees that also benefit low-income street vendors at hours suitable for working parents with some government, community and NGO support; and a Kenyan export-oriented company that established a childcare centre for plantation employees with funding from a German development bank.

Most importantly, the agency has formulated a number of relevant conventions and recommendations to be ratified and bind countries. Regarding Convention 156 on workers with family responsibilities, which promotes community-based childcare services, Addati and Cassirer (2008) remark that traditional views in many developing countries would oppose the notion that government has a role to play in childcare, while prioritising the role of the family. Convention 183 on maternity protection was another significant development, yet it is of only limited benefit in terms of the childcare needs of informal workers, and its emphasis on maternal benefits covered from social insurance or public funding in practice does not apply to informal workers. Likewise, work-life balance measures promoted by the ILO Decent Work agenda, such as maternity, paternity and parental leave, are entitlements only for formal employees. In the case of the Social Protection Floor Initiative led by ILO, Budlender remarks on its inclusion of maternity care and income security along with basic income security for children and access to nutrition, education, care and other services; as such it offers an opening to make a claim to childcare.

She also cites a report on the ILO discussion on work-life balance in its 312th session in 2011, which points out that the increased interest in work-life balance emerged from the increase in women's labour force participation, the expansion of non-standard work, the ageing of the population and changes in family patterns, including the increase in single parenting. This report also recognises that the global financial and economic crisis and related cuts to social services exacerbated the impact of these developments. It notes that the UN found leave policies and infrastructure for childcare necessary for achieving the Millennium Development Goals of poverty reduction, gender equality, child mortality, maternal health and HIV and AIDS, which contradicts the assumption that work-life

balance measures are irrelevant for developing countries and those in the informal economy. The report claims that lack of adequate childcare support results in coping strategies that include lower fertility, reliance on domestic workers and older children, children left without care or parents forced to take children to the workplace. Yet these strategies reduce school attendance and increase child labour as well as antisocial youth behaviour. As good practices, it mentions the 2008 India's Unorganised Workers (Social Security) Act, which entitles informal workers to maternity benefits, and the EU 2010 Directive, which requires Member States ensure that self-employed and unpaid family women workers receive maternity benefits for at least 14 weeks. It also emphasises that affordable and reliable childcare services are among the most cost-effective measures to promote social protection for vulnerable groups.

Early development policies and services is a key interest areas for UNICEF, which emphasises the benefits for children and the need for state action. The Convention on the Rights of the Child in its Article 18 acknowledges state responsibility to support working parents and to provide childcare services and facilities. A report on the evolution of UNICEF's interest in ECCE notes the lack of an explicit gender equality concern in such policies. However, the agency increasingly recognises that good quality ECCE benefits mothers and caregivers, as it frees up their time for work and education. More recently, UNICEF acknowledged women's disproportionate responsibility for children and its impact on their income-generating opportunities, their increased participation in vulnerable employment and cases of child neglect. Budlender comments that the agency appears to use an instrumentalist approach, with childcare necessary for family welfare and economic growth.

In the case of UN Women, although one would expect its support for childcare in relation to its women's economic empowerment goal, Budlender notes that 'the agency does not seem to have taken an explicit position'; yet a potential future change is likely as its newly established research unit was planning to explore the issue (Budlender wrote these lines a couple of months before the publication of the 2015 flagship report that did focus on the importance of care, including childcare, for women's rights and gender equality).

The World Bank has also been an important ECD actor, initially focusing on brain development and economic growth, more recently acknowledging the relation between childcare and women's economic empowerment, as is evident in its 2012 World Development Report. However, a study of 36 employment-related Bank-supported projects in Sub-Saharan African countries (Bibler and Zuckerman, 2013) did not find any care-related provisions in any of them. Finally, WHO does not appear to have an explicit interest in ECD, although it recognises its importance – in its broader sense – for child wellbeing.

While official development issues have largely neglected the issue of care, NGOs and donors have supported ECD activities – some with an explicit and strong focus (e.g. the Bernard van Leer Foundation), others as part of a broader focus on education, or the needs of vulnerable and disabled children or children affected by the HIV and AIDS epidemic. More recently, some donors have begun supporting initiatives looking at care and women's rights (e.g. Oxfam). A number of childcare support and advocacy organisations also promote ECD activities in various settings, including for vulnerable groups in European countries.

Finally, in recent years, care has emerged as a research topic attracting much energy and resources. The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation is at the forefront of these efforts with the Growth and Economic Opportunities for Women (GrOW) programme on women's economic empowerment, gender equality and growth in low-income countries, in collaboration with the International Development Research Centre and the UK Department for International Development. The Hewlett

Foundation and IDRC are also involved in the Counting Women's Work Project implemented by the Development Policy Research Unit at the University of Cape Town. Another care research initiative is based at the Institute of Development Studies, with the involvement of NGOs, such as BRAC and ActionAid, and development partners in several developing countries.

**Debusscher, P. and Ansoms, A. 2013. 'Gender Equality Policies in Rwanda: Public Relations or Real Transformation?' *Development and Change* 44(5): 1111-1134.**

Using qualitative research, this article explores Rwanda's gender equality policies and evaluates their transformative potential. Despite political commitment to gender equality and some positive effects, these policies ultimately fail to be inclusive and to challenge deeply rooted social norms and practices within which gender inequalities are embedded. Although care is not the main focus of this article, it nonetheless provides useful insights into the instrumental use of gender equality policies, the integration of care into these policies and the transformative potential of gender equality policies that pay inadequate or no attention to the disproportionate care burden of women.

Rwanda has attracted a great deal of interest for its significant development achievements, including those related to gender equality and particularly women's increased political participation and improved maternal health. Gender equality became a political issue in the country during the post-genocide era, driven by three key factors: (i) the conflict and violence changed gender roles and forced women to assume male responsibilities and to increase their participation into public life; (ii) in the immediate post-war period, the women's movement grew significantly and played a very active role in advocating and supporting gender equality laws and policies, such as the 1999 Inheritance Law and the 2004 Land Policy; and (iii) the ruling Rwandan Patriotic Front (RFP) committed to promoting women's empowerment.

Thus, in the past 20 years, significant achievements have taken place. Women's participation in governance structures is particularly visible, and several national mechanisms have been put in place to promote gender equality. An often-cited development is the introduction of a quota reserving at least 30% of parliamentary seats for women, yet in the 2008 parliamentary elections women ended up occupying 56.3% of posts in the lower house, making Rwanda the first country globally with a female majority in a national legislative chamber. The RFP created the Ministry of Gender, Family and Social Affairs, which later became the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF), promoting gender equality and not just women's issues; the ministry also created Women's Councils – consultative bodies to promote women's interests at all levels. Recently, MIGEPROF was placed within the Prime Minister's Office, signalling that gender equality is high on the political agenda.

Moreover, the integration of gender into national policy is a fundamental constitutional principle, and gender equality is regarded as critical to national socioeconomic development and an integral part of the ambitious government development policy. The government has adopted a specific gender policy and three-year strategic implementation plans with detailed performance indicators and clear ministry responsibilities, with, for example, the Ministry of Economic Planning and Finance adopting a gender budgeting programme. A Gender Monitoring Office has been established to monitor gender indicators and conduct gender auditing in the public, private and charity sectors.

However, the authors are sceptical about the transformative potential of these undeniably positive developments led by an authoritarian state in a top-down approach. Transformative potential refers to policy capacity to challenge deep-rooted social norms and practices within which gender inequalities are embedded and thus to promote genuine gender equality with the involvement of less

powerful civil society groups and marginalised voices. The authors distinguish between a transformative approach to gender equality, within which the latter is an end in itself, and an integrationist approach that addresses gender issues within existing development policy paradigms and promotes gender equality as a means to achieve other policy goals.

Using in-depth interviews with 33 stakeholders, including government officials and representatives of civil society and the donor community working on gender equality in the country, a review of official and unofficial relevant documents and extensive rural field experience, the authors analyse and identify five trends that threaten a transformative Rwandan gender equality policy.

The first is the dominance of an underlying economic rationale: although gender equality is a crosscutting theme in national development strategies, it seems its integration is instrumental to the broader national objective of economic development and social modernisation. The Ministry of Finance and Economy Planning clearly states that gender equality facilitates economic growth and fast-tracks poverty reduction. Several gender equality programmes are directly linked to economic growth objectives. And when gender equality issues compete with national development objectives, priority is given to the latter: the government's strategy to formalise the informal sector has negatively affected local livelihoods and widened social divisions. This has harmed women in particular, as it is largely they who are involved in low-paid informal and care work. Even women in formal employment were affected, when paid maternity leave for those in the formal private sector was cut from 12 to six weeks to reduce costs and attract foreign investment.

Moreover, in the second trend, government policies fail to consider some 'invisible' occupations of particular importance for women: subsistence agriculture and care. As part of the national development strategy 'Vision 2020', the emphasis on high-value and market-oriented agriculture has ignored and harmed smallholder interests. Women account for the majority of those in subsistence production, whereas men are responsible for cash crops. Women are also overrepresented in paid domestic and care work. Yet their work remains invisible to the government, whose policies do not question the unequal division of care, or value care at all; rather, it is excluded from the definition of work in the national accounts. The government also relies heavily on civil society to deliver broader care services (e.g. shelters, community-based care), usually with the involvement of volunteers. Care work has a distinctive class dimension: many middle- and upper-class households use young and uneducated girls (or boys) for housework without providing a contract and offering a very low salary and poor working conditions. Interestingly, the authors note most gender activists in government and civil society interviewed were not critical of this system and were even using it – though some did criticise it. However, government neglect and silence ends up legitimising the unequal division of labour between men and women, devalues care work and its significance for development and human wellbeing and deepens inequality through the intersection of gender with class differences.

Two other trends include the formalistic implementation of gender policies and their focus on quantitative results. Interviews with stakeholders revealed that, despite the establishment of gender equality structures, lack of resources hindered their operation. MIGEPROF has 30 staff members, 26 of them focused on children's rights and family policy. Of the remaining four responsible for gender issues, the UN pays two. In other ministries, structures put in place exist only in name, while Women's Councils' representatives are unpaid volunteers. At the same time, the government seems to have narrowed gender progress down to generating gender statistics. One of the reasons for this is that Rwanda depends heavily on donor funding for its government budget and donors encourage target-oriented policies that are measured quantitatively.

Within an authoritarian state aiming to manage and control all other actors and prioritising top-down approaches, civil society has only limited space to influence policy. It also struggles with funding. Closely linked to this is the final trend: limited space for grassroots organisations to participate in gender policy formulation. This reduces policy effectiveness, given that decisions are taken by urban elites who ignore the realities facing the majority of women. Several activists even criticised parliamentary women for not being close to the population.

Thus the authors conclude that these five trends limit the transformative potential of Rwandan gender equality policies. This particular example shows that, even where there is a strong political will and target-driven policies that provide opportunities to promote gender equality, their transformative potential is seriously hampered if they fail to challenge traditional social norms and practices, including care work, within which gender inequalities are embedded and to be inclusive of all women's voices and not only of the powerful urban elite.

**Htun, M. and Weldon, S.L. 2010. 'When Do Governments Promote Women's Rights? A Framework for the Comparative Analysis of Sex Equality Policy', *Perspectives in Politics* 8(1): 207-216.**

Placed within the gender and politics scholarship, this paper presents a framework to analyse and understand cross-national variation in struggles over women's legal rights and sex equality policies. Conceptualised as a narrower category of gender equality policy, sex equality policy aims to tackle male privilege and bring equality between men and women without considering issues of sexuality as gender equality policy does.

Htun and Weldon stress that existing theories in the field of comparative politics, mostly based on the experiences of developed countries and advanced democracies, can be rather misleading and fail to provide a solid understanding of gender-related policy change in other countries. Traditional typologies emphasising the role of democratisation, cultural change or modernisation may lead to inadequate explanations and unresolved puzzles. For example, sex equality policies have been adopted even when women's movements are weak, dictatorships have supported progressive family law reforms and women activists have mobilised against reproductive rights or parental leave. The authors' proposed framework is built on two key claims: sex equality policy involves many different issues and each issue involves different actors and conflicts (issue distinctiveness); and different actors (advocates and opponents) have different powers and effects in different contexts (agent-context interaction).

Regarding their first claim, Htun and Weldon distinguish between four different types of sex equality policies organised in two different dimensions: those that improve women's status as a group and those that tackle gender-based class inequalities; and those that challenge the doctrine and authority of organised religion and codified traditions of major cultural groups and those that do not. Gender status policies aiming to tackle practices that harm women as women include family law, violence against women law, abortion and women's reproductive rights and gender quotas. Class-based policies addressing inequalities among women include maternity and paid parental leave, childcare funding and funding for contraception or abortion. Moreover, some sex equality issues, such as those related to kinship relations, reproduction and sexuality, challenge the established control of traditional, religious or cultural authorities and can trigger conflict with the state. On the other hand, non-doctrinal issues tend to include gender quotas, violence against women, childcare provisions or equality at work – yet in some cases they can also provoke religious or cultural opposition. For example, religious law in Saudi Arabia designates sex-appropriate fields of work. Thus an issue can be

doctrinal and trigger conflict in one national context but not in another depending on the dominant religion, tradition or culture.

Each type of issue involves a specific set of actors and activates particular conflicts with distinctive implications. The majority of studies have so far failed to differentiate and analyse how and why different sex equality issues involve distinct actors and processes of policy change as well as the importance of the interaction of gender with other group identities, be they class, religion, ethnicity or race. Htun and Weldon’s proposed typology of sex equality policies that can be used to identify the sets of actors involved and their varying importance appears as follows:

		Do these policies challenge religious doctrine or codified cultural traditions?	
		Yes “Doctrinal” policies	No “Non-doctrinal” policies
Do these policies empower women as a status group or address class inequalities?	Gender-status policies	Abortion legality Contraception legality Family Law	Gender quotas in politics Violence against women Constitutional equality
	Class-based policies	Abortion funding Contraception funding	Parental leave Federal funds for child care Workplace equality

The value of this framework is that provides a better understanding of why a sex equality policy can be embraced and another rejected in the same country.

Apart from the particular issue that determines the actors involved in policy change, we also need to consider contextual factors, as these shape the priorities, strategies and effectiveness of such actors. The authors identify four key factors: state capacity, institutional legacies, international vulnerabilities and degree of democracy. State capacity refers to the effectiveness of national political institutions and their ability to enforce the law and materialise political commitment; it also includes fiscal resources (e.g. gross domestic product per capita is particularly important when the issue involved is parental leave and childcare, much more than is the case for the legality of abortion). Htun and Weldon use the example of parental leave or subsidised childcare: in states with weak capacity, women’s groups are unlikely to push for parental leave or childcare as they are well aware these policies are financially costly and their enforcement difficult. In such contexts, women’s movements prefer to push for policies with fewer costs, less challenging implementation or more symbolical significance, such as gender quotas or constitutional reform. Irrespective of how great the need is for a policy, poor state ability to meet it means little pressure appears. A concrete example is from China, where women’s groups do not press for childcare and parental leave policies because they see the state is not capable of implementing these measures. Market reforms in China have harmed workers’ rights contrary to the socialist ideals of the past, and the state has been unable to adequately enforce such rights in the private sector, which is nonetheless booming. It is thus not a coincidence that elite women’s groups push for issues more readily tackled through legal reforms, such as non-discrimination in hiring or sexual harassment, than the financially demanding paid maternity leave.

Institutional legacies refer to the previous political conflicts that affect and shape contemporary ones. For example, in some countries, such conflicts have been resolved by guaranteeing political representation to minority groups; such a group-based approach may prompt feminists to equate their gender status to that of a marginalised group when pushing for change. In other countries with a universalistic approach to conflict resolution, the state may be more sympathetic to claims about gender class-based inequalities or universal interests.

Vulnerability to international pressure is a relatively new development linked to the booming of international advocacy networks, global agreements on women's rights (such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women or the Beijing Platform for Action) and the sharing of ideas and resources at global level. International pressure is greater on gender status policies than on class issues. And poor countries, autocracies and emerging democracies that seek financial resources and legitimacy are far more vulnerable to such pressure.

Finally, degree of democracy is another important contextual factor, as the more democratic a country is, the more developed its civil society and women's movements are. On the other hand, more democracy may also strengthen religious institutions that oppose policy change. Yet, even in less democratic countries or within conservative governments, elite women and other progressive reformers may be able to access power and advance gender issues.

**Htun, M. and Weldon, S.L. 2014. 'Progressive Policy Changes on Women's Economic and Social Rights', Background Paper for UN Women Progress of the World's Women, New York: UN Women.**

Building on their previous work and the proposed typology of gender equality policies, Htun and Weldon prepared this paper focusing on women's economic equality and relevant state action for the latest UN Women flagship report. Using quantitative and qualitative data from 70 countries across the world, they choose to explore three policy areas – laws on women's legal status and conditions at work, laws on maternity and parental leave and laws on childcare provision – with the aim of identifying cross-national variation and trends over a period of 30 years and exploring the factors prompting some governments to do more to promote sex equality in these areas. Their analysis reveals that women's movements play a key role in pushing for women's legal rights and childcare policies.

In line with the key theme of the UN Women report, Htun and Weldon focus on women's economic and social rights and relevant state action to advance women's economic equality, defined as a situation in which women are not disadvantaged in their efforts to make a living and support a family. They note that the iconic nuclear family should no longer be considered the norm, as in many countries both mothers and fathers must work to make a living, while in the Global South women head at least a third of households. The reality of diverse family forms thus makes out-dated a uniform family model that most likely undermines women's rights. The authors' focus on three policy areas as indicators of state action to promote women's economic equality enables them to explore cross-national variations and trends and analyse the causal factors involved. They explicitly state that their focus is on the adoption of national laws and policies in these three areas, and not their implementation, as such cross-national data are currently unavailable. Adoption of national laws is a significant step for sex equality, as it ends discrimination, signals government priorities and provides incentives for the mobilisation of social movements. Laws can be a powerful force for social change and need to be adopted for policies to be implemented. Laws also indicate government understanding of the issues involved, which is necessary for those working on women's rights.

Table 1. Overview of National Policy Areas Analyzed in this Paper

Issue	Areas	Indicators
Women's legal status at work	State-sponsored discrimination	Sex-based prohibitions on employment and certain occupations
	Formal equality	Equal opportunity and anti-discrimination laws
	Substantive equality	Affirmative action/positive discrimination, attention to informal sector and non-traditional occupations, enforcement mechanisms.
Parental Leave	Maternity leave	Duration of leave, source of pay (if any), reimbursement rate
	Parental leave	Duration of leave, source of pay (if any), reimbursement rate
	Paternity and daddy leave	Whether government mandates leaves for fathers; whether the government upholds non-transferable leave for the second parent (daddy leave)
Child care	National child care policy	Government provision of child care, employer mandates
	Funding for child care	Cash transfers, subsidies, tax credits
	Access to child care	Eligibility, waiting lists, locations

Data used were collected between 2006 and 2010 by a team that reviewed national laws and policies, as well as secondary literature such as studies and databases by women's rights organisations and intergovernmental agencies, and carried out fieldwork in many regions including Africa, Latin America and Asia. Thus, data from 70 countries at four different points in time (1975, 1985, 1995 and 2005) were analysed. These countries represent around 85% of the global population and were chosen to ensure variation and regional representation. In each policy area, successful country cases are first presented and patterns identified; this is followed by statistical analysis of a range of countries to confirm these patterns and explain policy variation across countries. This examines five key variables: autonomous feminist movement, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ratification, women's policy machinery, female labour force participation and women's presence in parliament.

Using their typology, Htun and Weldon classify laws and policies tackling discrimination and unequal treatment at work as a gender status policy, whereas paid maternity and parental leave and government-funded childcare are class policies. The other dimension of their typology is less applicable here since most policies on women's economic equality are non-doctrinal – that is, they do not provoke conflict between the state and other organisations over their jurisdictional authority. Feminist movements, and to a smaller degree women politicians in parliament, drive gender status policies such as women's legal status at work. On the other hand, class policies tend to involve state intervention in the market and are actively supported by left parties and unions, while they can trigger market and business opposition; economic factors, such as national wealth and fiscal constraints, are also considered important in class policy change and welfare expansion. The authors constantly stress the need to make policy distinctions and produce a more refined analysis.

Policies promoting women's legal status at work include three types: those eliminating state discrimination against women (e.g. prohibitions on women in certain types of jobs), achieving formal

legal equality (e.g. equal opportunities laws) and promoting substantive legal equality – that is, proactively tackling gender problems and barriers to equality. Cross-national analysis of data shows national laws and policies entrenching sex discrimination have declined in number over recent decades, whereas the number of those advancing sex equality, especially formal equality, has increased dramatically. Regional trends vary, with formal discrimination declining in Latin America but increasing over the same period in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), where formal and substantive equality policies have grown more slowly. Evidence from many European and Latin American countries shows that policy change towards substantive equality appears to be driven by women’s organisations and activism and to be influenced by international norms and conventions. Statistical analysis that follows confirms that presence of autonomous women’s movements is significantly associated with greater sex equality in women’s legal status at work; CEDAW ratification also appears important. The significance of women’s presence in parliament is smaller, and international treaties or regional influences appear to have a weak association. Among control variables, gross domestic product (GDP) is strongly associated with greater sex equality and religious institutions with less.

The second area – maternity and parental leave – is crucial for women’s economic equality. While maternity leave is medically necessary for childbirth, parental leave is defined as gender-neutral leave provided for taking care of a child, which may be taken by anyone, including the father. Paternity leave is a gender-specific leave for fathers to enable them to be present at the time of a child’s birth. A small group of national governments (Iceland, Italy, Norway, Sweden) provide ‘daddy leave’, which is non-transferable parental leave to encourage fathers to get more involved in childcare, as take-up rates among men of parental leave tend to be very low. Leave policies vary in four key aspects: length of leave; conditions for leave eligibility; whether it is paid in recognition of lost wages; and amount of money provided for paid leave. Public funding signals acceptance of childbirth as a public good and of childcare work as a collective responsibility.

Data show regional variations: MENA countries offer maternity leave often in the form of employer mandates, and breastfeeding emerges as an important issue in relevant discussions. In Sub-Saharan Africa, paid maternity leave is provided through a mix of employer mandates, public financing and cost-splitting between the two. Apart from MENA and Sub-Saharan Africa, employer mandates were also most likely in South Asia in 2012. In wealthier European countries, maternal salaries are paid from social insurance funds. Statistical analysis of data from the chosen 70 countries shows an increase in the number of countries offering maternity leave, paid maternity leave and leave for fathers; an increase in the length of maternity leave; a dramatic expansion in parental leave in Europe and some parts of Asia; and a slow increase towards greater public funding. Public funding and generous benefits are correlated with GDP per capita, while employer mandates are generally more common in poorer countries. However, there are significant exceptions, including the oil-rich Gulf States and the US, where publicly paid leave exists in only a few states. While economic development may be an enabling factor, left mobilisation and political parties are crucial. Moreover, maternity, paternity and parental leave are often seen as a pro-family, pro-child policy rather than a women’s rights issue; some religious organisations also support leave as a pro-family policy. Concerns for child wellbeing have also influenced leave debates, as has a concern for declining fertility rates, particularly in European and East Asian countries, which has prompted governments to adopt a range of relevant policies. Social policies in the Global South aim to lower birth rates.

Evidence from advanced democracies indicates that, where social support systems are in place and men take greater responsibility for childcare, fertility rates are higher; women politicians appear to

help drive the expansion of maternity leave, while international laws support relevant provisions.<sup>9</sup> Statistical analysis of data from 70 countries examining the five key factors involved in policy change finds that maternity leave generosity (in terms of duration and duration of publicly paid benefits) ‘appears to be the only gender equality policy outcome where there is no specification of feminist movements that has a robust, significant association’. Indeed, the literature shows that maternity leave predates women’s movements in some cases, and it has been linked to pro-family debates. Women in government are positively related to maternity leave generosity, with a weak statistical significance. Left parties also appear to have a positive, albeit statistically weak, correlation. Being a signatory to relevant international norms such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is also positively associated. The statistical analysis also identifies a positive association with a communist legacy, and religious organisations. These findings hold true even when overall leave generosity (including parental leave), and not just maternity leave, is calculated.

Another crucial area for women’s economic equality is access to affordable and quality childcare. In many countries, family members continue to be primarily responsible for the children of working mothers. In others, state day-care centres operate, or the government provides economic support or requires private employers to offer such services. In some cases, the government collaborates with international organisations to provide childcare services. Government funding varies from direct cash transfers to subsidies or tax credits. While many countries offer care for children aged three and above, they lack services for infants and toddlers. Government provision of childcare signals that children are a public responsibility and not a private or exclusively maternal one. In the Global South, many countries have laws that require companies with a minimum number of women workers to provide on-site childcare centres. An International Labour Organization study of 167 countries in 2010 found around one-third of them had laws requiring employers to provide facilities for breastfeeding. In their analysis, Htun and Weldon find that access to day-care centres, government-run or subsidised, expanded dramatically between 1975 and 2005, yet most countries still lacked accessible childcare by 2005. On the other hand, there are considerable regional variations. Access decreased or remained roughly the same in Eastern Europe, and remained unchanged in every region except Western Europe and Asia. While cash transfers to families were popular in Western Europe in the 1970s and 1980s, tax credits are now preferred. Employer mandates are common in developing countries and especially in MENA and Asia. The countries with no childcare policy at all by 2005 were most likely to be in Eastern Europe and Africa.

The literature on the politics of childcare policy outside the developed world is limited, yet it identifies women’s movements as a driver of change in Latin America. Another part of the literature stresses the role of labour movements, unions and left parties. The authors state that their examination of the evidence suggests both actors, feminist and labour movements, often drive relevant policies in democratic states. National wealth again appears to be important. Statistical analysis of the key five factors confirms that women’s movements have a strong positive association with national childcare policy. Left parties also have a statistically important, albeit weak, association. On the contrary, women in government and international treaties have little effect.

Htun and Weldon thus conclude that women’s organising along with international intergovernmental authorities have played an important role in advancing women’s legal status and rights at work, although this has been more effective in some areas than in others; left parties also appear to be influential on some issues, yet not always, given that the analysis included developing countries with

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<sup>9</sup> The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted in 1966, includes the right to work and to just and favourable conditions of work, the right to unionise, the right to social insurance and mothers’ right to social protection before and after childbirth, including paid leave (yet it does not mention fathers or paternity/parental leave).

different power realities. The authors stress that a more refined approach and a greater understanding of the reasons behind cross-national variation and policy change can help identify strategies for the future. They also provide three country cases: the example of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in India as the outcome of the domestic mobilisation of workers, anti-poverty activists and women groups, and growing pressure from the international community; the adoption of gender equality policies by the Polish government and the empowerment of women's organisations in the country; and progressive policy development for domestic workers in Latin American countries.

**IDWN (International Domestic Workers' Network), ITUC (International Trade Union Confederation) and HRW (Human Rights Watch). 2013. 'Claiming Rights: Domestic Workers' Movements and Global Advances for Labor Reform', New York: IDWN, ITUC and HRW.**

Prepared by three key organisations promoting domestic workers' rights, this report presents the key advances within the first two years of implementation of International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 189 (C189), including labour law reforms and the growing strength of the domestic workers' movement, as well as the remaining challenges.

In 2011, the ILO's Domestic Workers Convention and its accompanying Recommendation established the first international standards for the working conditions of millions of domestic workers, mostly women and girls, many of whom are migrants and who are typically excluded from standard labour regulation. Many governments consider domestic work an informal economy activity, and as such domestic workers are excluded from legal labour rights or social insurance. Often, they are at the mercy of their employer and are forced to work long hours under difficult conditions and discriminatory social norms: for example, ILO mentions that, in Saudi Arabia, domestic work was the sector with the highest average working hours in 2009, at 63.7 per week. Child domestic workers are particularly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, with some employers preferring children as they are easier to control and paid less. In Indonesia, child domestic workers interviewed by Human Rights Watch said they earned \$0.02-0.05 per hour, that is, one-tenth of the normal minimum wage in the country.

Thus, the Convention has been hailed as a ground-breaking treaty for human rights, including labour, women's and children's rights. It established domestic workers' entitlement to the same basic rights as any other worker, such as the rights to minimum wage coverage, social insurance, overtime pay and weekly days off and the right to organise. Governments that ratify the Convention must protect domestic workers from exploitation and abuse, regulate employment agencies that recruit or employ them and prevent child labour in domestic work. Between 2011 and 2013, 10 countries officially ratified C189<sup>10</sup> and four more were completing the formal processes; a few others pledged their intent to ratify it. So far, the Philippines is the only Asian country to have ratified it, even though 41% of the global domestic workforce are employed in Asia. No Middle East and North African (MENA) country has ratified it. The Convention has also helped the international domestic workers' movement expand and foster coalitions with trade unions.

The report speaks of the importance of the growing global domestic workers' movement as 'the driving force' behind tripartite negotiation (governments, employers and workers' representatives) and the adoption of the Convention. The movement consists of domestic workers' organisations,

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<sup>10</sup> The latest information from ILO shows 22 countries have ratified the Convention (12 are in Latin America and the Caribbean, seven in Europe, two in Africa (Mauritius and South Africa) and one in Asia (the Philippines)).

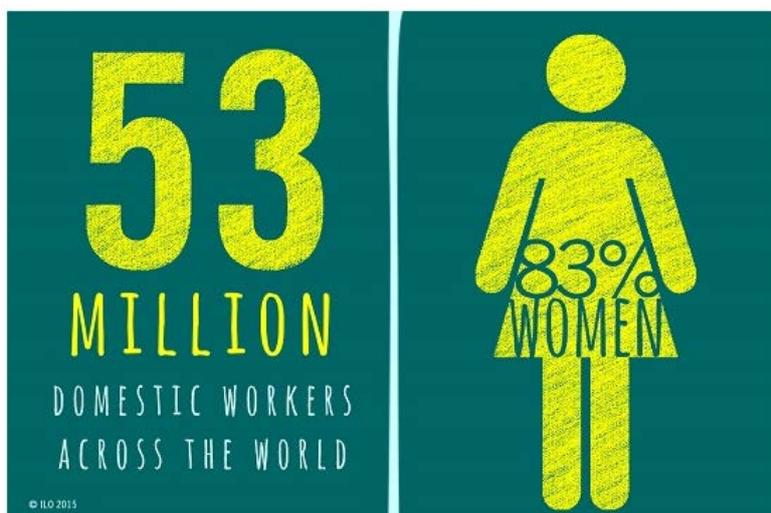
trade unions and civil society groups, including groups working on migrants', human and children's rights. Domestic workers' organisations include grassroots, local, national and regional groups, which have been actively campaigning to raise awareness of their rights, to strengthen efforts to organise, to lobby for national reforms and to expand services. Among global and regional networks, the report mentions the International Domestic Workers' Network (IDWN), a global network of domestic workers' organisations and trade unions in 35 countries, which, along with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), was a key player in putting the Convention on the ILO agenda. The ITUC is a union of 315 national union centres in 156 countries. Examples of regional networks created since the adoption of the Convention include the Africa Domestic Workers' Network. Trade unions have also provided significant help placing domestic rights and the Convention high on the agenda and have also got involved in negotiations for collective bargaining agreements in several countries.

The Convention and the increasing influence of domestic workers' movements pushed domestic workers' rights high on national agendas and led to national labour law reforms. ILO has played a key role supporting these efforts also, through research, dissemination of information, training and technical guidance. In 2012, a Kenyan court ruling placed domestic workers under the protection of the labour law and provided them with a minimum wage and social security benefits. In Thailand, a ministerial regulation entitled domestic workers to a weekly day off, paid sick leave and paid overtime for work during holidays, and included specific protections for those aged between 15 and 18 years. In India, the government extended the National Health Insurance Programme (RSBY) to domestic workers, and the National Domestic Workers' Movement successfully transitioned domestic workers' associations in 11 states into trade unions and united them into one federation. In 2013, in Morocco, the government approved a draft bill ensuring a contract, a weekly day off, paid annual leave and a minimum wage. In Tanzania, the government increased the minimum wage for domestic workers by 55%. And in the Philippines the government enacted the Domestic Workers Act, requiring contracts and extending an improved minimum wage, social insurance and public health insurance to 1.9 million workers in the country, while prohibiting employment agencies and employers from charging recruitment fees.

In MENA, where the majority of domestic workers are international migrants, the movement remains relatively small, new and isolated, and the conditions continue to be difficult, with mobility restrictions, prohibitions on labour organising and exclusion of domestic workers from national labour codes; thus it is not a coincidence that ratification campaigns appear to have little capacity in the region. However, the report notes a few developments: in 2012, in the United Arab Emirates, the Federal National Council approved a draft law for domestic workers, providing sick leave, annual leave, a weekly day off and paid holidays. In 2013, six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council developed a draft contract for domestic workers in the region, although provisions fell short of the Convention standards.

The global domestic workers' movement continues to grow, expand its alliances and increase its influence, campaigning for ratification of the Convention and national labour reforms. New groups and networks are established and new members are attracted. Creative strategies are used to increase membership, given the peculiar conditions of domestic work, as many workers are isolated and invisible in the private sphere, have limited time and mobility, have poor education and lack adequate information about their rights; migrants may also lack legal status. Domestic workers' groups approach them in parks on their day off, early in the morning when they go to buy bread or in night schools where they attend classes. To empower and build their capacity, domestic workers' groups organise training and awareness-raising sessions. Often, non-governmental organisations provide support and legal assistance or advocacy initiatives. Trade unions also encourage membership by

domestic workers. It is more difficult to reach out to child domestic workers than to adults as they experience greater isolation and less autonomy. Migrant domestic workers are also hard to organise because of immigration rules, language barriers and other factors.



Some of the most successful reforms have been the outcome of broad coalitions by domestic workers' organisations, trade unions, advocacy and other groups, often with ILO support. Apart from campaigning for legislative and enforcement reforms, domestic workers' organisations also organise rallies, protests and press conferences, and use social media to raise public awareness and attract media attention. They also work to change social norms and attitudes towards domestic work; for example, in the Philippines, the term meaning 'companion in the home' was promoted to replace the common derogatory terms 'girl', 'help' or 'illiterate worker'. In Lebanon, domestic workers and their allies organise a parade for Workers Day, including a celebration of the food and culture of migrant domestic workers.

Significant challenges remain. In some countries, domestic workers are not allowed to form their own unions or join other unions. For example, Bangladesh, Thailand and the US deny them the right to form their own trade unions. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates ban trade union activity for all. In countries that have expanded labour protections to domestic workers, the greatest challenge is effective enforcement of new legislation.

**Kabeer, N., Milward, K. and Sudarshan, R. 2013. 'Organising Women Workers in the Informal Economy', *Gender and Development* 21(2): 249-263.**

This article<sup>11</sup> investigates the challenges of organising the hardest-to reach-women, including domestic workers, working in the informal economy, and the strategies enabling them to demand a fairer distribution of resources, recognition of the value of their work and representation in decisions that affect them as workers and citizens. Despite the differences in type of employment and contexts, some key similarities emerge that provide useful insights about organising women in the informal economy at grassroots level.

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<sup>11</sup> This article is an adaptation of the introductory chapter in a book titled *Organizing Women Workers in the Informal Economy: Beyond the Weapons of the Weak* (2013, London: Zed Books) edited by the authors. The book was based on the Pathways of Women's Empowerment research project.

Hard-to-reach women working in the informal economy occupy marginal and invisible spaces, and the intersection of other forms of inequality such as class, race, caste, ethnic minority and legal status maximises their disadvantage. While reaching them is a challenge, organising them and building a shared identity and interests is even more difficult. Even when they are persuaded to overcome their fear of losing their livelihoods and join a group, their diverse identities and needs make organising difficult.

In recent decades, some organisations promoting collective action among women have emerged in collaboration with mainstream trade unions. Others supporting poor women in informal employment are not part of the mainstream, but may be associated with and supported by unions, social movements and non-governmental organisations. Interestingly, the majority of these organisations originate in the efforts of workers in different informal sectors.

Gender inequality is a key reason why women workers are poorly represented within mainstream trade unions and why other forms of women's organising have appeared. Moreover, trade unions traditionally focus on formal workers in male-dominated sectors, whereas women are disproportionately represented in the informal economy. In some cases, states do not allow union membership and collective bargaining agreements for informal employment. Even when women are included in unions, there may be problems, as men may wish to defend their interests and maintain benefits associated with gender inequality when women appear to threaten them with their action.

Building a shared identity is the first key step to collective action, 'the basis of claims making'. This can be particularly difficult when women informal workers do not recognise themselves as workers and consider work a loose concept linked to family survival. They may also fail to make a clear distinction between their domestic and market activities, or between their multiple roles as workers, mothers, wives and community members, and they may downgrade the value of their work in line with dominant social perceptions. As the authors note, being 'treated as a human being with human rights is in some ways more urgent than [...] being treated as a worker with workers' rights'. This is particularly true for domestic workers: they tend to be invisible in the private sphere and in a type of work often not recognised as work but 'a natural part of female identity and destiny' and thus of low value. In contexts of poverty and inequality, women may internalise racialised norms of inequality and accept dominant notions of their jobs and destinies, making them less likely to identify themselves as workers, let alone organise. Avoiding a worker identity may also be chosen, with an emphasis on doing family caring work, which can provide some social credit, especially in contexts where women's work is morally dubious. Moreover, this type of work often offers some flexibility and occasional benefits, such as second-hand clothes from employers or other in-kind additional payments, which may be lost if women start making claims.

Hence, the creation of a worker identity sharing common interests can be a long process and involves supporting women to understand and challenge internalised norms and persuading women with diverse identities that the benefits outweigh the risks. Often, women come together for the first time to organise around practical issues that affect their daily lives, such as childcare or violence, and later begin to organise around their rights as workers. And many of the strategies organisations use aim to offer practical support to women and immediate gains in dealing with the daily challenges. Organisations also seek to address divisive identities between their members by carefully negotiating and encouraging linkages built around common practical needs.

Organisations to support women informal workers tend to prefer using 'soft power' resources to achieve their goals instead of the traditional confrontational union tactics; culture, discourse, information and communications offer up these resources. For example, domestic workers in

Karnataka, India, organised 'broom worship' rituals on the occasion of a religious celebration where tools of male work are worshipped – although, as the broom is considered unclean, their action was provocative. The majority of organisations place a particular emphasis on education, dissemination of information and awareness-raising among women members. Information is also used for advocacy and backing up claims, in some cases with help from the International Labour Organization providing help. Communications and media are also important to reach and organise isolated and dispersed workers, such as live-in domestic workers. For example, in Thailand, an organisation created a phone line and a PO Box address as points of contact as well as broadcasting a phone-in programme on local radio.

Training on legal and human rights and use of laws has also proved important for organising informal workers as it allows them to invoke the power of the state to uphold their rights as women, workers and citizens and to find some protection. As a result of the focus on rights and building up a worker and citizen identity, some organisations engage more in political and policy processes.

Local organisations can benefit from collaborating with global organisations working on women's labour rights: the former can increase their resources and information and bring national policy in line with international standards whereas the latter can increase their legitimacy for global advocacy. Yet, in reality, the situation is far more complex, even contradictory. Local movements and organisations may not have the time to get involved in global processes, or may feel such interaction is not useful but detracts from local action. The focus and aim of many organisations is local and involves working with individuals and communities to positively change their lives through context-specific strategies and discourses. However, some organisations are willing to collaborate with international organisations for the wider dissemination of issues and broader solidarity.

The authors conclude by offering three key lessons for organising women in marginalised informal employment. First is the importance of starting with a local focus and the need to address not only redistribution issues, which are the traditional aim of mainstream trade unions, but also a broader set of issues, which also include recognition and representation within specific contexts and norms. Thus, organising these women will be shaped by local realities and will entail differences in the ways these groups are formulated and evolved, their strategies and their priorities. Contrary to sectoral trade unions, organisations of women informal workers have a strong local/ geographical focus. Even when they expand, federate and acquire global presence, the local base remains important. Second, given the importance of the local context, the process of organising is much slower and building a shared identity and interests is very time-consuming. Organisations with a local focus tend to be very different from those created under pressure from external agencies, including trade unions, and evolve at their own pace and around their own agenda. Finally, strategies evolve and change as women initially come together to tackle practical issues and gradually build a shared identity, confidence and willingness to demand their legal rights and influence political processes. While collaboration with global alliances can be useful for both, caution is recommended in relation to the different realities involved and the terms and areas of interaction.

**Razavi, S. 2015. 'Care and Social Reproduction: Some Reflections on Concepts, Policies and Politics from a Development Perspective', in R. Baksh and W. Harcourt (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Transnational Feminist Movements*, Chapter 16, New York: Oxford University Press.**

Drawing on the findings of the UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) research project, The Political and Social Economy of Care, Razavi provides a comprehensive theoretical

overview of how care became a research and policy issue for development. Starting by looking at the role of feminist analysts and their efforts to make care visible and to demand relevant policy action, she then examines how care emerged and evolved as a social policy issue in line with the specific political and economic context and the priorities of governments, international organisations and women's movements.

Despite its key importance for human wellbeing and human capital formation, care work, seen as a 'natural' task unequally borne by women, was largely invisible in mainstream research and policy until it became the focus of feminist work using diverse disciplinary perspectives, including economics, philosophy, sociology and social policy. Such diverse perspectives led to different definitions of care. Moreover, attention initially focused on care and social reproduction in high-income industrialised countries, and much less on developing countries, partly because of the assumption that families play the key role in such contexts. Consequently, most of the literature on high-income countries focuses on direct face-to-face care activities, neglecting the importance of the domestic work (e.g. meal preparation) that provides the basis for direct caregiving. Yet, in developing countries, domestic work is very time-consuming, because of a lack of basic infrastructure and domestic technology, and shapes different policy priorities aiming to facilitate direct caregiving.

Among feminist analysts, the contribution of feminist economists was fundamental. The latter attacked the narrow view of mainstream economics that had privileged monetary economy and ignored social reproduction, and questioned the validity of the neoclassical assumption of rational choice as a universal model of individual behaviour and of the economy in general. On their part, feminist economists revealed the importance of women's unpaid, including care, work,<sup>12</sup> and advocated for the need to be measured and become visible and valued. For that reason, they introduced new methods of data collection, such as time-use surveys, and undertook statistical work. In 1993, in response to the combined lobbying of researchers, activists and some governments, the system of national accounts used to calculate gross domestic product was revised to include undercounted work and uncounted work, although unpaid services for self-consumption (such as unpaid domestic and care work) were left out. However, efforts continued with International Labour Organization (ILO) support and in 2013 the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians adopted a new resolution, which redefines 'work activities' to include all forms of work, including unpaid care work undertaken by women and girls in households.

Feminist economists also analysed how the unpaid economy reacts as a shock absorber in crises and in episodes of rapid accumulation and growth. They also researched issues of commercialisation and privatisation of care services, their impact on the quality of provided care and the exploitation of labour socially marginalised groups provide. These issues also attracted the analytical interest of feminists working on social policy and welfare regimes, who used care as a central concept of welfare provision and produced cross-national comparative analyses of care regimes and the relative role of different societal institutions (states, markets, communities, households) in care provision<sup>13</sup> and their implications for tackling horizontal and vertical inequalities. For example, while social-democratic welfare states use redistributive and rights-based approaches and thus provide generous transfers and public care services to improve women's economic independence and eradicate class inequalities, liberal welfare states with strong market mechanisms tend to have only a residual role in care provision, privatise care costs and fail to tackle existing inequalities. While such analyses of welfare

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<sup>12</sup> Razavi distinguishes between those who seek to make visible the unpaid *productive* work of women and men and those feminist analysts who particularly focus on unpaid *care* work, initially in high-income countries, which is a more recent concern.

<sup>13</sup> In the UNRISD project, Razavi came up with the notion of the care diamond to capture this combination.

and care regimes focused on high-income countries, over the past 10 years they have been extended to developing countries that lack institutionalised welfare systems. Moreover, while this welfare regime analysis focused on national contexts, in recent years feminist analyses of care have also included the dynamic role of global forces in shaping care provision, especially the role of international migration of women to work as carers.

Governments, regional multilateral institutions and intergovernmental organisations (including the European Union (EU), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, ILO, UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Bank), donors and social movements have further promoted care policies. Research by UN institutions such as UNRISD and ILO in both developed and developing countries has also moved the policy debate forward. However, it appears that the care agenda has been narrowed down to the issue of childcare, even though feminist work on care used a broader vision.

In high-income countries with institutionalised welfare regimes, women's increased participation in the labour market, new family and household arrangements diverging from the normative nuclear model (e.g. lone parenthood) and demographic changes such as fertility decline and increased population ageing, along with growth of unemployment and working poverty rates, prompted policymakers to take measures, with the issue of childcare becoming central to the redesign of the European welfare state. To a large extent, these measures have been influenced by the post-neoliberal social investment perspective, according to which the state invests to provide equal life chances and to strengthen the human capital of its population. The particular focus of this perspective, further reinforced by concerns about child poverty, is the children and their human capital. As a result, various countries started providing childcare services and income support. Yet some analysts point out that this child-centred perspective came at the expense of women and gender equality.

In other cases, child welfare concerns have been combined with economic priorities: the EU has been particularly influential in shaping policies for work–family reconciliation, including childcare services and parental leave, framed by the concern to encourage women's labour market participation and a flexible employment regime in response to the prevalent market priorities for competitiveness and growth. Again, some feminist analysts noted that women's employment had become an instrument to increase competitiveness and broaden the tax base of European social insurance systems.

In developing countries, the social investment perspective and related ideas have also been influential and drawn attention to the role of social policy for economic development, a position programmes associated with UN organisations have pushed forward. Organisational approaches have differed, and have ranged from ILO's structuralist policies to more the basic and child-centred efforts of UNICEF in line with the Millennium Development Goals. Feminist organisations criticised this emphasis on child welfare and related maternal wellbeing, or the iconic mother-child dyad, on the grounds of side-lining gender equality objectives. Accordingly, the key tool of Latin American antipoverty policies, the conditional cash transfer, was criticised for reinforcing maternalism in social policy, instrumentalising women and strengthening the traditional gender division of labour.

However, child-centred social assistance measures in other countries did not have such an effect: in South Africa, the often-cited Child Support Grant does not impose any conditionality and is provided not to the biological mother but to the child's primary caregiver. Moreover, South Africa and other middle-income developing countries have also expanded preschool education services, thus shifting some responsibility for childcare out of the household to the state. Although the expansion of service coverage is considered a positive development, problems remain, including limited services for the youngest age groups (under three years) owing to fiscal and ideological concerns, service segmentation and commodification, feminisation of the care workforce, low-cost and poor-quality

services and heavy reliance on community voluntary work, with multilateral agencies promoting such an informal model of childcare provision as being suited to developing countries. Moreover, in some developing countries, governments have been concerned that, by recognising unpaid care work, they will have to pay for it. The Holy See and others worry that such recognition and redistribution of this work between men and women will equate care with market work and thus challenge the notion of maternal devotion, which it considers essential for family life.

In terms of the gender equality potential of child-oriented cash transfer programmes and preschool education services, while their main objective is to develop child capabilities and reduce the intergenerational transfer of poverty, some programmes do include explicit references to increase women's labour force participation and do indicate some degree of public responsibility for childcare. Therefore, as Razavi remarks, although 'gender equality is not an explicit aim of these programs, the policy concern for children may open doors for adult women's claims-making'. In order to promote gender equality objectives, she recommends removing conditionalities, making such schemes universal and designing a state-led integrated system of policy instruments, including decent wages for care. Moreover, in low-income countries, she asks for public provisioning of appropriate infrastructure and technology to reduce unpaid domestic work.

In her final section, Razavi examines the role of women's collective action in changing care policies. The HIV and AIDS epidemic and its dramatic consequences has pushed the care issue onto the policy agenda. Interest in child wellbeing on the part of both policy elites and child rights advocates has also influenced care policy responses in line with specific historical and political conjunctures, such as elected left wing governments and feminists in positions of power in Latin American countries or democratisation processes in South Africa. In other cases, such as in China, market reforms have led to a re-privatisation of care. Regarding the role of women's movements and collective action, some analysts have argued that women appear to be very little mobilised around the care issue in developing countries, with policies appearing to be imposed more from above and not in response to bottom-up claims. Even when there are demands for childcare, they are rarely part of collective action, perhaps because caring is still regarded as a woman's responsibility. Thus, Razavi asks why other issues, such as violence against women, mobilise women and become part of their movements and push for policy changes; she assumes this may owe to the availability of cheap private care options for middle-class women, who thus do not have any interest in mobilising and asking for public solutions. Yet some emerging evidence from Latin America once again suggests there are exceptions, with movements linked with women's economic independence and left wing mobilisation asking for care policy change. What is ultimately needed is more research on the issue as well as connecting feminist researchers and advocates on care with women and grassroots movements.

**UNRISD (UN Research Institute for Social Development). 2015. 'A Long History of Mobilization: Understanding Gender-Egalitarian Policy Change in India', Project Brief 9, Geneva: UNRISD.**

This policy brief provides an overview of the key findings of a recent UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) project researching how women's mobilisation has been able to influence policy change on the issues of violence against women and domestic work in India.

Various women's organisations with diverse identities and objectives exist in India, and the country has a long history of mobilisation for women's rights. However, mobilisation does not always lead to policy change: while women's mobilisation for change of anti-rape laws has been successful, women's efforts for the recognition of domestic workers' labour rights have been less effective.

Efforts to organise domestic workers to claim their rights started in the 1980s at subnational level with trade unions and cooperatives. In the 1990s and early 2000s, more regional groups got involved, with some success, in states where such movements had been active for several years. In recent years, mobilisation has increased and acquired a national character through the creation of specific national networks and federations, mainly because of the increasing numbers of domestic workers and the feminisation of the sector. The drafting of a bill by the National Commission of Women strengthened mobilisation across all states, and international mobilisation led by the International Labour Organization and international networks such as Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing for the adoption of the Decent Work for Domestic Workers Convention 189, helped women's organisations working in this area to grow in size and strength. However, no particular law regulating domestic work in the country exists, and current efforts of women's organisations focus on creating domestic workers' unions, participating in wage and leave negotiations directly with employers, and mobilising on wider issues, including caste discrimination and sexual harassment.

Research has identified a number of reasons for the situation: domestic workers are largely *dalit* and tribal migrant women; domestic work is considered a 'natural' task for women; such work takes place within the private sphere of the household and is thus invisible; domestic workers' mobilisation is difficult as they have a heavy workload, and can be weak as it 'falls between the cracks – between the women's movement and the labour movement'. Compared with successful mobilisation on violence against women, domestic workers' mobilisation became a national movement only in the late 2000s; the former had had a much longer history and a national character since the late 1970s. Moreover, its support base was much smaller compared with the strong and broad consensus of the latter. In addition, the issue of violence and rape affects all women beyond class, religion or ideology, whereas the issue of domestic workers' labour rights applies only to a group of women, who tend to belong to disadvantaged social groups. Dramatic rape events that attracted national and global attention, such as the rape of a young woman in Delhi in 2012, made the issue visible, led to mass mobilisation and forced policy makers to take action. Exploitation and abuse of domestic workers remain invisible as they take place within the household and the victims are usually *dalit* and tribal women. Finally, an open policy process further enabled women's organisations working in violence against women to place claims onto the policy agenda.

UNRISD (UN Research Institute for Social Development). 2015. *Democratic Transition and Women's Rights: Understanding Gender-Egalitarian Policy Change in Indonesia*, Project Brief 10, Geneva: UNRISD.

This policy brief provides an overview of the findings of a recent UN Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) project researching how women's rights advocates have influenced policy change on the issues of violence against women and domestic work in Indonesia.

The democratic transition in 1998 in Indonesia and the decentralisation process opened new spaces for women's mobilisation and policy change at both national and local levels. Women's organisations mobilised across the country and successfully pushed the new government to establish a National Commission on Violence against Women and to pass a domestic violence law. Importantly, they were able to significantly broaden their support base to include human rights groups and scholars but also religious leaders, whose influence over state policy decisions is strong.

However, women's mobilisation for domestic workers' labour rights remains marginalised and controversial. The majority of domestic workers are women from low-income households who

migrate from rural to urban areas or abroad. Mobilisation of domestic workers is rather difficult as they often do not recognise themselves as workers and their heavy workload hinders their involvement. The National Commission on Violence against Women initiated claim-making efforts through the creation of a national advocacy network concerned with increased violence against domestic workers. Non-governmental organisations working with migrants, religious groups working with domestic workers and others focusing on child labour (as many girls and boys work as domestic workers) joined in. Gradually, claims broadened to include not only protection against violence but also national legislation on domestic workers' labour rights. This development enabled the network to collaborate with trade unions, put forward a specific bill and ask for ratification of International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 189 on domestic workers. During this time, the network used various strategies to push its claims, including street demonstrations, hunger strikes, meetings with politicians, a lawsuit against the state and a focus on international treaties and pressure through the ILO country office. Advocacy efforts spread to provincial and district levels. Even so, after a decade of intense action, no major policy change has occurred.

The researchers, feminist activists themselves, attribute the difference between the two movements' outcomes to several factors. First, they stress that, while violence against women is a gender issue, domestic work is usually seen as a class issue. A push for domestic work regulation would negatively affect the livelihoods of middle- and upper- class women, who are those participating in policymaking and trade unions, as they would have problems hiring cheap domestic labour, a precondition for their labour market participation. Moreover, the former movement has been able to build broad alliances with other civil society organisations and influential religious groups, indicating strong leadership to negotiate priorities among all actors involved. The latter movement has been characterised by weak internal leadership and has failed to build such broad alliances. In addition, while the National Commission was important for pushing claims within the state, its coordination with the network gradually decreased, affecting its advocacy effectiveness. Finally, adequate and regular funding is also necessary for successful mobilisation.

**Williams, F. 2010. 'Claiming and Framing in the Making of Care Policies: The Recognition and Redistribution of Care', Gender and Development Programme Paper 13, Geneva: UNRISD.**

Focusing on care 'as the object of claims making and policy intervention', Williams presents the discourses of those making claims and those making policies, and analyses how different actors articulate care needs and make claims, how care policies are framed and delivered in specific historical, regional and national contexts (e.g. a demographic change or gender equality issue) and what their outcomes are for different groups of care receivers and providers over time and place. The main focus of her paper is on childcare policies for working parents in Europe, but she also looks at policies for disabled people and unpaid carers and makes observations about the situation in developing countries.

Her analysis is informed by the work of N. Fraser and the politics of recognition and redistribution. Needs have first to be named and articulated as legitimate spheres for political intervention. Apart from recognition, struggles over needs are about the redistribution of goods and income and the realisation of dignity and respect. A third critical element for mobilisation is 'collective identity formation' that offers people a common discourse to make their claim to the state (e.g. women as mothers or workers) and provides the strength to engage in the struggle for recognition and redistribution.

As examples of the importance of the context, Williams briefly shows how care discourses and policies in Europe evolved in response to changing contexts. After World War I, women's organisations in Britain asked for family allowances as a recognition of women's unpaid labour in order to reduce their dependency on men and increase their chances of equal pay in the labour market. While these claims aimed to advance women's rights as workers, claims for support for women as mothers were the successful ones. By the 1930s, within a context of welfare provision based around the male breadwinner model, the campaign for family allowances focused on women as wives and mothers, dependent on a male wage and caring for their household.

Meanwhile, in Sweden at the same time, women's organisations successfully claimed maternity leave and maternal health care and income support for single mothers, thus changing the dominant breadwinner model. To a large extent, their success was the result of three factors: their work to unite women of all classes and ideologies as workers, mothers and political participants; their organisation inside and outside the state; and the framing of their demands in line with the available political and cultural discourses.

After World War II, the welfare state in most European countries strengthened the male breadwinner model until the 1970s, when women's movements exposed women's invisible contribution at home and demanded state provision of care services so women could be free to join the labour force and to eliminate the care penalty on women's wages. Care claims have since proliferated; these have included disability movements and their critique of the dominant care model and movements for carers' rights and children's right to quality care. However, the discourse of equality and social justice started to faint under the dominance of neoliberalism, with policies of cost-effectiveness, fiscal constraints and commodification of care prevailing in the 1980s and 1990s.

At the beginning of 2000s, the different economic and social context contributed to changes in welfare policies. Main developments have included women's increased labour market participation, weakening the traditional breadwinner model;<sup>14</sup> the social investment approach, focusing on human capital and labour market activation that dominated welfare debates; and the use of cash payments directly offered to carers or care receivers, encouraging private market provision and consumer choice. Overall, two competing framings emerged: social movements mobilised around social justice claims for care, and policymakers influenced by the social investment ideas.

Among current care claim-making groups in Europe, Williams includes women's organisations for the recognition of unpaid care work and collective commitment to care in the name of gender equality at home and at work; trade unions focusing on time management, paid leave and a flexible schedule for both men and women workers; disability empowerment movements; children's rights advocates; service user organisations and care professionals seeking improvements in care quality; unions pushing for better working conditions for paid care workers; and even smaller self-help and volunteer groups working with service users, children, migrants and minorities who are marginalised from access to services. Their discourses emphasise equality, empowerment, universal access to support and services, time to care, independence, social rights, care quality and choice and care recognition.

Williams chooses to focus on five types of claims: gender equality claims for work–care reconciliation policies; support for disabled people; recognition for unpaid carers; trade union demands for flexible working; and campaigns for migrant care workers. In the first case, feminist analysts and activists focus on working parents and the need for gender symmetry in caring and earning responsibilities within a dual-earner model combining flexible working hours and parental leave for a more balanced work–

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<sup>14</sup> The traditional model includes the male breadwinner and the dependent wife staying at home to care for children.

care system. Such a system would enable both parents to earn and care and would also protect children's right to quality care through quality childcare services by well-trained and well-paid care workers. In terms of redistribution, this type of claim moves responsibility from mothers to fathers and from families to the state. This claim is appealing: working parent, trade unions, governments and multi-governmental bodies embrace the notions of work–care balance and time poverty, while states and non-governmental organisations support claims for child welfare.

In the second case, disability movements and activists have provided the best critique of how care needs are provided by rejecting the medicalised, pathologised and dependency model of disability care. In the name of human rights, they stress the need to empower the disabled and promote their autonomy by giving them voice, choice and control through measures such as direct cash transfers to access support. In the third case, unpaid carers such as parents of disabled children mobilise around their need for support and make their own claims.

In the fourth case, trade unions make claims for flexible working conditions that do not threaten job security, with a focus on family time and innovative work-based measures, such as working time savings accounts, time banking and shorter working hours in European workplaces. Finally, with the global care chain filling increased demand for childcare in the North, various campaigns and advocacy initiatives have appeared, with the involvement of international agencies, especially the International Labour Organization, asking for the extension of social protection to domestic workers.

Despite their differences, all these types of claims share a demand for recognition, rights and the redistribution of care responsibilities within a social justice framework. However, the dominant frame of care-related European policies is that of social investment in human capital.

Claim-making has been successful in the first decade of the 21st century in Europe in terms of recognising care needs and making caregivers and receivers more visible. Some progress in policymaking has also been made in many European states, largely influenced by the work–care reconciliation policies of the European Union and strengthened by international organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. However, it has to be stressed that these policies were framed by a concern to promote women's labour market participation and increase productivity rather than by gender equality within the context of population ageing, declining fertility and social security needs. Thus policies have focused on childcare provision as the instrument for women's employment.

This focus on employability and labour market activation has been a key component of the prevalent social investment approach and the promoted modality of care shows a different type of entitlement. Early childcare is provided to parents as earners and indicates acceptance of public responsibility for childcare, which is no longer assumed to be the private responsibility of mothers. Yet such services may not be characterised by accessibility, affordability or quality. Meanwhile, parental leave policies offer parents entitlements to care as carers, whereas cash transfers or tax credits to parents or to the disabled address citizens as consumers. Issues of redistribution have remained: analysts point out that feminist voices were marginal in the work–family reconciliation discussions led by EU institutions, employers and trade unions. In other gender policy areas, such as domestic violence and gender equality in political participation, not only were women's organisations involved but also they contributed to the framing of the issue and the discussions explicitly included a gender equality perspective.

After investigating the range of policy instruments used across Europe to meet care claims, Williams examines the aims and outcomes of work–family reconciliation policies in several countries across the

globe. Her ultimate objective is to explore whether and how far it is important for gender equality how care policies are framed, and whether and how care policymakers frame and understand gender equality. She notes the various factors identified as contributing to gender-relevant policy developments in general: political configurations of the left/right and the role of religious groups; labour market conditions; the political strength of feminists; feminist mobilisation; gender ideologies; cultural norms and practices; existing policy logics and institutional legacies; and notions of nationhood. However, she focuses on examining three driving discourses – demographic change, social investment and employment creation – and analyses how they influence policymaking in different contexts and what their outcomes are in terms of social, including gender, inequalities.

In developed countries, population ageing and fertility decline threaten the sustainability of pension systems and are a significant reason to encourage women to join the labour market and introduce such policies. Within such a dominant framing discourse, the space left for the state to also provide opportunities to meet gender equality goals varies and the outcomes are debated. In Japan, demographic changes became a dominant frame of political concern, which led to the introduction of work–family reconciliation measures. Although women’s organisations took advantage of the political opportunity to ask for improvements, lack of a strong frame for changing gender relations at home and at work meant they ended up not with a redistribution of women’s unequal share of care but just with relief. Thus Williams argues that, although the demographic framing provides political opportunities to introduce policies serving women’s interests, the subordination of the social justice discourse (of which gender equality is a part) leads to policies that reinforce gender and class inequalities.

In the case of the social investment frame, which is very influential among international organisations and thus globally, including in developing countries, and linked to concerns about child poverty and development, the main issue is its narrow focus on the child that ends up making women’s interests invisible. While this frame has led to the introduction of important child anti-poverty measures and childcare infrastructure for the first time in many countries, it does not challenge the conditions responsible for child poverty and women’s needs, and has even contributed to a muting of some movements lobbying on such needs through a social justice discourse.

Linked to the social investment frame is the employment creation frame, often appearing as a policy aim in its own right – that is, the use of care policies for employment creation. In Korea, declining male wages and women’s need for autonomy led to increased women’s labour force participation. The state responded with work–family reconciliation policies, with feminist organisations involved in care support demands. However, as part of the push for economic development and the commodification of care, the state response ended up creating new forms of poor employment, with women entering non-standard, precarious employment in the service sector and struggling in a deregulated labour market and with the scaling-down of social protection. Thus Williams argues that commodification of care in an unregulated private market entails problems with the quality of provided care as well as the conditions of care providers. Meanwhile, women’s need for independence can lead them to ‘new forms of oppression in providing collective care in a segregated and low-paid employment sector’.

This also holds true in the case of the migrant care labour force, which has contributed to making care a global concern. Movement of women from the South into care and domestic work in the North is a ‘profoundly asymmetrical solution’. It is also relevant to the question raised as to how far care policies in the developed world are relevant for developing countries, where the situation is even more difficult owing to contextual factors such as the HIV and AIDS epidemic and the priority policymakers give to economic development at the expense of social and care policies in line with financial constraints. In these cases, care policies should be presented as making economic sense. Another

problematic issue in dominant care policies is their assumption of a family model with two earners/carers. In reality, there is a wide range of diverse earning and caring configurations. Most importantly, in many countries, the majority of women are in informal employment and thus universal benefits would be better than dependence on social insurance contributions. Thus, what are needed in both the Global North and the South are 'new strategies and thinking around care and justice'.

In her conclusion, Williams points out that, since the beginning of the 2000s, important changes have taken place, including recognition of the productive potential of those previously marginalised from paid work, such as mothers and the disabled; recognition of men's caring capacity; emergence of state responsibility for care provision, and particularly childcare; and recognition of family carers. Care concerns have also attracted the attention of national governments and international organisations such as the OECD and the World Bank. However, other developments have constrained progress: a sense of obligation by mothers and the disabled to take up even precarious employment opportunities; increased commodification of care services; construction of carers and disabled people as consumers in the care market and not as citizens in the public domain of care; and the creation of a global exploited migrant care labour force. Moreover, although the care issue is crucial to gender equality, the dominant policy frame, with its focus on child welfare and employability, has led to measures that relieve middle-class women but ultimately undermine equality aims. Thus, the key challenge that remains is to advance care 'as a crucial component in claims for national and transnational social justice'.