

Work-Family Balance

overview of policies in Asia



Family and Work: The Socio-Cultural Contexts

- Family harmony, unity, solidarity
- Intergenerational support, filial piety
- existence of other adult parental figures in the home - help in child care
- Strong work ethic
- Paternalistic corporate culture – “one big happy family”
- Clearly delineated roles of men and women
- Son preference, children as old age security
- Availability of domestic help

Work-Life Balance: The Asian Context

The Rest of Asia

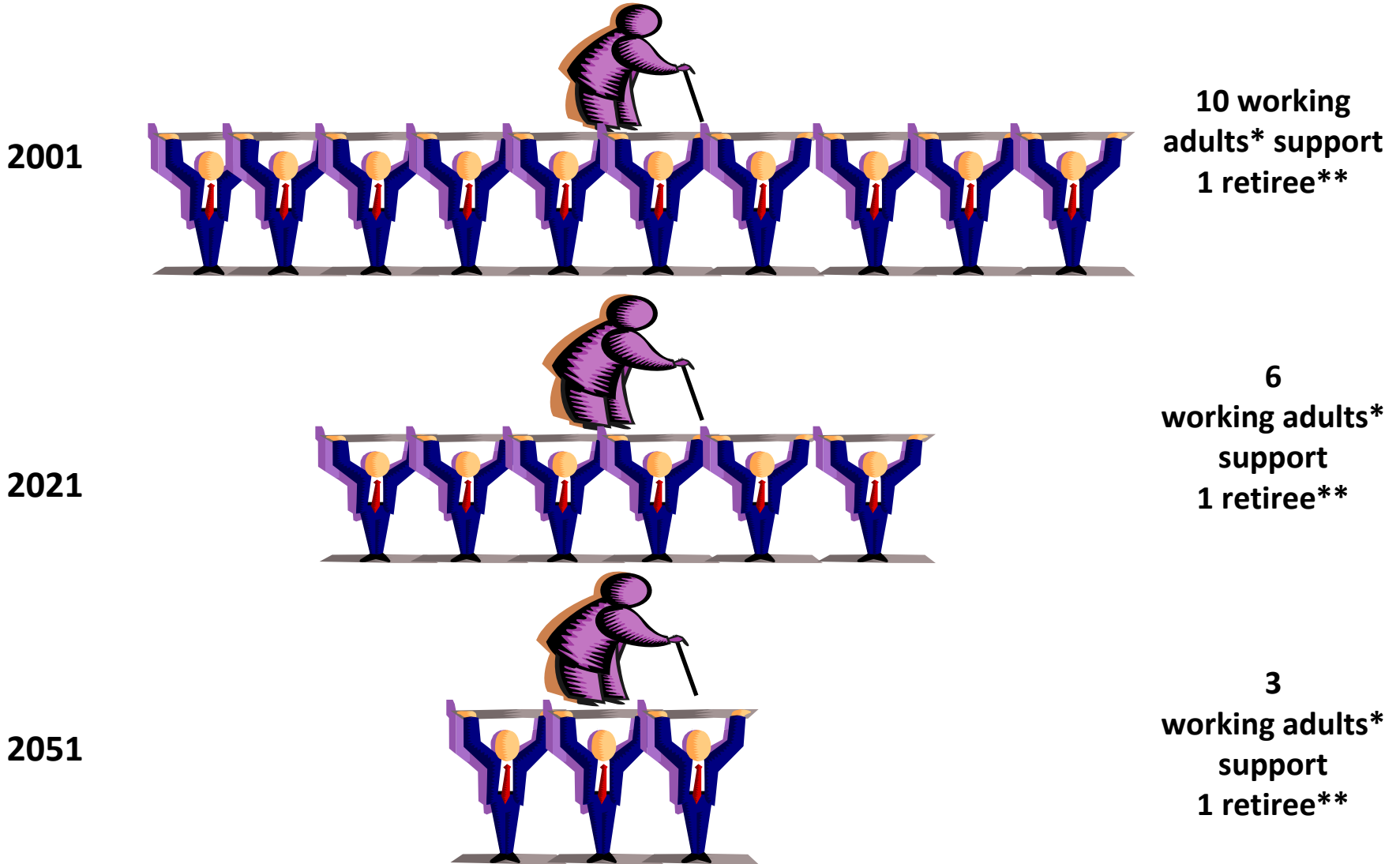
- urbanization ↑
- 3-generation households ↓
- dual-career couples ↑



Ratio of elderly in Japan nearly 20% of total, may hit 25% in 10 yrs



WHO SUPPORTS THE SENIOR CITIZENS IN ASIA?...

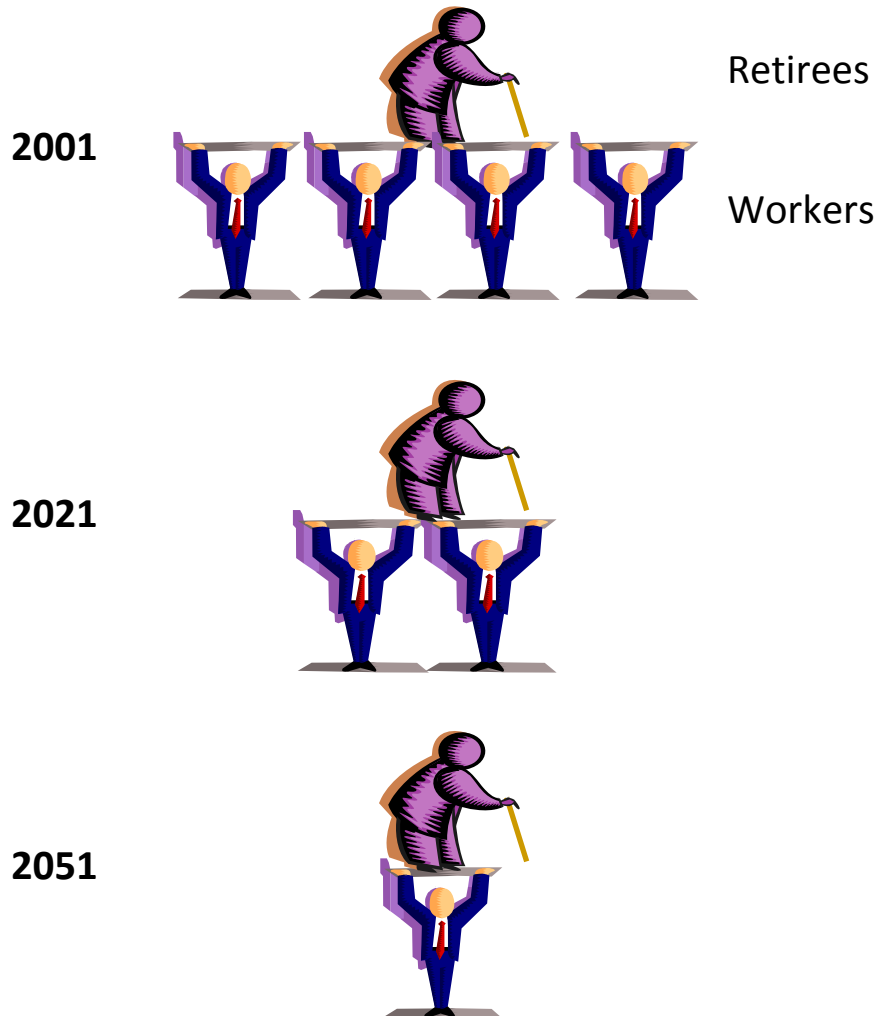


* Working adults are adults from 15 to 64 years old

** Retirees are adults 65 years old and above

THE CRUNCH WILL BE VERY SERIOUS IN JAPAN

Retirees to workers – Japan example



Need for pension services to rise dramatically as

- Retirees double across Asia by 2021
- Pension reform rolls out across region
- Banks seek new source of fee income
- Asia's aging look for dependable returns

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Are the lessons from the West applicable to Asia?

- China: being married and having children is strongly related with measures of well-being
- HK: ineffective family-friendly policies vis-à-vis employee culture of reciprocity (more stress and more hard work)
- Japan: employees do not need reduced hours. "karoshi"
- Korea: ineffective state policies on childcare vis-à-vis responsibility of mothers

Best practices are “truly Asian”

- “Take your parents to work” – importance of family and parental guidance in Indian culture



Best practices are “truly Asian”

- Daycare centers above and around railway stations –in response to shrinking workforce and commuter revenues in Japan



30,000 employees to work from home – to replace daily mass exercise sessions in Matsushita



The Singapore Promise: Enhanced Marriage & Parenthood Package

- The Baby Bonus cash incentives for parents will be extended beyond the fifth child.
- Enhanced tax benefits, leave measures
- Enhanced child-care centers
- Support for couples with difficulties conceiving
- *"Please put emphasis on marriage, on family: Make these your priorities, have a full and happy life."*

WFB realities in Asia

- Workers with Family Responsibilities
Convention No. 156 , Maternity
Protection Convention No. 183
- compliance of the private sector with
regard to maternity leave (->
stereotypes of women)

	Length of Maternity Leave	% of Wages Paid in Covered Period	Provider of Maternity Coverage
Afghanistan	90 days	100	Employer
Bangladesh	16 weeks	100	Employer
China, People's Republic of	90 days	100	Social Insurance (urban areas, state-owned enterprises regardless of location)
India	12 weeks	100	Social Insurance or employer (for non-covered women)
Indonesia	3 months	100	Employer
Korea, Republic of	90 days	100	Employment Insurance Fund
Malaysia	60 days	100	Employer
Myanmar	12 weeks	67	Social Security
Nepal	52 days	100	Employer
Pakistan	12 weeks	100	Social Insurance
Philippines	60 days	100	Social Security
Sri Lanka	12 weeks	86,100	Employer (86% of wages for workers paid at a time-rate or piece-rate)
Thailand	90 days	100, 50	Employer (45 days at 100%) and Social Insurance (remaining 45 days at 50%)
Viet Nam	4-6 months	100	Social Insurance (duration depends on working conditions, nature of work, disability)

WFB realities in Asia (continued)

- Paternity leave
- Quality of child care services
- Emphasis on education, e.g. Japanese *kyoiku mama* (“education mothers”)

WFB realities in Asia (continued)

- the culture of long working hours
- Work culture of support for family concerns
- Informal employment of women to address work-family conflict

WFB realities in Asia (continued)

- Men's participation in domestic work and child rearing (e.g. Chinese *yan fu ci mu* or "strict fathers, kind mothers"). Role as companion prioritized over role in domestic tasks
- Presence of domestic helpers

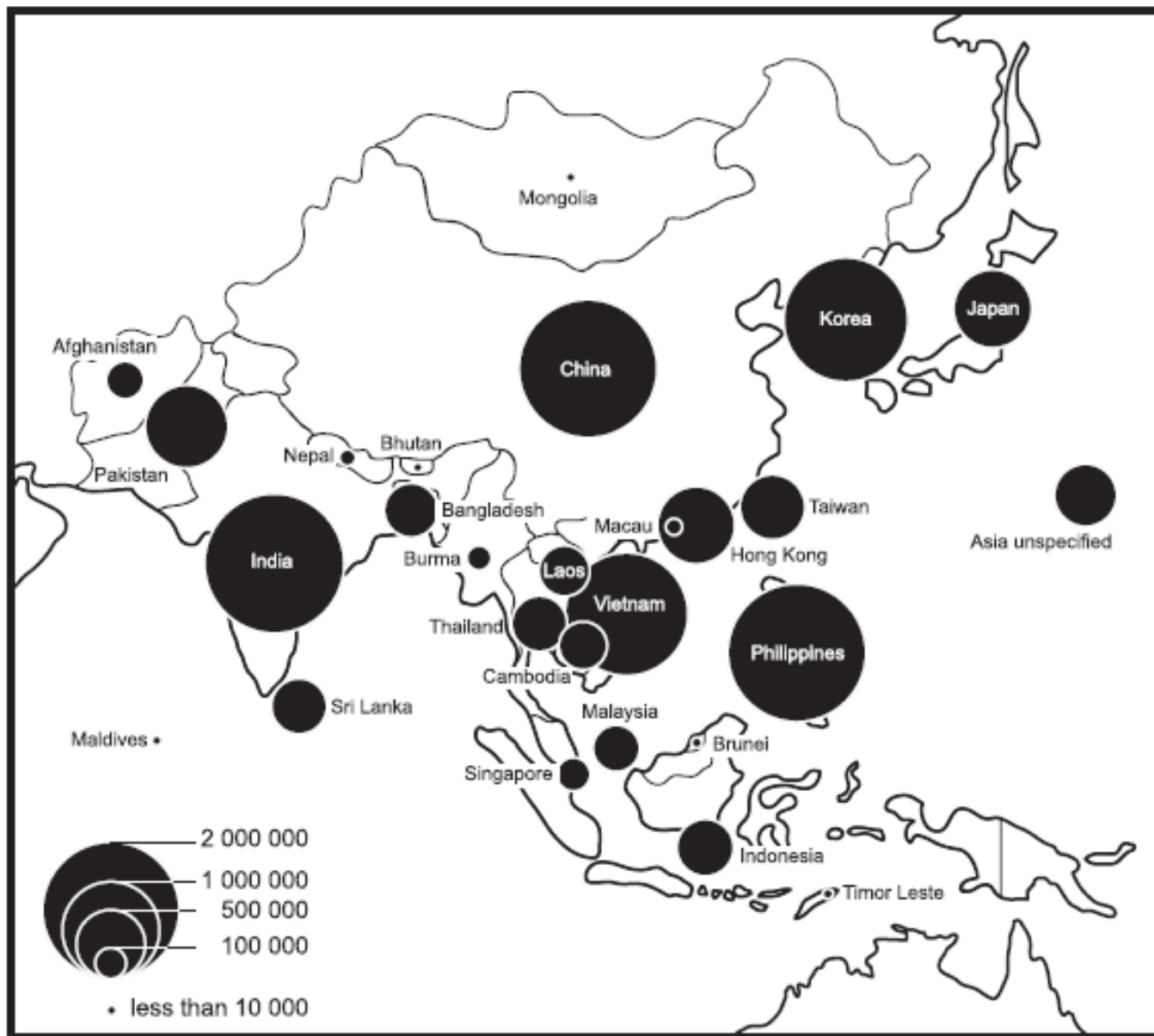


Figure 2 Number of persons born in Asian countries counted in the 2000 round of censuses in OECD countries (Source: OECD, 2005).

Recommendations

- Explore issues of corporate policy and culture that hinders or promotes work-family balance with the private sector.
- Create an incentive system for the business sector (e.g. tax breaks, improved government services, etc.) in observing paternal leaves, establishing child care services, encouraging flexible work and other work-family balance policies.
- Model the way, through the civil service or government bureaucracy, in work-family balance by implementing work-family balance policies and programs, and linking them to organizational efficiency and productivity

WORK-LIFE BALANCE: Investment or Cost?

- ✓ Health
- ✓ Motivation and Commitment
- ✓ Performance
- ✓ Retention of talent
- ✓ External and internal reputation
- ✓ Higher initiative

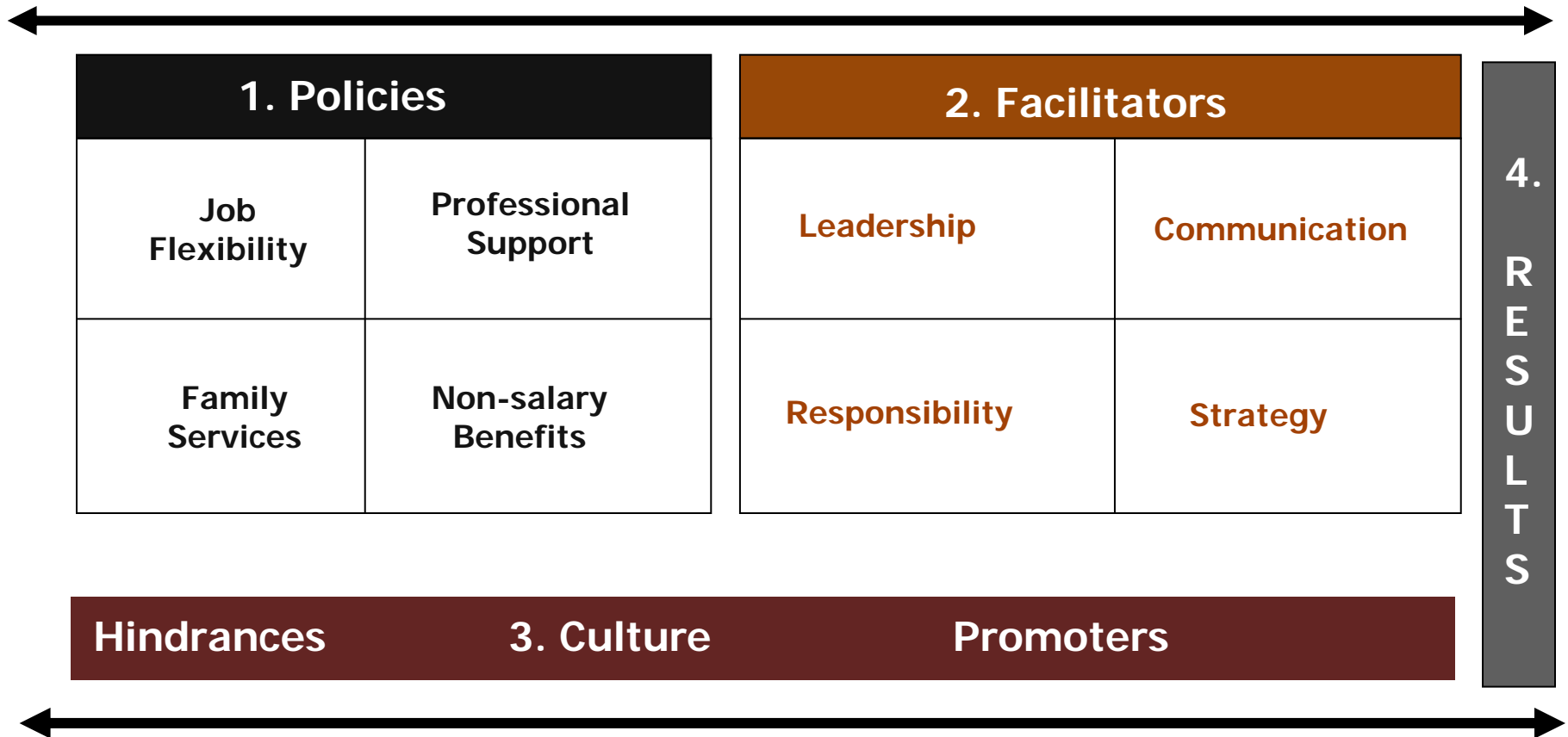
WLB = INVESTMENT

NO WLB = COST

- x Absenteeism (visible and invisible)
- x Turnover
- x Stress
- x Labour conflicts
- x Low quality
- x Bad atmosphere
- x Less productivity/hour



The Family-Responsible Employer Model



Policies: Job Flexibility

1. Flexible work schedule
2. Part-time work
3. Half day free in exchange for working longer hours the rest of the week
4. Reduced working hours in exchange for a lower salary
5. Maternity leave beyond the legal minimum
6. Paternity leave beyond the legal minimum
7. Leave of absence to take care of a family member
8. Flexible vacation schedule
9. Permission to leave the workplace due to a family emergency
10. Keeping job perks after a long leave of absence
11. Replacement of staff that is on leave of absence
12. Efforts to reintegrate employees that have been on a long leave of absence
13. Possibility of working at home
14. Video-conferencing to reduce the need for commuting

Policies: Professional Support

15. Professional counseling

16. Personal/family counseling

17. Legal/financial/tax counseling

18. Training on family issues

19. Training on how to reconcile work and family

20. Training on time and stress management

21. Training on men's and women's different working styles

Policies: Family Services

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| 22. Information on daycares and schools |
| 23. Information on senior citizen centers or centers for handicapped persons |
| 24. Daycare service (either in-house or subsidized) |
| 25. Gym |

Policies: Non-Salary Benefits

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| 26. Life insurance |
| 27. Accident insurance |
| 28. Health care plan for family members |
| 29. Outplacement service for workers who leave the company due to restructuring or closure |
| 30. Retirement plan |
| 31. Tickets or subsidies for meals at restaurants |

Recommendations (continued)

- Uphold the social significance of caregiving and domestic service through communication media strategies, and regular training to to enhance entrepreneurship, boost employability, or expand horizons for the vulnerable family workers.
- Protect the traditional Asian family values through family-focused solutions to work-family conflicts like parenting skills training, marriage courses and counselling services. Install mechanisms to discourage and sanction neglect of family responsibilities.