

## **Session X: Work-family balance: Overview of policies in developing countries**

### **Introductory remarks**

*Zitha Mokomane*  
*Senior Research Specialist*  
*Human Sciences Research Council of South Africa*  
Email: [zmokomane@src.ac.za](mailto:zmokomane@src.ac.za)

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### **Introduction**

The African conceptualization of the family centres around the extended family as an important unit of analysis, and as the basis for the substance of society<sup>1</sup>. For years this type of family structure—which comprises of generations of close relatives—has been the main source of material, social and emotional support, as well as social security for its members, particularly in times of need and crisis such as unemployment, sickness, old age and bereavement<sup>2</sup>. The traditional African extended family is also the base of reciprocal; caregiving relations between generations. In essence, four important roles are performed by the father, mother, child, and the old. The father is traditionally the head of the family, and is responsible for its wellbeing and to ensure the continuity of the lineage by begetting children. The mother is responsible for the upbringing of the children and caring for her husband and other family members. The child is greatly desired in the family and is regarded as a guarantee of the continuance of the family lineage<sup>3</sup>. The grandparents are part of the extended family system and they play a major role in taking care of grandchildren and maintaining multi-generational households during both ‘regular’ and ‘crisis’ times<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, right from birth other members of the extended family such as mother-in-laws or sister-in-laws from either the husband’s or wife’s family make themselves available to assist in caring for the new born baby and the nursing mother, a practice that lessens the emotional and physical burden that a nursing mother goes through during the early period of childrearing<sup>5</sup>. Overall therefore, African kin networks are a long-established institution which provides a sophisticated social security system for, among other things, child care and socialisation<sup>6</sup>.

Over the years, however, the continent has continued to undergo fundamental demographic, sociological and economic changes that have produced multiple constraints for the family as a unit of production, consumption, reproduction, and accumulation. Bigombe and Khadiagala<sup>7</sup> discuss these more comprehensively. This paper only discusses those changes that have implications for work-family balance, and pays particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa—the less developed region of Africa. A brief assessment of the existing parenthood-related leave provisions is also given, and the paper concludes with a proposed research agenda.

### **Changes in the extended family structure**

#### ***Demographic changes***

##### *Fertility transition*

Between the 1960s and 1980s, as fertility decline spread throughout much of the developing world, sub-Saharan Africa was distinguished as the only major region in the world without any indication of an onset of fertility transition<sup>8</sup>. By the early 1990s however, it began to be apparent that fertility in at least a few sub-Saharan African countries was beginning to fall. Over the last 15 years, several studies have revealed conclusively that fertility decline is indeed underway in most parts of the region. This fertility transition has two aspects that are important for work-family balance as they suggest that the care of minor children will, for many years to come, continue to be a major issue of concern for working parents in the region.

The first aspect is that, despite their general decline, fertility rates in all parts of sub-Saharan Africa (except Southern Africa) are still considerably higher than anywhere in the world. Currently the total fertility rate (TFR) is 5.7 children per woman in Central Africa and 5.3 children in per woman in East and West Africa<sup>9</sup>. By contrast, United Nations data shows that

TFR is 2.6 in Southern Africa; 2.9 in North Africa; and less than 2.5 in all other major world regions: Asia (2.4), Europe (1.5), Latin America and the Caribbean (2.3), North America (2.0) and Oceania (2.4). It has been argued that the sub-Saharan African levels are only likely to reach replacement level (2.0 children per woman) at the earliest in 40 years time: in 2040 for Southern Africa, in 2060 for West Africa, and in 2075 for East and Central Africa<sup>10</sup>. The second aspect is that a stall (where the national TFR has failed to continue declining) has been noted in many countries of the region, particularly in East and West Africa<sup>11</sup>. Using data from 24 African countries covered by multiple Demographic and Health Surveys, Shapiro and Gebreselassie<sup>12</sup> noted that in eight of the 24 countries the TFR had stalled at five or more children per woman.

### *Ageing population*

Just less than 5% of the current population of sub-Saharan Africa is aged 60 years and above<sup>13</sup>. This small proportion however masks a large increase in the number of people in this age group. Current estimates are that the number of older person in the regions will double from the 35 million estimated in 2006 to over 69 million in 2030, and to double again from that to over 139 million by 2050<sup>14</sup>.

While population aging is in many ways a positive reflection that people are living longer and healthier than ever before, it also presents challenges to policy makers, families, businesses and healthcare providers, among others, to meet the demands of aging individuals<sup>15</sup>. In the African context where older persons have virtually no social security or social welfare programmes to cater for their everyday socio-economic needs<sup>16</sup>, and where nursing homes and homes for the aged remain a foreign concept<sup>17</sup>, the growth of the older population has clear implications for work-family balance. In essence, the African system of intergenerational parenting and caregiving expects adult children (particularly daughters) to take responsibility for the care and maintenance of their elderly parents<sup>18</sup>. Although the HIV and AIDS epidemic has had an impact on parent-child reciprocity relations in Africa, it is still common for adult children to live with their parents so as to provide this care. Noël-Miller<sup>19</sup>, for example found that close to 80% of all grandmothers aged 70 years and over in the Gambia resided in their child's household. Similar results have been noted elsewhere in the continent<sup>20</sup>. Thus where these adult children are working and have their own families or households to care for, as is often the case, elder caregiving presents additional burden of care for working children in Africa.

### ***Economic changes***

#### *Increased labour force participation of women*

Among the most striking labour market trends of recent times has been the growing proportion of women in the labour force and the narrowing gap between male and female participation rates<sup>21</sup>. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), despite regional variations, women's participation in income-earning activities outside the home has been increasing conspicuously and significantly in almost all countries and "there have never before been so many economically active women".<sup>22</sup> In sub-Saharan Africa, the labour force participation of women, albeit still lower than that of their male counterparts, have increased steadily over the last decade, rising from 60% in 1999 to about 63% in 2009. This labour market trend is further affirmed by the decreasing female unemployment rate from 8.9% in 1999 to 8.5% in 2008<sup>23</sup>. The United Nations<sup>24</sup> also reports that the proportion of sub-Saharan African women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector was 29% in 2007, up from about 23% in 1990, and is expected to reach 33% in 2015. These trends, while positive, mean that African women are working longer hours than men when both market and non-market activities are taken into consideration<sup>25</sup>. All in all the socio-economic relations that relegate unpaid family responsibilities to women mean that despite their increasing entry into wage employment, women continue to be primarily responsible for the general management of their households and for the care of minor children and elderly members in their households and families.<sup>26</sup>

Faced with the difficult balancing act as they seek to fulfill the demands of a job that brings needed income and to meet the caring needs of children and older or disabled family members<sup>27</sup>, many African women with caring responsibilities tend to see the informal sector

as the only paid work that can provide them with enough flexibility, autonomy, and geographical proximity to home to allow for the combination of paid economic activity with family responsibilities. Chen et al<sup>28</sup> showed that a considerably higher proportion (84%) of African women in non-agricultural occupations is employed in the informal sector compared to 63% of men. While the reasons for preponderance of women in informal economic activity are multifaceted and complex, family responsibilities are among the major ones. Indeed research from Angola<sup>29</sup>, Zambia<sup>30</sup>, and Zimbabwe<sup>31</sup> found that women participating in the informal economy in these African countries do so partly due to the flexible hours that enable them to fulfil household and childcare responsibilities. It is noteworthy, however, that given the notoriously low wages, low productivity, and high poverty of workers associated with the informal sector, women working in this sector are often clustered in the most precarious and poorly remunerated forms of work. The workers also often require long working hours in order to achieve subsistence level earnings. This, among other things, can detract time away from the workers' families and further perpetuate their inability to adequately reconcile work and family responsibilities.<sup>32</sup>

### *Migration and urbanisation*

For years, rural-urban migration has been an essential mechanism for job opportunities, social mobility and income transfers in Africa. In consequence, although the region is still largely rural and agricultural, more than 38% of its current (2005 estimate) population lives in urban areas compared with only 30% in 1985 and 23% in 1970. In addition, while in 1970 there were only two cities in the continent with populations exceeding 500,000, a total of 37 African cities had populations of more than 1 million in 2005<sup>33</sup>. In addition to internal rural urban migration, the last four decades have witnessed an increase in the number of migrants to other African countries and abroad. Of the 150 million migrants in the world currently, more than 50 million are estimated to be Africans and the ILO estimated that by 2025, one in ten Africans will live and work outside their country of origin.<sup>34</sup>

Some of the important implications for work-family balance brought about by Africans' migration include the physical separation of family members, reduced household sizes, and the weakened traditional kinship mode of residential settlement—all of which have diminished the strength of traditional extended family networks<sup>35</sup>. In consequence, kinship obligations have become less compelling and the traditional family support for care roles and domestic tasks, while still frequent, is becoming less available<sup>36</sup>. Where such assistance is given the period is considerably shorter than what obtained previously<sup>37</sup>.

In a different vein, and similar to what Sorj<sup>38</sup> noted in Brazil, the availability of grandparents to allocate a good part of their time to helping their adult children in housework and child care may be changing as a new generation of grandmothers is now emerging. This new generation is better educated, more socialised in the world of work, and more active in terms of social life. It is also likely that this generation will continue to be engaged in the public life; even in later stages of life.

### **Sociological changes**

#### *Increasing proportion of single-parent households*

Another aspect of the structural changes taking place in the family that further indicate divergence from the African extended family system is the emergence of single-parent households.<sup>39</sup> While marriage remains the norm in most African countries, particularly in Central, East, and West Africa, it is no longer universal<sup>40</sup>. Divorce and separation are becoming a common phenomenon, while remarriage is becoming less common, and the traditional practice of widow inheritance is on the decline.<sup>41</sup>

These nuptiality trends, in combination with other factors such as increased childbearing out-of-wedlock have made single-parent households, particularly female-headed households, a discernible pattern of the African social landscape.<sup>42</sup> In consequence many women are less likely to have a spouse available to help with household responsibilities, and are assuming responsibility alone as the economic provider and caregiver for their children.<sup>43</sup> In South Africa for example, the proportion of children aged less than 17 years living with their mothers

only increased from 38% on 2002 to 40% in 2007, while the proportion living with both parents decreased from 38% to 34% in the same time period.<sup>44</sup>

Faced with inadequate family support for care responsibilities working women in Africa adopt various coping strategies, many of which have implications for gender equality. These include taking up informal employment, as discussed earlier, or adopting less than satisfactory solutions such as taking children with them to work or taking an older sibling out of school to look under younger children. Taking children to work does not only have the potential of exposing them to hazardous environments in the workplace, but it can also decrease the time and investments that women can put into paid work, thus hampering their overall productivity as well as career prospects and development. Taking an older sibling out of school also has clear implications for gender inequality as it is often older sisters that are taken out of school to provide care. This has a negative impact on their long-term educational opportunities, and it reduces their prospects for decent work opportunities.<sup>45</sup>

### **High prevalence of HIV and AIDS**

Sub-Saharan Africa remains the region most heavily affected by the HIV and AIDS epidemic. According to UNAIDS figures, the region accounted for 72% of all new infections in 2008, and for 68% of the global number of people living with HIV in 2009<sup>46</sup>. UNAIDS further reports that during 2009 alone, an estimated 1.3 million adults and children died as a result of AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa and that more than 15 million have died in the region since the beginning of the epidemic in the early 1980s.<sup>47</sup>

In relation to work-family balance the most evident impact of this epidemic has been the great strain on the care-related activities of families, often with critical implications for gender inequality. As part of their national responses to the epidemic, many African governments shifted the burden of care from the state to families and communities through the home-based care model. While this has eased the pressure on public health systems that do not have adequate resources, it is done with the assumption that there is adequate community and family support to meet the patients' needs. However, the fact that many African families cannot afford to have a non-working able adult member as a full-time carer means that many care givers have to continue working to help support their households<sup>48</sup>. However, this has been shown to have important spill-over effects at both work and home. A study in Botswana, for example, found that HIV caregivers are more likely to take leave from work, to take this leave for longer period of time than non-HIV caregivers, and for the leave to be unpaid—factors that can affect income and, to some extent, job security.<sup>49</sup> By the same token, studies<sup>50</sup> have shown that adult caring for children orphaned by HIV and AIDS (90% of these children are cared for by family members) face substantially greater obstacles in both caregiving and work responsibilities than other families. Those caring for orphans have difficulties and problems providing adequate care for the health and development of the orphans and for their own children because of work conditions.<sup>51</sup> In Rajaraman and colleagues' study, working mothers with HIV and AIDS caring responsibilities spoke of how they were often unable to cook for and bathe their children or help them with homework. It is thus not surprising that the study also found that children of HIV-caregivers had relatively poorer academic and behavioural outcomes than children of non-HIV care givers.<sup>52</sup>

To the extent that the HIV and AIDS 'care economy'<sup>1</sup> is performed primarily by women, HIV and AIDS-related care work also reduces the working women's time to do other potentially life-enhancing activities such as engaging in income generation and skills building projects, or further education<sup>53</sup> and to attend to other social relationships. Heymann and others<sup>54</sup>, for example, noted that in Botswana, caring for children orphaned by AIDS impacted the time caregivers could care for other family members including their parents and in-laws: caregivers spent 34.7 hours per month caring for parents and in-laws compared with 43.7 hours for those without orphan care-giving responsibilities. Heymann et al concluded that the challenges of meeting the work and caring responsibilities severely restricts women's options, often forcing them to choose between employment and care, or to combine them, all of which require painful trade-offs in terms of quality of employment and/or quality of care and long-

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<sup>1</sup> This is described as the unremunerated work undertaken within the home, which ensures the physical, social and psychological maintenance and development of family members, as well as 'volunteer' activities in the community that keep the social fabric in good order (Ogden, et al, 2004)

term consequences for escaping poverty.<sup>55</sup> This was echoed by Urdang<sup>56</sup> in a paper on the care economy in Southern Africa:

The role of primary care giver is an undertow that pulls women out of regular employment (whether formal or informal), extracts girls from school to assist in the caregiving, prevents women from seeking medical treatment when they have no one to care for children and their homes in their absence, escalates household tension into violence when women cannot provide food on time or adequately perform other aspects of their expected domestic roles. The burden on women and girls to look after the ill can create a time poverty so severe that households implode under the strain.

### **Achieving work-family balance**

The foregoing discussion provides indications that with current socio-economic and demographic transformations, the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities is increasingly becoming an important phenomenon with high policy relevance in many sub-Saharan Africa. To this end, there is an urgent need for public and private workplaces in the region to adapt to these transformations, and put in place explicit mechanisms that will allow workers with care responsibilities to adequately reconcile the demands of work and family.

Work-family policies in the form of labour legislation and collective labour agreements present some of the main measures that can address the potential conflicts that parents, particularly mothers, might face in meeting the demands of working and caring for their children and other members of their households.<sup>57</sup> These measures can take two forms: (1) statutory and on-statutory leave and (2) flexible working hour arrangements such as flexibility in work schedules, working from home, and telecommuting.<sup>58</sup> Leave provisions include:

- *maternity leave* (job-protected leave that grants women leave of absence before and after childbirth (and in some case adoption of a child);
- *paternity leave* (short-term job-protected leave available to fathers in the time immediately after the birth or adoption of a child, making it possible for them to spend more time with their families;
- *parental leave*—a statutory entitlement to be absent from work after the exhaustion of earlier maternity and paternity leave<sup>59</sup> and
- *temporary leave periods* for employees to take care of children and other dependent family members.

### **Leave provisions**

Table 1 (see Annex) shows that none of the countries in sub-Saharan Africa make provision for parental leave; as Smit<sup>60</sup> noted “the debate around parental leave among policy makers in [Africa] is nothing more than a deafening silence”. The next less common type of leave is paternity leave. Only 12 countries in the region provide fathers at least some time off work. However only three countries, (Mauritius, Uganda, and Tanzania), recognise paternity leave in its ‘pure’ form. The other nine countries have special multi-purpose leave provisions which could potentially be used by fathers as paternity leave. However these are meant to be used a broad range of family-related eventualities such as funerals or attending to an ill-family member.<sup>61</sup> To this end, these leaves are too short given the increasing care demands that are emerging in the continent due to the family transformations discussed earlier in the paper. In South Africa for example, the Family Responsibility Leave is only available for the birth or illness of a child and not to attend to a sick adult dependant.<sup>62</sup>

Maternity leave is the only type of parental leave that is comprehensibly available throughout the region. There are, however, some pertinent points that warrant highlighting:

- *Duration*: all African countries offer maternity leave with the duration ranging from 60 days in five countries (Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique and Uganda) to 16 weeks in South Africa, but typically 12-14 weeks. Just over half (23) of the 44 countries for which data were available for Table 1 offer less than the minimum 14 weeks paid maternity leave as stipulated by the ILO’s Maternity Protection Convention in 2000.
- *Restrictions*, African countries generally tend to consider maternity leave as a social, rather than universal right<sup>63</sup>. That is, the leave is only available to formally employed mothers; informally employed and part-time workers are less likely to access it. In

addition, a number of countries have restrictions based on factors such as length of service and the number of maternity leaves already provided.<sup>64</sup> Therefore not all women active in the labour force may be able to access this right.

- *Wages.* To the extent that parental leaves are often only effective when they are paid, the payment of wages in all but two countries (Lesotho and Swaziland) is a positive aspect of maternity leave provision in Sub-Saharan Africa. However the limited compensation (less than 100% of wages) in some countries and the fact that some countries place the responsibility of providing cash benefits on the employer may hamper women's use and access. Smit<sup>65</sup> for example questions the extent to which employers in countries such as the DRC and Zimbabwe are able to pay their stipulated proportions of the employees' basic salaries, given the those countries' socioeconomic and political problems.
- *Job security.* Like unpaid leave parental leave with no guarantee of a job at the end of the leave has no significant effect. It is a positive aspect, therefore that legislation in most (27 of the 44) countries shown clearly stipulates that women are protected against discriminatory dismissal on account of pregnancy and are guaranteed the right to return to their jobs at the end of their maternity leave. It is of concern, however that no such guarantee is given in at least 16 countries of the region.

### **Flexible work arrangements**

There is no evidence of separate legislative right for employees to request flexible working arrangements in any of the African countries. Although some countries (see Table 2) stipulate that night work and/or overtime is prohibited for women in certain cases, it is clear that this is mostly grounded on the protection of the health of new mothers and their children, rather than on achieving work-family balance.<sup>66</sup> In South Africa the only existing legal avenue for the right to request adaptation of working hours for the purposes of care is through the unfair discrimination provision of the Employment Equity Act. This option however remains grossly underutilised, ineffective, and is cumbersome and costly for employees<sup>67</sup>. As Cohen & Dancaster<sup>68</sup> assert, employees who are caregivers are forced to rely on the willingness of employers to implement work-family reconciliation measures or to use their own resources to pursue claims of unfair discrimination based on family responsibilities.

**Table 2: Arrangement of working time, selected sub-Saharan African countries**

Country	Arrangement of working time
Burkina Faso	No night work (10pm-5am) for females. Exceptions exist
Cameroon	No night work (10pm-6am) for women. Exceptions exist
Equatorial Guinea	No overtime for pregnant women
Ethiopia	No night work (10pm-6am) or overtime for pregnant women
Gabon	No night work (9pm-6am) for women
Ghana	Unless with her consent, no night work (10pm-7am) for pregnant women
Guinea	No night work (8pm-6am) for women
Mauritania	No night (10pm-5am) work for women. Exceptions exist
Mauritius	No night work or overtime for pregnant women 2 months before confinement
Nigeria	No night work (10 pm-5 am) for women.. Exceptions exist
Seychelles	No night work (10pm-5am) from 6 months of pregnancy and up to 3 months after confinement
South Africa	- No night work during pregnancy and up to 6 months after confinement - Employer to provide alternative duties if normal duties pose danger to new mother or her child
Swaziland	No night work (10pm-6am) for females. Exceptions exist
Tanzania	No night work (8pm-6am) from 2 months before and 2 months after confinement

Source: Adapted from International Labour Organisation's TRAVAIL legal databases. Available at [www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.home](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.home)

### **Childcare**

The provision of early childhood education and care—which includes all arrangements providing care and education for children under compulsory school age—is another effective way through which working parents can achieve work-family balance when they return to work. Table 3 in the annex illuminates the extent to which these support facilities exist in sub-Saharan Africa. The table shows the proportion of children aged 5 years and below enrolled in pre-primary education facilities. Although in many countries the gross enrolment rate (GER)

increased in the decade between 1999 and 2008, the rates are much lower than in other world regions such as East Asia (44%), Latin America (64%), and North America and Western Europe at 81%.<sup>69</sup> One of the reasons for the relatively low proportions in sub-Saharan Africa is that governments in the region generally consider care and education of children younger than three years the responsibility of parents, private institutions, and non-governmental organisations. In addition, these privately-run child care centres are mostly in urban areas and are usually considered expensive, which often hinders access in poor and/or rural communities.<sup>70</sup> Smit also points out that even in countries such as South Africa, Mauritius and Seychelles which provide some subsidies for early childhood education and care, the objective is mainly to enhance the early development and education of children rather than facilitating working parents' reconciliation of employment and family responsibilities.

## Conclusion

This paper highlighted how the socio-economic and demographic transformations currently taking place in Africa have potential implications for work-family balance and, to some extent, gender equality in the continent. The overall finding is that while all African countries provide statutory maternity leave, there has been little progress in terms of granting paternity leave. Parental leave is virtually non-existent as is the legal right to request flexible working arrangements.

It is acknowledged that in a developing world context, parenthood-related policy matters must 'compete' with a plethora of social development and welfare issues that governments may be paying more attention to. However, the prevailing transformations lead to the conclusion that there is an urgent need to (1) forego the assumption that all workers have a source of unpaid labour to care for their families, and the notion of the ideal worker as essentially male and free of domestic responsibilities, that seemingly still permeates the thinking of many employers in the region, and (2) put in place mechanisms to help workers with caring responsibilities to adequately manage their work and domestic roles. As Dancaster<sup>71</sup> argues:

To acknowledge the critical need for care in [Africa], we need to recognise the role of employees as caregivers through legislative provisions encompassing a range of leave circumstances, with the right to request flexible working arrangements. These measures are a means of valuing [workers] as the main providers of this vital societal function and are necessary considerations if there is to be true equality of opportunity in the workplace

A number of pathways to achieve this have been proposed<sup>72</sup>. These include:

- *Reassessment of maternity leave provision.* The inadequacy of statutory maternity leave, particularly in terms of entitlement, duration and restrictions, need reassessment in most countries.
- *Introduction of paternity leave.* Taking cognizance of the well-documented importance of fathers participation in early childcare<sup>73</sup>, and to the extent that work-family policies have the potential to encourage men's to do so, African countries should consider paternity leave in its own right, at the very least, as part of a 'fathers only' quota in parental leave.
- *Consideration of parental leave provision.* Parental leave systems—based on the principle that both fathers and mothers are jointly responsible for children's overall care and developmental wellbeing—should be considered by all countries.
- *Introduction of flexible working arrangements.* There is also the need to consider and debate the introduction of the legal right to request flexible working arrangements as a measure to assist employees in the combination of work and care responsibilities.
- To the extent possible governments must increase the proportion of national budget directed to pre-primary education so as to make early childhood education and care more accessible, and to enhance working parents' ability to reconcile work and family responsibilities. In the same vein, employers must be encouraged to make provisions for child care facilities as part of a family-friendly work environment.

Furthermore, as suggested by Smit<sup>74</sup>, given the low per capita income in most countries of the region, shorter but paid periods of leave may be a more viable option for parents in a

developing country context, than long periods of unpaid parental leave. “Even in cases where shorter term parental leave are implemented, a degree of flexibility should be allowed—for example making it possible for parents to stagger blocks of leave time during a child’s early childhood”<sup>75</sup>.

Overall, however, it is imperative for any mechanisms that are adopted to be evidence-based and context-specific. As Korenman and Kaester<sup>76</sup> caution, considerable care is needed before assuming that the more ‘family-friendly’ institutional arrangements present on western countries would be desirable for Africa. In addition, given the often-advanced argument that governments in developing countries cannot adequately deliver family support because of limited human and technical resources, undertaking context-specific research will highlight the most appropriate support mechanisms for Africa, including the most feasible modes of delivery of those mechanisms. The following research questions are particularly worthy of in-depth study and interrogation:

*Changes in family and household composition and structure.* Against the background of previous studies showing that the structure of families has important implications for work-family conflict there is need to document the systems of family and family traditions in the various countries and societies in Africa. It is important, for example, to establish how family rituals and routines interact with workplace demands. Another area deserving research attention is the structure and composition of households as well as time use patterns of all household members.

*Labour force participation and work patterns.* In-depth analysis of African labour markets and work patterns could explore how changes in the labour market affect the capability of families to strike a balance between work and family responsibilities, with particular focus of factors such as type of industry, occupation, location of work, and working hours, etc.

*Work-family fit.* Work-family fit refers to an individual’s overall assessment of how well she or he has been able to integrate paid work and family life.<sup>77</sup> It will thus be important to determine African workers’ family fit, particularly in regard to: how they manage to combine their family responsibilities with paid employment; how they define and perceive their work burden; and how the definitions and perceptions differ between different types of workers and industries.

*Support mechanisms for families.* There is need for research to determine the support mechanisms that are currently available for workers in the different African societies, and the gaps that exist between the needs for work-family reconciliation and the existing support measures.

*Labour legislation and collective labour agreement.* There is need to study the gaps that exist between the needs for workers and their families and the existing labour legislations and collective labour agreements.

*The role of men.* The following questions are particularly worth addressing: How do African working men and fathers compare with their female counterparts, and with their counterparts in other parts of the world on key measures of work and family balance?



**Table 1: Parenthood related policies, Africa**

Country	Maternity Leave				Paternity leave	Parental leave	Temporary leave period
	Duration	% of wages	Funder	Job-security			
Angola	90 days	100	Social security & employer	√	---	---	---
Benin	14 weeks	100	Social security and employer	---	---	---	---
Botswana	12 weeks	≥25	Employer	√	---	---	---
Burkina Faso	14 weeks	100	Employer and social security	√	---	---	---
Burundi	12 weeks	100	Employer and social security	---	---	---	---
Cameroon	14 weeks	100	The National Social Insurance Fund.	√	---	---	Up to 10 days paid leave for family events
Central African Republic	14 weeks	50	Social Security	√	---	---	---
Chad	14 weeks	100	Social Security Fund	---	---	---	Up to 10 days paid leave for family events
Comoros	14 weeks	100		---	---	---	---
Congo	15 weeks	100	Social security and employer	---	---	---	---
Congo, DR	14 weeks	66.6	Employer	---	---	---	---
Cote d'Ivoire	14 weeks	100	National Social Insurance Fund	√	---	---	Up to 10 days paid leave for family events
Djibouti	14 weeks	50 (100 for public employees)	Employer	---	---	---	10 days family related leave
Equatorial Guinea	12 weeks	75	Social Security System	√	---	---	---
Eritrea	60 days	Paid; no info. on amount	Employer	---	---	---	---
Ethiopia	90 days	100	Employer	---	---	---	---
Gabon	14 weeks	100	The National Social Insurance Fund	√	---	---	Up to 10 days paid leave for family events
Gambia	12 weeks	100	Employer	---	---	---	---
Ghana	12 weeks	100	Employer	√	---	---	---
Guinea	14 weeks	100	Employer and Social Security Fund	√	---	---	---
Guinea-Bissau	60 days	100	Employer	---	---	---	---
Kenya	2 months	100	Employer	---	---	---	---
Lesotho	12 weeks	0 (unpaid)	--	√	---	---	---
Madagascar	14 weeks	100	Social security and employer	√	---	---	10 days unpaid leave for family events
Malawi	8 weeks	100	Employer	---	---	---	---
Mali	14 weeks	100	National Institute of Social Welfare	---	---	---	---
Mauritania	14 weeks	100	Social Security Fund	√	---	---	---
Mauritius	12 weeks	100	Employer	√	5 days paid	---	---
Mozambique	60 days	100	Social Security	√	---	---	---
Namibia	12 weeks	100	Employees and employers contribution to the Maternity Leave, Sick Leave and Death Benefit Fund.	√	---	---	---
Niger	14 weeks	100	Social security & employer	√	---	---	---
Nigeria	12 weeks	50	Employer	√	---	---	---
Rwanda	12 weeks	100		---	---	---	---
Sao Tome & Principe	70 days	100 for 60 days	Social security (employer for women not covered by social security).	---	---	---	---
Senegal	14 weeks	100	Social Security Fund	√	---	---	---
Seychelles	14 weeks	100	Social Security Fund	√	---	---	Four days paid leave for "compassionate reasons"
Somalia	14 weeks	50	Employer	√	---	---	---
South Africa	4 months	60	Unemployment Insurance Fund	√	---	---	3 days paid family responsibility leave
Swaziland	12 weeks	0 (unpaid)		√	---	---	---
Tanzania	84 days	100	The National Social Security Fund	√	5 days paid	---	---
Togo	14 weeks	100	Social security and employer	---	--	---	Up to 10 days paid leave for "family events directly related to home"
Uganda	60 days	100 h	Employer	√	4 days paid	---	---
Zambia	12 weeks	100	Employer	√	--	---	---
Zimbabwe	98 days	100	Employer	√	--	---	---

Source: Computed from the International Labour Organisation's TRAVAIL legal databases. Available at [www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.home](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.home)  
 Note – No information available

**Table 3: Pre –primary education Gross Enrolment Ratio (%), selected African countries, years ending 1999 and 2008**

Country	Pre-Primary Education GER 1990	Pre-Primary Education GER 2008
Angola	27	40
Benin	4	13
Botswana	--	16
Burkina Faso	2	3
Burundi	0.8	3
Cameroon	11	25
Cape Verde	--	60
Central African Republic	--	5
Comoros	3	27
Congo	2	12
Congo, DR	--	3
Cote d'Ivoire	2	3
Djibouti	0.4	3
Egypt	10	16
Equatorial Guinea	26	54
Eritrea	5	13
Ethiopia	1	4
Gambia	19	22
Ghana	40	68
Guinea	--	11
Guinea-Bissau	4	--
Kenya	42	48
Lesotho	21	--
Liberia	47	84
Madagascar	3	9
Mali	2	4
Mauritius	94	98
Namibia	34	31
Niger	1	3
Nigeria	--	16
Sao Tome & Principe	25	39
Senegal	3	11
Seychelles	100	100
Sierra Leone	--	5
South Africa	21	51
Tanzania	--	34
Togo	2	7
Uganda	--	19
Zimbabwe	41	--

Source: UNESCO, 2011

Note – No information available

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