

**Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Division for Social Policy and Development**

**FAMILY-ORIENTED POLICIES
FOR POVERTY REDUCTION, WORK-FAMILY BALANCE
AND INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

Note

This report has been issued without formal editing.

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Chapter I

Anti-Poverty Family-Focused Policies in Developing Countries

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Introduction

Different perspectives on well-being and development conceptualise and measure poverty in different ways. According to Barrientos (2010), in developed countries the social participation and inclusion perspectives define poverty as exclusion from cooperative activity where those in poverty are unable to take part in their communities' social life at a minimally acceptable level. In developing countries the dominant view tends to be the "resourcist" perspective which defines poverty as the inability of an individual or family to command sufficient resources to satisfy basic needs (Fields 2001 cited by Barrientos, 2010). All in all, therefore, poverty can be understood as a reflection of the inability of individuals, households, families, or entire communities to attain a minimum and socially accepted standard of living measured in terms of basic consumption needs or income required to satisfy those needs (Kehler, undated). In line with this, family poverty¹ can be described as a state in which a family earns less than a minimum amount of income—typically US\$1.25 per day per person in low-income countries (United Nations, 2011a)—and where the insufficient income hampers the family's ability to adequately cover basic costs of living, including paying for food, shelter, clothing, education, health care, utilities, transport, etc. (Ahmed, 2005).

There is, in addition, a general consensus among poverty scholars and policy stakeholders that poverty is multidimensional and goes beyond income and material deprivation. According to the United Nations² for example, poverty is fundamentally:

“a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and clothe a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living in marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation”.

Similarly, the Programme of Action of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen stated that:

“Poverty has various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods; hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also

¹ In the absence of a standard definition of 'family', and given that in most developing countries multiple-person households of unrelated individuals are not common (Belsey, 2005) family household will serve as the operational definition of family in this paper, and 'family' and 'household' will be used interchangeably.

² The Statement for Action to Eradicate Poverty adopted by the Administrative Committee on Coordination in May 1998, quoted in the Report of the Independent Expert on Human Rights and Extreme Poverty (E/CN.4/1999/48) See Indicators of Poverty and Hunger: www.un.org.esa/socdev/unyin/documents/YdiDavidGordon_poverty.pdf. Accessed 27 May 2011.

characterised by a lack of participation in decision-making, and in civil, social and cultural life” (United Nations, 1995: paragraph 19).

There is considerable evidence that the persistence of poverty is relatively higher in certain groups of people and types of households and families. In developing countries these include single parent households, particularly those headed by women; migrant families; families living in rural areas and urban slums; and households affected by HIV and AIDS.

The disproportionate burden of poverty borne by female-headed households is largely due to the multiple forms of discrimination that women face in education, health care, employment, and control of assets. According to Carmona (2009), for example, women are more likely than men to be unemployed, to be in vulnerable employment situations, and to assume heavier loads of unpaid work and family care. Evidence also “consistently shows that where mothers and children have poor health, nutrition and education they are likely to transmit poverty on to the next generation” (Carmona, 2009:2).

Migrant families—either migrating with the breadwinner or left behind—often face increased poverty especially if they are low-skilled (Kohler et al, 2009). For example, the arrival of job-seeking rural migrants in urban areas often expands the pool of young urban job seekers, and worsens the urban unemployment phenomenon that is characteristic of many developing countries. It also reduces the pressure on employers to offer competitive incomes and work standards to their workers, and results in many urban migrants facing a future of low-wage employment, unemployment, underemployment, and poverty (Min-Harris, 2010). For families left behind in rural areas, the lack of remittances means that their poverty levels persist. Cross-border migrants are, on the other hand, generally not eligible for social protection and other family services in the host country and usually do not have health insurance or old age pension entitlements (Taylor, 2008; Kohler, 2009). Thus whether there is a single migrant from a family, or the family migrates, migrant families in developing countries are often left especially vulnerable on all counts (Kohler, 2009).

Among the most evident impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic has been the erosion of families’ coping mechanisms as they lose working adults at the same time as children orphaned by the epidemic swell dependency ratios (Heymann and Kidman, 2009). In consequence, most families and households affected by the epidemic have moved from relative affluence into poverty as a result of breadwinners’ loss of paid employment or decreased labour, and the increased borrowing and sale of possessions so as to take care of the sick (United Nations, 2004). There is also wide evidence that households where orphans live are, in many settings, more likely than others to be poor, and to suffer disadvantages in education, nutritional status, and general well-being (United Nations, 2004; Belsey, 2005).

Within families, poverty is relatively higher among children, older persons, and people living with disabilities. Evidence from various disciplines has shown that children growing up in low-income households experience social and health conditions that place them at risk for later academic, employment, and behavioural problems (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997; Ahmed, 2005; Shanks & Danziger, 2011). Children of economically-deprived parents are also more likely to miss the personality

development teachings from the family—their first learning institution—as parents struggle to pay attention to the importance of parental care (Ahmed, 2005). It can be concluded, therefore, that children enter poverty by virtue of their families' socio-economic circumstances (Brooks-Gunn & Duncan, 1997). Older persons, on the other hand, have an increased likelihood of becoming and remaining poor because old-age brings with it reduced capacity to work, as well as difficulties in accessing health care and other essential services (Gorman, 2004). Disability and poverty are intricately linked as both a cause and consequence of each other (Braithwaite & Mont, 2009). Not only are people with disabilities over-represented among the poorest people (accounting for 15 to 20 per cent of the poorest in developing countries), but poverty—as a result of the poor living conditions, health endangering employment, malnutrition, poor access to health care and education opportunities etc—dramatically increases the likelihood of disability and secondary disability for those individuals who are already disabled (Yeo, 2001).

In an attempt to improve their situations, households in poverty often adopt strategies that are dysfunctional in that they increase their households' vulnerability (the probability of being in poverty in the future) and trap the households into long-term poverty (Barrientos, 2010). In developing countries these strategies include reducing the number and quality of meals; postponing health-related expenditure; withdrawing children from school and/or engaging in child labour; engaging in informal employment; and adopting less productive, but safer crops.

It is against this background that many developing countries have adopted social protection as the key response to poverty and rising vulnerability among their populations. Described as “policies and programmes that protect people against risk and vulnerability, mitigate the impact of shocks, and support people from chronic incapacities to secure basic livelihoods” (Adato & Hoddinott, 2008:1), social protection has wide-ranging benefits that include: promoting access to nutrition, health services and education; protecting the most vulnerable from sinking into poverty; achieving economic growth; assisting in building social cohesion; and promoting political stability (Carmona, 2009). With specific regard to the family, social protection can, in the short term, help provide relief to affected families and prevent them from falling into destitution, while in the longer term, its promotive and transformational functions address some of the underlying causes of inter-generational poverty (Kohler, 2009).

This paper gives an overview of family-focused social protection policies and programmes in developing countries. Particular focus is placed on sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Latin America—the developing regions shown in the next section to be the most affected by poverty. The paper begins with an examination of the dimensions of poverty in developing countries, particularly the current levels of poverty, and the factors associated with increasing family poverty in these countries. This is followed by a review of major family-focused anti-poverty social protection policies and programmes in each of the three developing regions. The review aims to demonstrate how these programmes focus on families by answering questions such as: Is the family the unit of focus? What types of families are covered? Are any special situations taken into account? The paper concludes with a discussion of policy implications and offers recommendations on plausible actions that can be taken to improve the current family-focused policies and programmes and families' access to them.

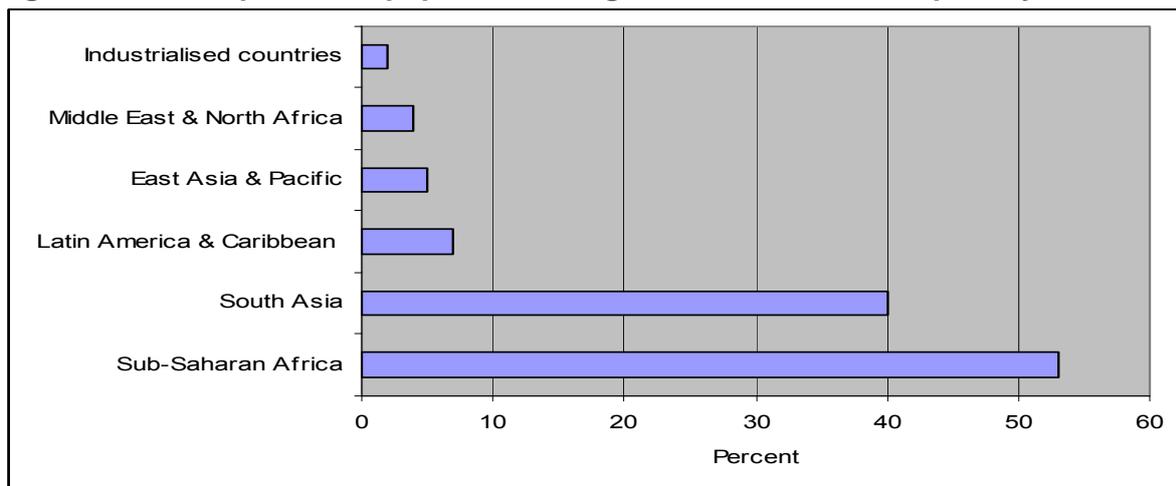
Dimensions of poverty in developing countries

Current levels of poverty

The 2011 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) report (United Nations 2011b) asserts that the robust economic growth witnessed in the early 2000s reduced the number of people in developing countries living in extreme poverty (on less than US\$1.25 per day) from 1.8 billion (46 per cent) in 1990 to 1.4 billion (27 per cent) in 2005. This early economic growth was also able to offset the effects of the 2008 global economic crisis. The United Nations (2011b) thus projects that the number of people living in extreme poverty in developing countries will continue to decrease, and will fall below 900 million (or 15 per cent) by 2015. This will be well below the 23 per cent target of MDG 1 which aims to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, and to half the proportion living in poverty by 2015.

Despite this overall decline in poverty levels, many developing countries remain poverty-prone. For example, more than half of the population of sub-Saharan Africa still lives in extreme poverty (Figure 1). It is also universal knowledge that a third of sub-Saharan Africans are underfed. This is largely due to the sub-continent's dependence on small-scale subsistence agriculture which is increasingly affected by environmental and climate change risks, and offering insecure livelihoods (Cook & Kabeer, 2009). Similarly, despite experiencing the high economic growth rates witnessed throughout Asia, South Asia exhibits high levels of extreme poverty (40 per cent). The region is also home to the largest absolute numbers of poor people, with its 400 million chronically poor people making up almost half of the world's total (Cook & Kabeer, 2009). Latin America also demonstrates patterns of poverty and vulnerability evident in the other two regions. Although its extreme poverty levels shown in Figure 1 are much less than those for sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, available evidence shows that in 2009 about 183 million Latin Americans (a third of the region's population) were living in poverty, and 74 million of these were classified as living in extreme poverty (Moro, 2011). The most extreme poverty in the region tends to be concentrated in remote rural areas and among indigenous people. Latin America is also the most unequal region in the world, with a Gini Coefficient of 0.52, which is closely followed only by that of sub-Saharan Africa at 0.47 (Go, 2007; Lopez & Perry, 2007). As Lopez and Perry argue, not only does high inequality lead to higher poverty levels, it also constitutes a barrier to poverty reduction.

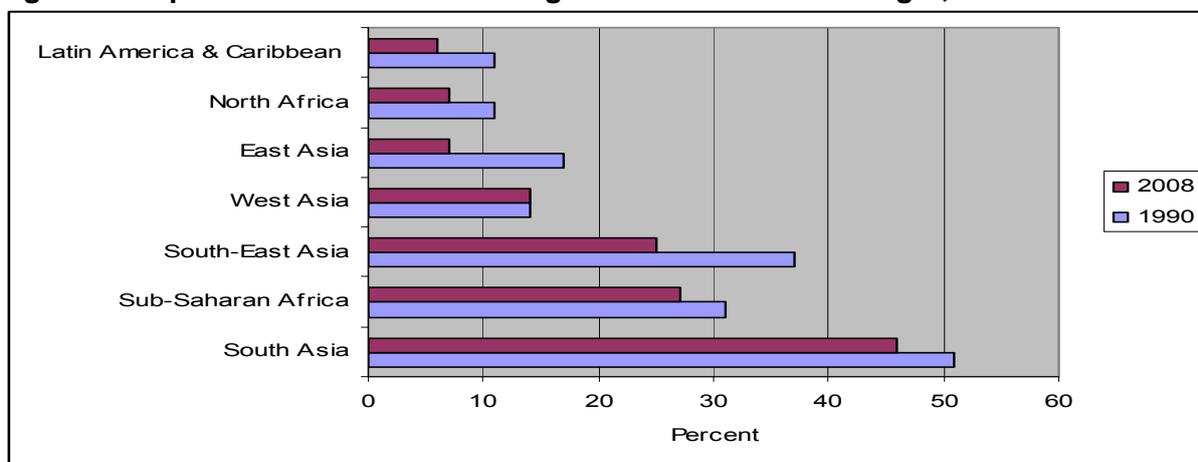
Figure 1: Proportion of population living on less than US\$1.25 per day, 1990-2008



Source: UNICEF (2011). *Adolescence: An Age of Opportunity*. New York: UNICEF

Given that better nutrition improves the capacity of people to produce a sustainable livelihood, reducing hunger is often seen a necessary condition for reducing poverty (Curtain, 2003), and it is indeed the second target for MDG 1. To this end, the proportion of people suffering from hunger is regularly monitored. The 2011 MDG Report, for example, shows that the proportion of people who suffer from hunger in developing countries remained at about 16 per cent between 2005 and 2007, and concluded that “based on this trend, and in light of the economic crisis and rising food prices, it will be difficult to meet the hunger-reduction target [of MDG 1] in many regions of the developing world” (United Nations, 2011b:11). Another indicator of the achievement of this target—the prevalence of underweight children aged below 5 years—is shown in Figure 2. The figure shows that while the proportions have generally decreased, they are still relatively high in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, possibly as a result of global food price increases that preceded and accompanied the 2008 downturn and “contributed to a considerable reduction on the effective purchasing power of poor consumers, who spend a substantial share of their income on basic foodstuff” (United Nations, 2010:12).

Figure 2 Proportion of children under age five who are underweight, 1990 and 2008



Source: United Nations (2010). *Millennium Development Goals Report*. New York: United Nations

The following subsection reviews some of the key challenges that shape developing countries' vulnerability to poverty.

Factors associated with family poverty in developing countries

While the global economic growth is rebounding from the world financial and economic crisis of 2008, labour markets are still showing slow employment creation, and widespread deficits in decent work (United Nations, 2011b). For example, over 75 per cent (up from 21 per cent in 1990) of the sub-Saharan African labour force was employed in the informal sector in 2008 (Xaba et al, 2002; Economic Commission for Africa, 2010). In Latin America the figures were 36 per cent for 2009, up from 32 per cent in 1999. The corresponding figures for South Asia are 80 per cent and 77 per cent respectively (United Nations, 2011b). The informal sector is notorious for its long working hours, low productivity, low earnings, and the high poverty among its workers. Overall, informal sector workers are generally known to live and work under harsh conditions associated with shocks such as illness, loss of assets, and loss of income. They also have little or no access to formal risk-coping mechanisms such as insurance, pensions and social assistance (African Union, 2009).

Beyond economic factors, changes in family structure have been a major force behind poverty, and family poverty in particular, in many developing countries. As a background it is perhaps worth highlighting that in many of these countries the extended family—which comprises of generations of close relatives—has for many years been seen as an essential stimulant for the well-being of people and the sustenance of society through its provision of emotional and material support for its members (Bernard, 2003; African Union, 2004). In the African context for example, the extended family is a long established institution which provides a sophisticated social security system for its members, particularly in times of need and crisis such as unemployment, sickness, old age, and bereavement (African Union, 2004). The traditional African extended family is also the base for childcare and socialisation as well as for reciprocal care-giving relations between generations where older persons play a major role in taking care of grandchildren while younger family members are the main caregivers of older members (Blanc and Lloyd, 1994). Asian societies also have a strong traditional culture of intergenerational support where children are expected to have a sense of gratitude towards their parents and an obligation to provide care for them in their old age. At the same time, the extended family—grandparents, aunts, and other relatives—are counted upon to provide child care-giving support (Caparas, 2011). In Latin America many societies possess a collectivistic orientation which underscores a strong concern for the fate and well-being of one's kin, and the need for family members—young and old—to support each other and to assist in the socio-economic maintenance of the family (Fuligni et al, 1999).

Over the years, however, many developing countries have undergone fundamental demographic, economic and sociological changes that have stretched, and in some cases exhausted, the socio-economic support mechanisms that were traditionally offered by extended families. While trends vary by region and country, several transformations can be affirmed: decreasing fertility; increased number of older persons; increased migration; changing nuptiality patterns; increased proportion of female-headed households; and high levels of HIV and AIDS and other communicable

diseases. Overall, these changes have contributed to family circumstances that are characterized by economic fragility and debilitating family poverty (Dintwa, 2010). The following sub-sections illustrate these trends.

Decreasing fertility levels

While total fertility rates (TFRs) in sub-Saharan Africa are still higher than elsewhere in the world, several studies (for example Bongaarts, 2008; Shapiro and Gebreselassie, 2008) have revealed conclusively that fertility decline is underway in most parts of the region and that the TFRs are certainly much lower than they were four decades ago. These rates are also expected to continue declining and to reach replacement level (2.0 children per woman) in about 30 years time, at the earliest: in 2040 for Southern Africa, in 2060 for West Africa, and in 2075 for East and Central Africa (Caldwell and Caldwell, 2002). By the same token, socio-economic changes in Asia over the past 50 years have been accompanied by a remarkable drop in birth rates, with TFRs falling from nearly 6.0 children per woman in the 1960s to about 2.8 in 2010 (Bloom et al, 2011). Similarly, following a 30-year dramatic decrease, fertility rates in most Latin American countries are now near, or below, the replacement level (Roett, 2011).

While it is well-documented that families with lower fertility are better able to invest in the health and education of each child, which in turn can help reduce poverty and stimulate national development; from the point of view of family poverty, small families have less ability to cope with situations such as unemployment, illness, or death, as there are fewer people to rely on or to distribute the burden of care and support among (Oliveira, 1997). Therefore to the extent that providing support for older people, children and the infirm is still primarily a family responsibility, smaller families may be more vulnerable to poverty in many developing countries as care responsibilities can hamper carers' full involvement in income-generating activities.

Ageing population

The most significant ramification of the foregoing fertility decline is a change in the age structure of the population with, among other things, a rising ratio of older persons (Cook, 2009). For example, although less than five per cent of the current population of sub-Saharan Africa is aged 60 years and above, current estimates are that the number of people in this age group will double from the 35 million estimated in 2006 to over 69 million in 2030, and to over 139 million by 2050 (Velkoff and Kowal, 2007; Makoni, 2008). In South Asia, the proportion of the same age group is projected to increase from its 2005 proportion of 7.4 per cent to 11.1 per cent in 2025 and to 19.2 per cent in 2050. In Latin America, the United Nations projections are that the proportion of the population aged 65 years and above will reach 18.5 per cent in 2050, three times the 6.3 per cent reported in 2005 (Roett, 2011).

Population ageing is in many ways a positive reflection that people are living longer and healthier than ever before. In the context of family poverty however, it raises the issue of old age support. For example, research on micro-simulation of kin availability suggests that due to declining fertility discussed above, many older persons in developing countries will increasingly have fewer children upon whom to rely (Velkoff, 2002). This could leave many older persons in precarious situations, particularly

given—as shall be shown later—the poor availability of, and access to, social welfare programmes that cater for the everyday needs of older persons in developing countries (Taylor, 2008; Caparas, 2011).

Increased rural-urban migration and decline in extended family systems

The vulnerability of older person in developing countries is further aggravated by weakened family support systems caused by increased out-migration of younger family members from rural areas. Often driven by perceived prospects in urban areas, and sometimes across regions, this rural-urban migration means that the three-generation household, the extended family, and their associated support mechanisms are no longer the norm in many developing countries as families become physically separated and household sizes decrease (Miller, 2006; Cook, 2009). In consequence, kinship obligations are becoming less compelling and the traditional family support for care roles and domestic tasks, while still frequent, is becoming less available (Wusu & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2006; Cassier & Addati, 2007). For example, while large families are still the norm in South Asian countries, they are becoming more dispersed (De Silva, 2003) and “it is likely that before long, family nucleation would create voids in the traditional joint family systems that have persisted in Asia” (Intrat et al, 2007). Nuclear households are also the most widespread form of residence in Latin America, where single-person households are also on the increase in all countries (Jelin & Díaz-Muñoz, 2003). With this decrease in household sizes and in the availability of family assistance, low-income families have the most difficulty since satisfactory market-based care solution for older persons, children, and the infirm are often beyond their means (Addati & Cassirer, 2008).

Increasing female labour force participation

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 (International Labour Organisation, 2007). According to the International Labour Organisation, 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” (International Labour Organisation, 2007:2). For example, the number of sub-Saharan African women in non-agricultural employment increased from 24 per cent in 1990 to 33 per cent in 2009, and is projected to reach 36 per cent by 2015. The corresponding figures for Latin America and the Caribbean are 36, 43 and 45 per cent respectively, while for South Asia they are 13, 19, and 22 per cent.

Despite their increasing entry into wage employment, women in developing countries 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 (UNECA, 2001). This often leads to negative consequences such as increasing incidents of “work-family conflict”, a phenomenon defined as “a form of inter-role conflict in which the roles pressures from work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect” (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985:77). This conflict can contribute to family poverty by constraining women’s ability to maximise income generation opportunities and/or career prospects; reducing the number of

adults in a family who can participate in paid work; and restricting the range of jobs that parents or caregivers are able to take up. It has also been associated with negative child health and academic outcomes (Ruhm, 2000; Berger et al, 2005), as well as with negative impacts in the quality of relations between spouses, and increased risk of family dysfunction (Macewen and Barling, 1994; Matthews et al, 1996). Examples of family dysfunction include spousal emotional distress such as depression; insufficient surveillance and lack of control over children's behaviour; lack of warmth and support and displays of aggression and hostility among family members (Ahmed, 2005).

Changing nuptiality patterns and increase in female-headed households

Many developing countries are also witnessing notable changes in their marriage patterns. In sub-Saharan Africa for example, whereas marriage is still the norm it is no longer universal and it is increasingly taking place later in life (van de Walle, 1993; Hentrich, 2002). Divorce and separation are also becoming a common phenomenon, while remarriage is becoming less common (Ntozi and Zirimenya, 1999; Wusu and Isiugo-Abanihe, 2006). A trend towards less frequent and delayed marriage is also being observed in South Asia and other parts of Asia (Jones, 2010). Overall these changes have led to an increase in female-headed households, which, as discussed earlier, carry a disproportionate burden of poverty (Bigombe and Khadiagala, 2003; Bernard, 2003). It should further be noted that in many developing countries, marriage is still a crucial means for women to secure access to land, livestock, credit housing and other resources. Hence, the increasing number of female-headed households means that many of them will increasingly be unable to secure or access income and wealth-generating resources, leaving them vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion.

HIV and AIDS and other communicable diseases

The livelihood and family-based support systems in developing countries have also been undermined by the HIV and AIDS epidemic as well as other communicable diseases. Sub-Saharan Africa is the region most affected by HIV and AIDS, accounting for 72 per cent of all new infections in 2008, and for 68 per cent of the global number of people living with HIV in 2009 (UNAIDS, 2010). UNAIDS data further shows 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 people have died in the region since the beginning of the epidemic in the early 1980s. To a lesser extent, HIV and AIDS is also a major health issue in Latin America where an estimated 1.4 million people were living with HIV in 2009 (UNAIDS, 2010). In addition to its erosion of families' coping mechanisms discussed earlier, the epidemic has, in some of the most affected areas, had an impact on family structure, as reflected in the emergence of skip generation (children and grandchildren with parents missing) and child-headed households (Agyarko et al, 2000; Mturi et al, 2005; Taylor, 2008). In consequence, there has been notable role displacement with the burden of care falling on to older persons and children who characteristically have no access to education, health care, emotional and physical support, and other essential resources to cope (Mturi et al, 2005; Taylor, 2008).

In South Asia, over half of the disease burden is attributable to non-communicable diseases. However, communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, respiratory

infections, and water- and vector-borne diseases still remain prominent in the total population creating what is referred to as a 'double-disease burden' in the region (Engelgau, 2011). In Latin America, the major communicable diseases are malaria and tuberculosis. As with HIV and AIDS, families bear the burden for the time and effort involved in providing care for people affected by these diseases, as well as for treatment-related direct expenses for health care facilities, medicines, laboratory tests and transportation (Caparas, 2011).

In view of the foregoing key factors underlying family poverty, social protection policies and programmes aimed at reducing poverty and deprivation in developing countries can be grouped under two main categories: social security or social insurance, and social assistance. *Social insurance* refers to contributory social security schemes that protect income earners and their dependants against temporary or permanent involuntary loss of income as a result of exposure to contingencies that impair earning capacity (Kaseke, 2005). *Social assistance*, on the other hand, refers to non-contributory assistance or benefits provided to poor and needy groups in a population (International Labour Organisation, 2000). Both social insurance and social assistance are typically designed to (1) reduce family poverty in the short term by raising family consumption and (2) break the intergenerational transmission of poverty by putting family members in a better socio-economic position (Arriagada, 2011). The following section gives an overview of all these programmes in the three developing regions that are of interest to this paper.

Anti-poverty family focused policies in developing countries.

This section explores the extent to which social security and social assistance in developing countries is family-focused. For social assistance, the focus is on the following types of support: cash transfers; public works programmes; provision of basic social services, and food programmes or subsidies.

Social Security

The International Social Security Association categorises the social security programmes into five main groups:

- i. *Old-age, disability, and survivor benefits*. These cover long-term risks and provide pensions or lump-sum payments to compensate to loss of income resulting from old-age or permanent retirement.
- ii. *Sickness and maternity benefits*—these deal with the risk of temporary incapacity and are generally of two types: (1) cash sickness benefits and (2) healthcare benefits which are provided in the form of medical, hospital and pharmaceutical benefits.
- iii. *Work injury benefits*—the oldest type of social security, these provide compensation for work-related injuries and occupational illnesses and they almost always include cash benefits and medical services
- iv. *Unemployment benefits*—these provide compensation for the loss of income resulting from involuntary unemployment
- v. *Family benefits*—these provide additional income for families with young children to meet at least part of the added cost of their support. In some

countries they include school grants, birth grants, maternal and child health services, and allowances for adult dependents.

Using this typology the following sub-sections give an overview of social security in developing countries.

Latin America

Latin American countries began to adopt modern social security systems in the early years of the twentieth century when countries like Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay introduced occupations schemes such as disability pensions, survivor benefits, old-age pensions, and in some cases health insurance (Ghai, 2002; Ferreira and Robalino, 2010). According to Ferreira and Robalino, these systems were often implemented with the implicit expectation that as economies developed and incomes per capita grew, a majority of the labour force would end up in salaried jobs in the formal sector. This expectation however remains unfulfilled. For example, while Table 1 below shows that all countries in Latin America have old-age, disability, and survivor benefits, it is noteworthy that these derive their finances from three possible sources: a percentage of covered wages or salaries paid by the worker; a percentage of covered payroll paid by the employer; and/or a government contribution (International Social Security Association, 2008). In essence therefore, these benefits are available only to formal sector waged workers, in either the public or private sectors, who are able to contribute to social security. Thus given, as discussed earlier, that the majority of Latin American workers are employed in the informal sector, the coverage of these programmes remains very low and inadequate. Indeed, in a study of 18 Latin American and Caribbean countries, Ferreira & Robalino (2009) concluded, with regard to Latin America that “pension coverage is above 50 per cent of the labour force only in Uruguay; Chile, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Argentina, Mexico, Panama, and Brazil have coverage rates between 30 per cent and 50 per cent. In other countries coverage is less than one-third and “shows little indication of improving” (Ferreira and Robalino, 2009:8). To the extent that the social security benefits accrue to contributing workers, they are targeted at individuals and not families per se; families can access the benefits indirectly if they are dependent on a contributing member. Table 1 also shows that unemployment and family allowances are much less available than contributory schemes. Where they are available they tend also to be employment-related, available to only individual salaried workers who have contributed towards them.

Table 1: Social security programmes in selected Latin American countries, 2009

Country	Old age, disability & survivors	Sickness and maternity		Work injury	Unemployment	Family allowances
		Cash benefits for both	Cash benefits plus medical care ^a			
Argentina	X	X	X	X	X	X
Belize	X	X	a	X	a	a
Bolivia	X	X	X	X	a	X
Brazil	X	X	X	X	X	X
Chile	X	X	X	X	X	X
Colombia	X	X	X	X	X	X
Costa Rica	X	X	X	X	a	X
Ecuador	X	X	X	X	X	a
El Salvador	X	X	X	X	a	a
Guatemala	X	X	X	X	a	a
Guyana	X	X	a	X	a	a
Honduras	X	X	X	X	a	a
Mexico	X	X	X	X	X	X
Nicaragua	X	X	X	X	a	X
Panama	X	X	X	X	a	a
Paraguay	X	X	X	X	a	a
Peru	X	X	X	X	a	a
Uruguay	X	b	b	X	X	X
Venezuela	X	X	X	X	X	b

Source: International Social Security Association (2009). *Social Security Programs Throughout the World: Africa, 2009*. Geneva: International Social Security Association

Key: a. Has no programme or information is not available
b. Coverage is provided under other programmes

Sub-Saharan Africa

Social security programmes in sub-Saharan Africa are also mainly of the contributory type (Table A1 in the annex) that apply to salaried workers only who, as discussed earlier, constitute the minority of the economically active population in the region; informal sector workers do not have access to these benefits. Another salient point from Table A1 is that the current social security landscape in sub-Saharan Africa aggravates aspects of gender bias, which in turn can leave families, particularly those headed by women, vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion. In essence, given that African men have higher formal employment rates than their female counterparts, the predominance of contributory social insurance schemes in the region means that in the event of family break-ups or the death of the husband, affected women are often not entitled to present or future unemployment or pension benefits (Taylor, 2008). Taylor also noted that despite the high rate of inter-country labour migration in sub-Saharan Africa, the principle of territoriality—which requires that benefits be paid in the host country—is widespread throughout the sub-continent. This lack of portability of benefits is not only a major obstacle to the maintenance of social security rights but it also increases the vulnerability of the many migrant workers and their families.

As in Latin America it is also evident from Table A1 that provision of unemployment benefits of formally salaried workers is generally absent in sub-Saharan Africa. Family allowances, on the other hand, exist in 21 of the 38 countries shown in the table. Apart for those in Mauritius and South Africa (which in effect are social assistance programmes), the family allowances are employment-related and payable only to contributing workers when certain requirements are met.

South Asia

As in the other two developing regions, formal social security schemes exist across South Asia (Table 2). However, given the high level of informality in the region's labour market, it can be concluded that the vast majority of the region's population remains outside the system. For example, according to Kohler et al (2009), for the region as a whole, coverage rates for contributory pension programs are very low and less than one in ten workers participate and a large proportion is public sector workers, or civil servants. Also consistent with the pattern in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, unemployment and family allowances are similarly scarce; the latter exist only in Sri Lanka and the former in India, and are both payable to the contributing worker rather than to families.

Table 2: Social security programmes in selected South Asian countries, 2010

Country	Old age, disability & survivors	Sickness and maternity		Work injury	Unemployment	Family allowances
		Cash benefits for both	Cash benefits plus medical care ^a			
Bangladesh	c	X	X	X	b	b
India	X	X	X	X	X	b
Nepal	X	b	d	X	b	b
Pakistan	X	X	X	X	b	b
Sri Lankan	X	b	d	X	b	X

Source: International Social Security Association (2009). *Social Security Programs throughout the World: Africa, 2010*. Geneva: International Social Security Association

Key: b. Has no programme or information is not available.

c. Old-age benefits only.

d. Medical benefits only.

X Available in some form.

Cash Transfers

Cash transfer programmes provide a predictable and reliable source of income which can have significant effects upon the capacity of households to invest in human and physical capital (Woolard & Leibbrandt, 2010). There are basically two types of cash transfers: conditional and unconditional. Also known as social pensions, the latter are effectively entitlements awarded either in cash or in kind and financed entirely by public revenues or specific taxes. The transfers are paid out to certain pre-determined categories of individuals, typically persons who are unable to work and not covered by other social security schemes. These include people with disabilities, orphans, the chronically ill, older persons without family support, and other 'vulnerable groups' such as children (Devereux, 2006). The unconditional cash transfers not only provide a safety net against poverty by offering basic support to all persons who qualify for them, but they also help families cope with caring responsibilities thus promoting intergenerational support (Kaseke, 2005). Conditional cash transfers (CCTs), on the other hand, have the primary objective of providing short-term poverty alleviation by simultaneously maintaining consumption and promoting investments in long-term human capital development. This is done by linking the transfers to the demand side of service delivery, and paying them out on condition that children enrol in school, attend school on regular basis, and that young children and/or pregnant or lactating

women attend health care facilities for scheduled check-ups, immunizations and other services (Adato & Hoddinott, 2007; Slater 2011).

Cash transfers in Latin America

In relation to the rest of the developing world Latin America has the most stable and long-running cash transfer initiatives (UNDP, 2011). The programmes arose from the political recognition that a significant proportion (generally up to 40 per cent) of the labour force was in informal employment and hence, together with their families, did not have access to traditional social security schemes (Barrientos & Hinojosa-Valencia, 2009; Ferreira & Robalino, 2009). Table A2 in the annex shows the pattern of cash transfers in Latin America.

Unconditional cash transfers

Unconditional cash transfers in Latin America started as early as 1974 when Costa Rica introduced the *Régimen No Contributivo de Pensiones por Monto Basoco* (Non-contributory Basic Pension Regime) targeting the elderly and disabled poor individuals (Barrientos & Hinojosa-Valencia, 2009). It is evident from Table A2 that current unconditional cash transfers in the region continue to be generally categorical, targeting households with older persons, people with disabilities, and children.

Conditional cash transfers

CCTs have been spreading rapidly in Latin America since the mid-1990s, following the implementation of Brazil's *Bolsa Familia* in 1995 (Ferreira & Robalino, 2009; Arriagada, 2011). Relative to unconditional cash transfers, CCTs are the most dominant type and now exists in more than 15 Latin American and Caribbean countries and reach more than 20 million families, which is over 113 million people or 19 per cent of the population of the region (Arriagada, 2011). Consistent with the literature (see for example Soares & Silva, 2010; Arriagada, 2011) Table A2 shows that CCTs in Latin America generally have their central axis of action taking place around poor families or households with children, rather than on individuals or specific family members. It is noteworthy, however, that these programmes typically select a woman (usually the mother or the woman responsible for children in the household) as the primary recipient of the transfer, a policy option "based on the assumption that the money spent by women tends to be invested in goods and services more likely to positively affect the well-being of the children" (Soares & Silva, 2010:7).

Cash transfers in sub-Saharan Africa

Following a series of weather-triggered emergencies in Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa in the early 2000s, and with the high numbers of sub-Saharan Africans affected by HIV and AIDS and poverty, social protection has now established itself firmly on the policy agenda in most sub-Saharan African countries (Devereux & Cipryk, 2009). Since the development of the *Livingstone Call for Action on Social Protection*, a growing number of governments in the sub-continent are designing and developing national social protection strategies, often in the context of more comprehensive versions of poverty reduction strategy papers aimed at achieving economic growth, poverty reduction and sustainable development (Adato and Hoddinott, 2008; International Social Security Association, 2008; Niño-Zarazúa et al., 2010). The Call for Action urges African governments to, among other things,

strengthen social protection and social cash transfer interventions; adopt comprehensive social protection schemes for older persons; and introduce universal social pensions (Beales & Knox, 2008).

Unconditional cash transfers

The earliest unconditional cash programmes in sub-Saharan Africa were old age pensions established in South Africa (1928), Namibia (1949), and Mauritius (1958). These programmes, according to Niño-Zarazúa et al (2010), have their roots in the South African social pension scheme introduced in the 1920s to protect the minority white population against poverty in old age. Unconditional cash transfers however became more widespread from the mid-1990s in response to the impact of HIV and AIDS on families. Given that the epidemic affected Southern Africa the most, where it left many households without members of working age and shifted the burden of care to older people, the pattern of current unconditional cash transfers in sub-Saharan Africa is that they exist mostly in Southern Africa (albeit increasingly in East Africa) and are in the form of categorical old age pensions (Table A3 in the annex). Only in South Africa and Mauritius are there cash transfers that are specifically child-focused, although they are received by parents or caregivers, majority of who are women. In South Africa for example, the Foster Care Grant is paid to a foster parent looking after children aged 18 years or younger (21 years if a student) and similarly the means-tested Child Support Grant is paid to the primary caregiver of a child or children aged 17 or younger

Conditional cash transfers

To date CCTs have proved less popular in sub-Saharan Africa “possibly because the quality of education and health services is often so poor that the benefits of imposing conditions are doubtful” (Save the Children et al, 2005). Where they do exist, they tend to be targeted at poor households that have people who are unable to work, or households looking after orphans and other vulnerable children (OVCs). Table A3 shows that the programme beneficiaries are generally selected through a mix of community targeting exercises.

Cash transfers in South Asia

In line with the trend in the other developing regions, all governments in South Asia recognise the importance of social protection as a tool for reducing poverty (Kohler et al, 2009). However, no government in the region has as yet established a full-fledged, comprehensive and interlinked social protection system per se (Kohler et al, 2009). Therefore, as Table A4 in the annex shows, cash transfers in South Asia are rudimentary or absent, and are concentrated in only three countries: Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. As in sub-Saharan Africa, the unconditional cash transfers are generally categorical and targeted at older persons. In a regional review of social protection in South Asia, Kohler et al (2009) revealed that a number of children’s benefits in the form of education stipends and health-related benefits are also available in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. In general, these programmes are categorical and target children from poor households. Their main aim is to increase school attendance, to delay marriage among girls, and to encourage women to give birth in health facilities.

CCTs in South Asia also tend to be limited to only two countries: Bangladesh and Pakistan, where they typically target poor households with children. They are generally linked to children's school attendance.

Impact evaluation of cash transfers

While it has been difficult to trace the impact of cash transfer programmes on broader national poverty and inequality indicators (Hujo & Gaia, 2011), there is ample evidence that these programmes support household consumption and lead to direct improvement in household welfare (Soares, 2004; Adato & Bassett, 2008; Barrientos, 2010). For this reason CCTs are often referred to as the 'silver bullet' to fight poverty and inequality, a reputation largely based on the results of various evaluations of CCTs in Latin America which have consistently associated these transfers with improved human capital outcomes (Adato & Hoddinott, 2007). Among the most established and rigorously evaluated CCTs programmes is Mexico's *Oportunidades* (previously Progresa) and Brazil's *Bolsa Familia* the key achievements of which are shown in Box 1 below.

Box 1. Impacts of CCTs in selected Latin American countries

*Oportunidades*¹

This programme aims (1) to improve schooling, health, and nutrition of poor households particularly children and their mothers and (2) to ensure that households have sufficient resources so that their children can complete basic education.

The programme provides income transfers to poor households on the condition that they send their children to school and attend regular health checkups. The programme began operating in rural areas but was extended to urban areas in 2003. An extension to additional urban areas in 2009 has been made with some additional training and microenterprise support mechanisms.

The Programme's main achievements are:

- 10 per cent reduction in primary school desertion and 24 per cent increase in secondary school registration. Dropout rates decreased by 24 per cent with a corresponding rise in completion rates for secondary schools in rural areas of 23 per cent
- A 42 per cent increase in the probability of entering secondary school for boys and 33 per cent for girls
- A 3 per cent increase in attendance to preventive healthcare checkups in rural areas and 20 per cent in urban areas
- 11 per cent decrease in maternal mortality and 2 per cent decrease in child mortality
- 20 per cent reduction in the incidence of sick days for beneficiaries aged 0-5 and 11 per cent for those aged 16-49
- A 50 per cent decrease in the incidence of low-size-for-age in children in a 10 year period
- A reduction in anemia amongst children
- A 22 per cent increase in total family consumption for rural areas and 16 per cent in urban areas.

Bolsa Familia²

Implemented in 2003 and coordinated at the federal level, *Bolsa Familia* is a conditional cash transfer programme targeted at families living below the poverty line that aims to combat poverty and promote social inclusion. Allowances are paid subject to certain conditions being met, such as mothers and children attending health check-ups and receiving vaccinations and children attending school. The programme's cash benefits are paid directly to the family, preferably to the mother.

In 2008, the programme, with an estimated cost of 0.45 per cent GDP, covered the entire country and served some 10.55 million Brazilian families living on an income of between BRL 20 and BRL 182 per months. This was equivalent to nearly one-quarter of the country's total population. The programme has increased the incomes of covered families by nearly 25 per cent.

The Programme's main achievements are:

- The immediate alleviation of poverty through the provision of cash transfers. Among children younger than age 13 it has reduced the poverty rate from 52.2 per cent to 49.2 per cent
- Helping to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty in some families
- Improved social cohesion by strengthening the family unit.
- As a tax-financed programme, it contributes to improved income distribution.
- By increasing family disposable income, it acts as a catalyst for local economic activity.

¹ International Social Security Association (2010). *Social Security Highlights: Family benefits and demographic change*. Available at www.issa.org. Accessed 27 July 2011.

² Barrientos, A., Niño-Zarazúa, M. & Maitrot, M (2010). *Social Assistance in Developing Countries Database*, Version 5.0. Manchester; Brooks World Poverty Institute

Estimates of the poverty impact of unconditional cash transfers can be gleaned from the evaluation results of old age pensions in Southern Africa. The results generally show that these transfers are often deployed to ensure children's schooling, improve health care and re-allocate productive resources within households (Adato & Bassett, 2008; Niño-Zarazúa et al, 2010). It has been found, for example that girls in households receiving a non-contributory social pensions are more likely to attend school, succeed academically, and have better health and nutrition indicators than children in similar households that do not receive the pension (International Social Security Association, 2008). Box 2 below shows results of other evaluations in Southern Africa.

Box 2. Evaluating the impacts of pensions in Southern Africa

Non-contributory pensions in South Africa reduce the country's overall poverty gap by 21 per cent, and for households with older people by more than half (54 per cent) while virtually eliminating poverty for households with only older people (a reduction of 98 per cent). In Mauritius the share of older people in households below the poverty line is 64 per cent without the non-contributory pension but only 19 per cent with the non-contributory pension. In Lesotho, 60 per cent of the monthly pension received by person aged 70 years and older is redirected consistently to children—to purchase school uniform, books, and health care. Evidence suggests that that this has halved Lesotho's hunger rate. Furthermore, 21 per cent of the surveyed recipients in Lesotho spent part of their pension creating jobs ranging from general household chores to farm work. Some older people in Namibia use their pension to invest in livestock and other agricultural activities, and to access credit (accepted as collateral)

Source: Adapted from International Social Security Association (2008).

Against the above background, and given that the majority of older persons in developing countries live in multigenerational households, old –age pensions can be understood in terms of transfers to household, not to elderly individuals.

Provision of basic social services

It is often emphasized that cash transfers and CCTs in particular are not sufficient if they are not accompanied by access to social services. The basic thesis is that the provisions of social services such as health, education, water, and sanitation can address the needs of excluded groups and thus bring the intergenerational transmission of poverty to a halt (Kohler et al, 2007:7). For example, while most developing countries provide free universal basic education, other educated related–costs (such as transport, books, meals, and uniforms) and the opportunity cost of lost income from child labour means that many children are unable to attend school. Similarly, where households are forced to make impoverishing payments to receive basic level of acceptable health services, large inequities in access and health outcomes can result (Cook, 2009). Using water and sanitation as examples, Table 3 below shows the extent of provision and access to social services in developing countries. The table shows that a high proportion of people in developing countries generally lack adequate access to clean water and sanitation.

Table 3 Proportion of the population using improved drinking water and sanitation facilities

Region	Percentage of population using improved drinking-water sources, 2008			Percentage of population using improved sanitation facilities		
	Total	Urban	Rural	Total	Urban	Rural
Sub-Saharan Africa	60	83	47	31	44	24
South Asia	86	95	83	35	57	26
Latin America & the Caribbean	93	97	80	80	86	55
Developing countries	84	94	76	52	68	40

Source: UNICEF (2011). Adolescence: An Age of Opportunity. New York: UNICEF

There is also wide evidence that despite improvements in providing access to health care in developing countries, people in these countries tend to have less access to health services than those in more developed countries, and within countries, the poor have less access to health services (Peters et al, 2008). Much of this is due to low financing; according to Chudi (2010) for example, while it bears 90 per cent of the global disease burden, the developing world allocates less than 10 per cent of its annual budget to healthcare. The out-of-pocket payments which households have to make in the absence of adequate public health financing not only creates financial barriers to access and reduce the affordability of health care services, but they also push people into poverty or deepen existing poverty (International Labour Organisation, 2010).

Access to adequate and affordable housing, particularly for low-income families, is also a current and growing problem in the majority of developing countries. Majale et al (2011) argue that in some cases it is not that housing is too expensive, but rather that incomes are too low. In consequence, poor households often spend an inordinate share of their incomes on housing, resulting in reduced expenditure on other basic needs such as food, education, and health, and creating levels of insecurity which may serve to undermine other social protection interventions and objectives (Cook, 2009; Majale et al, 2011). To this end, a number of developing countries are putting in place pro-poor housing programmes as part of their wider social protection strategies. These are discussed below.

Latin America

All Latin American countries have acute housing shortage problems and, as policy responses, most countries in the region have one or more public housing programmes that essentially require savings specified in absolute monetary value terms or as a percentage of the monetary value of the housing value or as a percentage of a voucher (Ruprah 2010:2). The programmes are directed at increasing ownership occupancy rates with the underlying assumption being that increased assets of lower income families would pave a chain of events such that families would exit poverty. According to Ruprah, the evaluation results of these programmes link them to an increase in home ownership, a reduction in irregular tenancy, improved quality of housing and access to some utilities such as potable water and sewerage. At the same time, however, the results showed no increased household income or poverty reduction effects. In addition, there were no education effects on households' children as measured by school attendance and education lags.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, income levels are such that the majority of households cannot afford to buy even the least expensive house, even if mortgage finance was available (UN-Habitat, 2005). In a paper on housing finance systems and policy in sub-Saharan Africa, Rust (2008:10) illustrated the extent of housing affordability and access to finance as follows:

South Africa

“within SA’s population of about 12.7 million households, only about 2 million can afford to meet their needs in the housing market.

Zambia

Few self-employed people earn enough to qualify for a home loan. This leaves the 16 per cent of all Zambians who are formally employed (2.2 million) as the potential market. Of these, 40 per cent are currently un-banked.

Kenya

Less than 10% have traditionally qualified for mortgage loans, with the majority ruled out by their low incomes. Borrowers generally consist of high net worth individuals

Rwanda

Of the 270 000 formally employed, only around 50 000 people earn above RWF1.2 million (US\$2000) per month. The income of the bulk of the population will fall below the level where they can secure mortgage financing in the formal market.

Mozambique.

A household would require a monthly net salary of 48 000 MT (US\$1900) to borrow \$40 000 over a 20 year period to purchase a small apartment in the less attractive areas on the cement city of Maputo. This is more than the net basic salaries of a couple of senior doctors working for the national health system

Table 5 shows some of the policies and programmes used to address the poor access to housing. To the extent that middle-to-high income families can theoretically obtain housing finance, many of the programmes are targeted at low income households and not at individuals per se. All in all, most countries have national housing policies aimed at improving the general housing conditions in the countries, not only for the poor. While there have not been many evaluations of the African housing programmes, Botswana’s Self-Help Housing Agency has been seen as a success story in terms of providing a means of access to affordable housing for low-income groups and to upgrade the existing squatter settlements (Mosienyane, 1996). However, an evaluation of the scheme by Ikgopoleng & Cavrić (undated) noted that it was marred by problems such as lack of serviced land and inadequate finances for plot development which were exacerbated by the high urban development standards which are out of the reach of low-income urban families. The evaluation also revealed that there were some non low-income urban households living in SHHA areas

Table 4: Housing conditions and developments in housing policies, selected sub-Saharan African countries

Country	Developments in housing policies
Botswana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Housing Policy (1999) • Self Help Housing Agency provides land & housing finance to low income households
Kenya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kenya Slum Upgrading Project (KENSUP) established to respond to MDGs • National Housing Corporation (NHC) and local authorities provide limited public rental • Private sector developers working in up-Kenya market developments
Mozambique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No national housing policy : draft strategy in 2005 not implemented • Construction of social housing and provides low-cost credit to low income households promoted
Namibia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision 2030 and 5-year National Development Plans, National Housing Policy • " Distinction between high, middle and low income markets • " Build Together programme, mobilising savings, insufficient scale
Rwanda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft National Human Settlement Policy (2004); draft Land bill (2004) draft Mortgage Law (2007) • Government low cost housing scheme in rural areas to accommodate returning refugees • Kigali City also provides subsidised housing
South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Housing White Paper (1994) and Breaking New Ground (2004) • Subsidised, "Peoples' Housing Process" • Market-driven housing for middle - high income population
Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft National Housing Policy prepared in 2005 - not yet adopted addresses slum upgrading, minimum norms & standards, private sector role in the provision of housing on a commercial basis • PPPs with local and national government, and int'l donor, address self-help housing
Zambia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New housing strategy pending - in consultation phase

Source: Rust, K. (2008). *International Experience & Lessons Learned*. Paper presented at the workshop on Housing finance systems and policy in sub-Saharan Africa, Wits Business School, Johannesburg. 3-8 November 2008

South Asia

Access to adequate housing is also a key issue in Asia and the Pacific where more than 500 million people or 45 per cent of all urban residents of the region live in sub-standard housing such as slums and squatter settlements because there is an insufficient supply of better quality housing at a cost they can afford. (ESCAP, 2010). ESCAP further reports that national governments in South Asian countries have generally been taking various measures over the years in meeting the housing needs for the poor through various programmes and missions. Examples of these include:

India

Indira Awas Yoyana is a cash subsidy scheme for rural Below Poverty Line (BPL) families for construction of dwelling units, using their own design and technology.

Interest Subsidy Scheme for Housing the Urban Poor

The scheme provides for interest subsidy of five per cent per annum on the loan amount of up to Rs. 100 000 (about US\$2000) for the economically weaker section and lower income group in the urban areas for acquisition or construction of houses.

Sri Lanka

The Women's Bank is a cooperative society built and operated by and for the poor women of Sri Lanka. The Bank provides its members with loans for construction of kitchens, toilets, wells, etc. as basic necessities to improve the quality of life of its members.

Pakistan

Khuda-ki-Basti (KKB). Under this scheme a poor and needy family is invited to personally visit the reception of KKB on site. After initial verification, the family is given an on-room temporary residence on rent at the site. Once the management of KKB is convinced of the genuineness of the family's need, they are allocated a plot on site with payment installments. The family is then permitted to start construction on an incremental basis subject to their financial means. Technical support in construction is provided by the management. The ownership of the plot is conditional to living on site and is non-transferable. This prevents any speculation or misuse of the scheme.

Source: ESCAP (2010), *Regional Project on pro-poor housing finance in Asia and the Pacific: A compendium of select countries of Asia Pacific region*. ESACP

Public works

Public works programmes aim to provide a cushion against unemployment risk for the poorest workers by offering some monetary compensation for 'emergency' or short-term work, typically in the maintenance, upgrading, or construction of local infrastructure (Ferreira, 2010). It has been shown that when well-planned, the outputs of public works (for example schools, roads, conserved soil) can create community assets to support household livelihoods (Slater, 2011)

Public works programmes in Latin America

Workfare programmes became widespread in Latin America in the 1990s and have since been implemented in various countries of the region: Mexico, Bolivia, Colombia and Peru (Ferreira & Robalino, 2009). Currently however, Argentina's *Jefes y Jefas de Hogar* is the only that can be described as a family-focused anti-poverty programme. It is targeted at unemployed heads of households with dependents under the age of 18 years or with disabled individuals of any age. Pregnant women are also a target population. To be eligible recipients must be engaged in one of the following activities: a training programme, community work for up to 20 hours per week, or work for a private company (Barrientos et al, 2010).

Public works programmes in sub-Saharan Africa

In a study of 167 public works programmes (PWPs) in sub-Saharan Africa, McCord and Slater (2009) concluded that these can be categorised into four types.

Type A PWPs offering a single short-term episode of employment with a safety net or social protection objective.

Type B Programmes offering repeated or ongoing employment opportunities as a form of income insurance, which in some cases entails a guarantee of employment for all who seek it.

Type C Programmes promoting the labour intensification of government infrastructure to promote aggregate employment

Type D Programmes enhancing employability by improving labour quality.

Based on this typology and on the study by McCord & Slater, it can be concluded that most PWPs in Africa are of Type A. With their target populations mostly being people from poor households, the programmes are the preferred means of transferring social protection to households with labour. McCord and Slater (2009) however argue that the scale and coverage of most PWPs in Africa is minimal and rarely matches the extent of need among the poor under- and unemployed. In addition, given that most of the programmes offer a single episode of employment, they are insufficient in the context of high unemployment and chronic poverty where short-term consumption smoothing is required (McCord and Slater, 2009).

Public works programmes in South Asia

In South Asia, public works programmes have traditionally been offered as a last resort for those stricken by absolute poverty. However, these programmes are now a widespread policy tool in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan (Table 5). Most are self-targeted and categorical, aimed at poor households, largely in rural areas.

Table 5: Examples of current public works programmes in South Asia

BANGLADESH	
Programme Title and Description	PKSF Programmed Initiative for the Eradication of Monga (PRIME). Poverty alleviation and credit through: (1) cash for work employment opportunities for one month a season, (2) emergency credit; (3). consumption loans; (4). remittances services and specially designed flexible credit support throughout the year; (5). beneficiaries' copying skills and resources for the future
Eligibility	The poorest households
Targeting/Delivery	Self-targeting
Mechanism	
Value of the benefit & delivery	NA
Geography	Northern Bangladesh
Coverage	NA
INDIA	
Programme Title and Description	Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY). Provides a minimum wage for unskilled labour and a means of livelihood to people at critical levels of subsistence.
Eligibility	Rural poor
Targeting/Delivery	Geographic, demographic and self-targeting. Preference given to underprivileged groups (scheduled castes/tribes, freed bonded labourers), and 30% of the employment opportunities are earmarked for women.
Mechanism	
Value of the benefit & delivery	Minimum wage and value
Geography	Rural areas
Coverage	In 1993-94, the first component created 952 million person days of employment; the second 7.35 million person days. More recent data are not available
INDIA	
Programme Title and Description	Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rojgar Yojana (SJSRY). Employment programme for urban poverty alleviation. Two main components i) the Urban Self Employment Programme (USEP) and the ii) Urban Wage Employment Programme
Eligibility	Urban poor
Targeting/Delivery	Categorical and means-tested. A house-to-house survey identifies genuine beneficiaries. Noneconomic parameters are applied in addition to the urban poverty line. Women beneficiaries in women-headed households are given priority.
Mechanism	
Geography	All urban towns in India
Coverage	In the last three years, the total number of self-employment loans given under SJSRY has been just 952, which is less than one per cent of the below-poverty line families.
NEPAL	
Programme Title and Description	One Family, One Employment. Infrastructure development programme.
Eligibility	Unemployed people in remote areas
Value of the benefit & delivery	Jobs pay Rs180-Rs350 per day
Geography	Karnali region
Coverage	55000 households in Kamali region to date

Source: Kohler, G., Cali, M. & Stirbu, M. (2009). *Social protection in South Asia*. Kathmandu, Nepal: UNICEF.

Food programmes or subsidies

Food and nutrition assistance programmes are particularly important for nutritional rehabilitation for families and children, where improved quantity and quality of food, and specific micronutrients, are needed urgently (Adato & Bassett, 2009). However, arguments have been made that these programmes generally yield a smaller increase in the beneficiaries' choice sets than would a cash transfer of the same monetary value, and have high operational and administrative costs related to procurement, transportation, and the logistics of distribution. Their availability in developing countries is discussed below.

Food programmes in Latin America

Food based programs in Latin America are of two broad types defined by their target group. The first type targets poor households and includes soup kitchens, the distribution of basic staples or nutritional supplements to mothers and babies, as well as food-for-work programs for which participants self-select on willingness to work for low compensation (as in workfare). The second type comprises categorical programs that target specific demographic groups, rather than the poor. The former (those targeted to the poor) range from in-kind food rations that household members can collect in certain shops or in public clinics to food stamps targeted to the poorest households.

Food programmes in sub-Saharan Africa

Food aid was a popular mode of emergency aid in sub-Saharan Africa in the early 2000s during the food crisis in Southern Africa and the Horn of Africa. Since the Livingstone Call of Action however, many countries in the sub-continent have replaced or complemented food aid with broader social protection programmes, and the trend is now turning to be targeting 'predictable hunger with predictable cash transfers' instead of food aid (Save the Children et al., 2005). Among the few major food programmes remaining in the region is Ethiopia's *Productive Safety Net Programme*. The programme consists of two components: public works and direct food support for those chronically food insecure households with members who cannot work such as people with disabilities and older persons. The food aims to enable households to build assets and increase income over a five year period with the public works component. Eligibility is based on a household's three years continuous dependence on relief.

Food programmes in South Asia

In South Asia, food programmes are a major type of social assistance in Bangladesh and India. These are focused on households and families but women appear to be the main recipients (Table 6).

Table 6 Examples of food programmes in South Asia

BANGLADESH	
Programme Title and Description:	Vulnerable Group Development Programme In-kind wheat transfer. Complementary package of development services including health and nutrition, education, literacy training, savings and support in launching income-generating activities. Monthly food rations for two years
Eligibility	Physically sound, extremely poor women 18-49. Selected from the most vulnerable and poor households in the union based on 4 of the following: chronic food insecurity; household owning no land or less than 0.15 acres; housing conditions; no regular source of earning; female-headed household.
Targeting/Delivery Mechanism	Geographic targeting
Value of the benefit & delivery	Participants receive either 30kg of wheat or 25kg of micronutrient fortified whole wheat flour each month for 24 months.
Geography	Covers 750,000 ultra-poor rural women (female-headed households) that are vulnerable to chronic crisis in 480 upazilas in all 64 districts of Bangladesh. Total coverage 570,000 households
Coverage	3.75 million people across the country
Programme Title and Description:	Food-for-Work. Employment generation for the poor mainly in the dry season through infrastructure creation and maintenance. It also aims at reducing food insecurity
Eligibility	Functionally landless; lack of productive assets; generally female-headed households; day labour or temporary workers; income less than Tk 300/month
Geography	Rural Bangladesh
Coverage	About 1,000,000 participants annually. Provided about 75,000,000 hours of work in 2003-2004
INDIA	
Programme Title and Description:	Targeted Public Distribution System. To provide cereal grains to the poor at subsidized prices.
Eligibility	Families below the poverty line
Targeting/Delivery Mechanism	Categorical
Value of the benefit & delivery	240 kg of food grains annually per family
Geography	Nationwide
PAKISTAN	
Programme Title and Description:	Tawana Pakistana. Mid-day meals for girls in rural primary schools and Community-based interventions to address malnutrition
Eligibility	Girls in rural primary schools
Targeting/Delivery Mechanism	Categorical; Mid-day meals
Value of the benefit & delivery	650,000 girls aged 5 - 12, half enrolled and half out-of-school, in approximately 250 girls' primary schools in each district (6,500 schools in all).
Geography	26 most malnourished districts of Pakistan
Coverage	530,000 beneficiaries (2002-2003)

Source: Kohler, G., Cali, M. & Stirbu, M. (2009). *Social protection in South Asia*. Kathmandu, Nepal: UNICEF.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to provide an overview of family-focused, anti-poverty policies in developing countries, with particular focus on the three developing regions with the highest poverty and vulnerability: Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia. After an overview of the current levels of poverty in the three regions, the paper showed how prevailing socio-economic and demographic transformations have the potential to increase, and in some cases have increased, families' vulnerability to poverty by changing the environment in which families function and support their members.

The social security and social assistance programmes adopted by developing countries to mitigate the impact of poverty on families were then reviewed and the overall conclusion is that it is imperative for family-focused anti-poverty strategies in these countries to acknowledge and incorporate the prevailing transformations taking place within family system. For example, while the review showed that all developing countries have some form of social security, the schemes tend to target the formal economic sectors. Given the high level of informal sector employment in developing countries, this social security pattern means that a high proportion of their populations is not eligible for the benefits. It is also noteworthy that while there has, over the years, been an increase in the proportion of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector; men still are much more widely employed than women. Thus the current wage-based system of social security means that the increasing numbers of female-headed households in developing countries are at higher risk of poverty and vulnerability.

While the introduction of widespread social security programmes in developing countries can be hampered by limitations such as underdeveloped capital and insurance markets and high budget restrictions characterized by traditional labour structures (Justino, 2003), there is still a need for efforts to be made to ensure that workers in the informal sector can be brought into the formal schemes by adapting and extending the social security system to suit the conditions of informal-sector and rural workers, the self-employed and domestic employees (Ghai, 2002). The specific pathways to achieving this differ among authors (see for example, Taylor, 2008; International Social Security Association 2008; Niño-Zarazúa et al., 2010), but all emphasize key components, among them:

- *The need to improve the overall understanding of social security* by conducting research on extension efforts, documenting best practices worldwide, developing new mechanisms to reach out to workers in the informal economy and creating guidelines for extending basic benefit entitlement.
- *Achieving concrete improvements in social security coverage* through technical assistance projects focusing on a diagnosis of unfulfilled needs and ways to meet them. Undertake training and policy discussion with stakeholders, strengthening institutions and social dialogue, formulating action plans, establishing networks of support institutions and individuals, and monitoring and evaluating results

Ghai (2002) also suggests that informal sector workers could also be encouraged to devise their own social insurance schemes as a protection against sickness, accident, loss of livelihood, old age etc, and gives the example of the Self-Employed Women' Association (SEWA) in India (see Box 3) as a plausible approach.

Box 3: Social security for informal workers: The case of SEWA

The Self-Employed Women' Association (SEWA) is a registered trade union working with women in the informal sector. Most of its members are vendors, hawkers, home-based workers and labourers. SEWA ensures that its members receive minimum wages and provides them with legal assistance and overall work security. It provides a voice and representation to the members at various levels. SEWA's Integrated Social Security Programme is the largest contributory social insurance scheme for workers in the informal economy in India. The premium is financed by one-third contributions from foreign donations, one-third from Indian life insurance companies and one-third from members. The scheme covers health insurance (including a maternity grant), life insurance (death and disability) and asset insurance (loss or damage to dwelling or work equipment). The total insurance package is just over \$1.50 per year

Ghai, D. (2002). *Social security priorities and patterns: A global perspective*. International Institute for Labour Studies Discussion Paper. Available at: www.ilo.int/public/english/bureau/inst/publications/discussion/dp14102.pdf. Accessed 20 February 2010

The paper also presented evidence of the positive role of unconditional cash transfers, specifically, old age pension, in reducing and improving human capital and health outcomes of children. Available evidence (see, for example, Barrientos & Lloyd-Sherlock, 2002) shows that the pensions can also mitigate some of the factors to which family poverty has been attributed. For example, where sources of alternative income for younger generations are scarce, the cash transfers can increase incentives for younger family members to live with elders, thus create new possibilities for intergenerational reciprocity. Furthermore, in a context of extreme poverty and household vulnerability, where it may prove impossible to reconcile cultural norms of reverence and support for elders with daily demands for caregiving, the pensions can act as incentives for households to properly care for older persons, and can also strengthen households' capacity to do so (Barrientos & Lloyd-Sherlock, 2002).

Conspicuously absent in many developing countries' unconditional cash transfers are child-oriented policies. Thus, while old-age pensions have positive impact on child welfare, there is a need to cater for children in poor families that do not have older persons. This will also ensure that the bulk of the old-age pension goes towards improving the welfare in their intended beneficiaries—the elderly. In developing the child-focused policies and programmes, note should be made that approaches concomitantly targeting multiple generations and multiple levels of influence have been found to be more successful in breaking the link between family poverty and child-well-being (Shankz & Dazinger, 2010).

A vast body of literature from developed countries (see for example, Immervoll et al, 1999; Milligan & Stabile, 2009) has pointed to several potential mechanisms through which child benefits can impact the health and development outcomes of children as well as overall family well-being. One channel is through improvement in a family's ability to purchase more goods and services (such as food, clothing, books and other expenditure-related inputs) that are valuable in maintaining basic child welfare and for

enhancing child development. Another channel may have indirect effects such as reducing family stress and improving household relations, increasing the chance and opportunities for employment, and overall enhancing families' ability to function, learn, and improve their socio-economic status. To this end, the range of child-focused programmes such as those in South Africa (Box 4) are worthy of consideration by other developing countries.

Box 4 Child-focused programmes in South Africa

Foster child grant: Paid to a foster parent who is a citizen, permanent resident, or refugee of South Africa at the time of the application. There must be a court order indicating the foster care status of the child. The child must be aged 18 or younger (age 21 if a student) and remain in the care of the foster parent. Beneficiaries may only receive one benefit at a time.

Child support grant (means-tested): Paid to the primary caregiver of a child or children aged 17 or younger. The primary caregiver must be aged 16 or older and a citizen or permanent resident of South Africa at the time of the application. The grant is paid for up to six children if they are not biologically related; otherwise, there is no limit. Means test: Annual income must be less than 30,000 rand for a single person; 60,000 rand for a couple. Beneficiaries are eligible to receive only one benefit at a time.

Care dependency grant (means-tested): Paid to a parent, foster parent, or primary caregiver of a child aged 18 years or younger who requires permanent care or support services as the result of a severe mental or physical disability. The child must be cared for at home and the disability confirmed by a medical assessment report. The applicant and the child must reside in South Africa at the time of the application. Means test: Annual income must be less than 129,600 rand for a single person; 259,200 rand for a couple. Beneficiaries may only receive one benefit at a time; a foster parent may receive more than one benefit at a time.

Source: International Social Security Association (2009). *Social Security Programs Throughout the World: Africa, 2011*.

It is also notable that while people with disabilities make up to 15 to 20 per cent of the population in developing countries, and given the intricately link between poverty and disability, very few developing countries have disability benefits. Yeo (2001) attributes this partly to the lack of internationally comparable data relating to people living with disabilities and chronic poverty in developing countries. There is, therefore, need to undertake research to determine the specific numbers, spatial distribution and needs of people living with disabilities so as to acquire evidence on the impact of poverty on disability and vice versa; and to help in directing available resources towards tackling disability as part of family poverty reduction efforts. It will also be useful for developing countries to: enhance people with disabilities' access to employment, and education and training, through investments in accessible educational and work sites that address individual specific needs; to re-examine all social policy documents and their implementation plans to determine the extent to which they recognize and address specific issues of people with disabilities; to put in place mechanisms that will ensure the effective mainstreaming of disability so as to increase participation and social inclusion of people with disabilities. Overall, all these can be achieved with the ratification and effective implementation of international commitments such as the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* as well as similar regional commitments.

With regard to conditional cash transfers, it was evident that most of them are targeted not at individuals, but at households with children, and are mostly given to women or mothers. While investing in children should be seen as a priority to break the intergenerational poverty, family focused anti-poverty strategies need to consider poor families that, for example, have no children and hence no indirect access to conditional cash transfers. It has also been argued that while the delegation of responsibility to women provides a measure of empowerment as women handle the income transfers and receive the tools of knowledge through workshops and courses related to the transfers, this could also be perpetuating the stereotype that women's role is that of a carer as opposed to being in economic activities. Others argue that the receipt of transfers adds an extra role to multiple ones already played by women in the home, community and economic spheres; while others have also argued that if women's devotion to the programmes is seen, for example as abandonment or an underestimation of the role of the man, situations of family stress or domestic violence can arise (Soares & Silva, 2010; Arriagada, 2011). Against this background, the involvement of men in these programmes—through, for example, specialized workshops for them and activities specifically designed for their participation and motivation—are pertinent. Men's participation in the programmes will also be in line with increasing calls for the involvement of men and fathers in the care and maintenance of their families (see for example, O'Brien, 2011; Richter et al, 2011).

The review of the provision of social services showed that the proportion of people in developing countries with access to basic services such as water, sanitation, and health care is generally low. This underscores the need for governments in these countries to make concerted efforts to meet these essential needs. Ghai (2002) argues that except in the poorest countries, the real problem is usually not scarcity of resources but often lack of administrative and technical capacity on the part of government to formulate strategies and programmes, and to coordinate and monitor their implementation. Ghai thus suggest that international development and donor agencies can play a vital role in overcoming these obstacles through financial and technical assistance. Ghana's National Health Insurance Fund (Box 5), developed with support from the largest trade union confederation in Luxemburg, is an example of how this can be achieved. Other programmes that can offer lessons for broadening access to basic health services to the poor in developing countries can be found in Brazil (Macinko et al, 2006), Chile (Missoni & Solimano, 2010), Colombia (Baeza & Packard, 2006) Costa Rica (Sáenz et al, 2010), Mali (Franco et al, 2008), and Sri Lanka (Ranna-Eliya & Sikurajapathy, 2008).

Box 5: National Health Insurance Fund of Ghana

In order to abolish out-of-pocket user fees for health services, in 2003 the Ghanaian Parliament passed the National Health Insurance Act, which introduced a compulsory health insurance scheme that covers all person resident in Ghana, It is “an act to secure the provision of basic health care services ... through mutual and private health insurance schemes, to put in place a body to register, license, and regulate health insurance schemes, and to accredit and monitor health care providers operating under health care schemes; to impose a health insurance levy and to establish a National Health Insurance Fund that will provide subsidy to licensed district mutual health insurance schemes”. The Ghanaian Fund offers affordable medical coverage to informal-sector workers and their families for an annual premium equivalent to US\$18.00

Source: International Social Security Association (2008). *Dynamic social security for Africa: An agenda for development*. Geneva: International Social Security Association

With regard to housing, a regional study of pro-poor housing finance in Asia and the Pacific ESCAP (2010) established that there cannot be a universal solution to the issues of pro-poor housing financing in any country. This can also be said about Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, as ESCAP (2010) suggests, housing stakeholders in different countries need to collaborate with each other and incorporate the best practices of various pro-poor models to the existing ones. At the same time, there is need for educating the poor about finance options available to them in their countries. It will also be a good idea to provide construction assistance to the poor in the form of low-cost housing technologies which would result in bringing down the final cost of building a house. A particularly apparent gap in the pro-poor housing programmes in developing countries is that of specific measures to help young couples; no examples of these were identified in the literature. Thus this is an issue that deserves special attention given that lack of housing can interfere with family functioning by, for example, preventing or delaying marriage formation and/or discouraging young couples to have children (Robila, 2011).

The paper also showed that while public works programmes exist in many developing countries, they often do not employ more than a small fraction of poor households with access to labour at any one time. The low coverage of almost all programmes means that the extent of 'social protection' offered by PWPs is rarely commensurate with their 'political' role in the social protection discourse (McCord and Slater (2009). Overall, the key limitations associated with PWPs are: they offer short term benefits rather than regular, predictable support required in situations of chronic poverty; large scale PWPs require significant managerial and technical inputs which may not be readily available; most PWP cannot offer employment to all who seek it, and hence access tends to be heavily rationed and may exclude the poorest who are least able to compete for employment; and PWPs are a costly way of delivering social protection, and may only be economically rational if the assets created offer real and sustained benefits.³

Despite the foregoing, it is also acknowledged that given the high levels of unemployment and underemployment and the low coverage of unemployment benefit schemes in developing countries, public works programmes can still provide a useful mechanism to assist the most vulnerable among the unemployed and should continue to form part of the developing countries' social protection floor (International Labour Organisation, 2008; Ferreira & Robalino, 2010). India's National Rural Employment Guarantee of Employment Scheme, while not a permanent solution, is an illustration of how temporary income support can be used to assist households. The scheme offers 100 days of paid employment in rural public works programmes. If a public works programme is not established, there is an entitlement to 100 days of a social transfer. Other design features include minimum wage; equal pay for equal work and on site child care facilities with a child carer hired from among the community where there are more than five pre-school aged children in the workers' community (International Labour Organisation, 2008; Kohler, 2009). Given that unemployment benefits or assistance programmes are -by nature- usually short-term, consideration should be made to combine public works programme with skills training and

³ See www.oecd.org/dataoecd/17/51/47466739.pdf

information to the workers in the search for employment, or to promote self-employment at the end of the programme.

Given the high operational and administrative costs related to procurement, transportation, and the logistics of distribution associated with food transfers, developing countries might be more efficient in their family-focused anti-poverty strategies if they devote resources to social pensions and conditional cash transfers, the evaluations of which have shown positive outcomes in various areas like nutrition. In a study of cash transfer programmes, in Southern and East Africa, for example, Adato & Bassett (2009) found that most of the programmes were associated with reported reduced hunger and increased average meals per day. Zambia's pilot *Social Cash Transfer Scheme* recipients consumed more protein, fats, fruits and vegetables, and fewer "inferior" foods associated with coping strategies used during food shortages. Similarly, Malawians receiving cash transfers through the expanded *Mchinji Cash Transfer* programme consumed almost twice as many food groups than comparison households, and were more likely to eat higher quality foods, including fish, chicken, beans and vegetables.

All in all, the alleviation of family poverty, calls for focus on the family, rather than on individual members because is within the family that the programmes can act more efficiently in order to tackle the root causes of poverty and do away with its vicious circle. "The design of poverty alleviation programmes need to incorporate the relations and internal dynamics that occur in families, as well as specifically encourage activities for individual members of the home, with their different needs and motivation mechanisms." (Arriagada, 2011:2). Essentially:

No single program is likely to be enough. And although the most concrete issue for a family may be insufficient income, "fixing" income support policies alone might not take us far enough along in a risk and protection framework. Families with children, especially those headed by young single women, could undoubtedly use better-designed cash and financial help with housing, child care, food, and job training to make ends meet. However, to prevent a lifetime of poverty and dead-end jobs, a host of other resources—education, parenting support, services to provide their children a nurturing home environment, and high-quality early child care—are needed. Given that families often experience spells in and out of poverty throughout the life course, it would be strategic to assist parents of young children to increase their educational attainment and plan a better life for themselves and for their children. Work-related participation requirements might be part of a broader goal to improve long-term outcomes for entire families.

Source: Shanks, T.R.W. & Danzinger, S.K. (2011)

Way forward

All in all, in spite of its varied and changing forms, for many developing countries the family remains the dominant unit of production, consumption, reproduction, and accumulation that can be seen in three basic dimensions: as a psycho-biological unit where members are linked together by kinship relations, personal inclinations and emotional bonds; as a social unit where members live together in the same household and share tasks and social functions; and as the basic unit of economic production (Bigombe & Khadiagala, 2003; African Union, 2004; Belsey, 2005). This recognition of the family as a dynamic unit engaged in an intertwined process of individual and group

development underscores the need for governments of developing countries to encourage cohesion of the family, to ensure its place at the core of society, and to strengthen it as part of an integrated and comprehensive approach to sustainable development.

Strong families have access to a range of emotional, material and spiritual resources which can enable its members to contribute meaningfully to their own development and prosperity, as well as the betterment of society. They, for example, share resources, care for the elderly, the sick, and the disabled, and socialize children in ways that no other institution can do more successfully (ESCAP, 2008; Department of Social Development, 2011). The achievement of strong families is, however, largely dependent on other institutions in society. The structure of a country's economy, for example, will: influence the extent to which members of a family are able to enter and participate in the labour market; determine whether family members are able to derive livelihoods from decent work opportunities, earn a living wage and have benefits which enable them to have acceptable standards of living; and have a bearing on the ability of family members to access quality health care, quality education and decent employment (Department of Social Development, 2011).

Against this background it is imperative for governments and stakeholders in developing countries to strengthen the family through the support and effective implementation of the key international and regional commitments to family well-being and poverty reduction. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP, 2008) highlights a wide-ranging list of other channels through which governments and other stakeholders in their region of focus can adopt to strengthen families. Many of these are relevant to developing countries in general and examples⁴ include:

1. Ensuring income and basic social security

- Ensure sufficient minimum income and adequate standard of living for all families, especially those in extreme economic or social need, through a variety of social protection schemes, including livelihood protection, universal pensions, social- and micro-insurance schemes, conditional cash transfers and income support.

2. Enhancing education and training opportunities

- Provide social protection measures such as conditional cash transfers to enhance poor families' access to education services.

3. Increasing access to health care services

- Increase the coverage of primary health care to ensure all family members have access to adequate and affordable health care.
- Expand financing of health care and the provision of insurance schemes to people living in poor families or those who are vulnerable to poverty.

⁴ For a more comprehensive discussions of policy recommendations see ESCAP [2008]).

4. Targeting vulnerable families

- Identify and target those families who are the most vulnerable and the least likely to have alternative sources of support.
- Ensure eligibility requirements for social protection services and benefits. Do not deny services to families with special needs, especially those who are just above or below the minimum level of income.

5. Empowering the family by supporting its caregiving functions

- Provide direct support to family caregivers in the form of economic and non-economic measures, such as personal income tax relief and subsidies for the care of children, older persons and persons with disabilities.
- Put in place context-specific mechanisms and policies to facilitate the balancing of work and family responsibilities.

6. Reinforcing family solidarity

- Ensure that interventions to support families recognize generational interdependence and promote intergenerational interaction and healthy intra-family relationships.

7. Integrating a family perspective into the policy basis for social services

- Ensure national commitment to maintain the centrality of the family in national development policies and programmes.

8. Enhancing policy-relevant research and data collection

- Strengthen the information base for family policy and social services programmes by collecting data on the characteristics of individuals, families, households, populations and their socio-economic status.
- Develop appropriate indicators and practical methodologies for the collection of data on families and for assessing the direct and indirect effects of policies and programmes on family life and well-being.
- Promote regional networks for research and information exchange on policy options, experiences and best practices to assist in developing family policies and more effective social services planning.

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Table A1: Social security programmes in selected sub-Saharan African countries, 2011

Country	Old age, disability & survivors	Sickness and maternity		Work injury	Unemployment	Family allowances
		Cash benefits for both	Cash benefits plus medical care ^a			
Benin	X	b	c	X	d	X
Botswana	e	d	d	X	d	c
Burkina Faso	X	b,f	X	X	d	X
Burundi	X	d	d	X	d	X
Cameroon	X	b,f	X	X	d	X
Cape Verde	X	X	X	X	d	X
Central African Republic	X	b,f	d	X	d	X
Chad	X	b,f	c	X	d	X
Congo (Brazzaville)	X	b,f	X	X	d	X
Congo (Kinshasa)	X	d	c	X	d	X
Côte d'Ivoire	X	b	X	X	d	X
Equatorial Guinea	X	X	X	X	d	X
Ethiopia	X	d	d	X	d	d
Gabon	X	b, f	X	X	d	X
Gambia	X	d	d	X	d	d
Ghana	X	d	c	X	d	d
Guinea	X	X ^f	X	X	d	X
Kenya	X	d	g	X	d	d
Liberia	X	d	d	X	d	d
Madagascar	X	b, f	X	X	d	X
Malawi	h	d	g	X	d	d
Mali	X	b, f	X	X	d	X
Mauritania	X	b, f	X	X	d	X
Mauritius	X	d	g	X	X	X
Niger	X	b, f	X	X	d	X
Nigeria	X	d	g	X	c, h	d
Rwanda	X	d	d	X	d	d
Sao Tome and Principe	X	X	c	X	d	d
Senegal	X ⁱ	X	X	X	d	X
Seychelles	X	X	c	X	c	d
Sierra Leone	X	d	d	X	d	d
South Africa	X ⁱ	c	c	X	X	X
Swaziland	X	d	d	X	d	d
Tanzania	X	b	X	X	d	d
Togo	X	b, f	c	X	d	X
Uganda	X	d	d	X	d	d
Zambia	X	d	g	X	d	d
Zimbabwe	X	d	g	X	d	d

Source: International Social Security Association (2009). *Social Security Programs throughout the World: Africa, 2011*. Geneva: International Social Security Association

Key: b. Maternity benefits only.

c. Coverage is provided under other programmes or through social assistance.

d. Has no programme or information is not available.

e. Old age and orphan's benefit only.

f. Maternity benefits are financed under family allowances.

g. Medical benefits only.

h. The statutory system has yet to be implemented

i. Old age and survivor benefits only

X Available in some form.

Table A2: Cash transfer programmes in Latin America & the Caribbean

Unconditional cash transfers					
Country	Name of program and year started	Objectives	Target population	Selection of beneficiaries	Transfers
Argentina	Universal Family Allowance per Child for Social Protection , 2009	To provide a family allowance for parents who are unemployed or work in the informal economy	Children below age 18 years (no limit for handicapped children)	---	USD\$48 given to one parent/child carer, subject to a maximum of five children.
Brazil	Beneficio de Prestação Continuada 1988	To reduce poverty and vulnerability among the elderly poor excluded from social insurance schemes	Poor people aged 65 + People with disabilities with a family per capita income of less than one quarter of the minimum wage	Means-tested and categorical	Equivalent of one month of minimum wage: about US\$ 4 a day
Chile	Subsidio Unitario Familiar, 1981	To reduce extreme poverty among households with children	Poor households at the bottom 40percent of the income distribution with pregnant women, school-age children or disabled members.	Means-tested and categorical	A month equivalent to US\$10 in 2007
Costa Rica	Caja Costarricense del Seguro Social , 1974	To reduce poverty in old age or as a consequence of disability	Adults aged 65+; people with disabilities, aged 18-64 and unable to work; and others classified as extremely poor with no family support.	Means-tested	to ₡ 70,125 monthly
Mexico	Programa de Apoyo Alimentario, 2009	To improve the nutritional status of deprived households	Children under age 5 ; pregnant/lactating women; households in poverty who do not receive support from the Oportunidades programme.	---	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bimonthly financial support • Nutritional supplements to children 6 months to 2 years, and to pregnant/ lactating women. • Provision of milk to low-income households with children aged 2 to 5 years

Conditional cash transfers						
Country	Name of program and year started	Objectives	Target population	Transfers	Selection of beneficiaries	Conditions
Bolivia	Bono Juancito Pinto, 2006	To promote the accumulation of human capital as a way of breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty	Public school children up to grade 8	US\$ 29 per child	Categorical	Children must be registered and attending school regularly at least 80 per cent attendance).
Brazil	Bolsa Familia, 2003	To reduce hunger, poverty, inequality and social exclusion by facilitating the empowerment of poor and vulnerable households	Households in extreme poverty with children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Households with per capita incomes below a quarter of the minimum wage: R\$50/month plus US\$7.5 per child below 16 years of age up to three children. •Households in moderate poverty receive R\$15 per child below 16 years of age up to three children 	Targeting through means test, using a database of vulnerable households applying for support	Conditional on visits to health centres by children and pregnant/lactating mothers as well as children's school attendance
Colombia	Familias en Acción 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To complement the income of extremely poor households with young children; • to reduce non-attendance and drop-out rates; • to increase health care provision to children aged 7 and younger ; to improve health care practices and nutritional status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The poorest 20percent of households and with children aged 0-17 •Extremely poor households with minors ages 0-6 that are not participating in other programs 	Monthly education subsidy: \$8 for each minor in Grades 2–5; \$14–33) per minor in Grades 6–11. Monthly Health \$3 per family with members less than 7 years.	Geographic targeting used only in about 10 large urban areas (e.g. in Bogota). Means tests are used for household targeting in localities and urban areas. Municipalities use program targeting and program registration	Conditional on visits to health centres by children and pregnant/lactating mothers as well as children's school attendance
Costa Rica	Avancemos , 2006	To reduce poverty in the short run while fostering long-term poverty	• Children aged 0–14, including street children,	•An income transfer for health and education equivalent	---	Conditional on visits to health centres by children and

		alleviation through increased educational attainment	and pregnant women in extreme poverty	to US\$ 5 per child aged 0–14, up to 4 children per household, • An additional transfer of US\$ 10 per household.		pregnant/lactating mothers as well as children's school attendance
Dominican Republic	Programa Solidaridad, 2005	To invest in health, nutrition and education among poor households	Extremely and moderately poor households with: Children aged 0-5 for health services. • Children and adolescents aged 6-16 to ensure school attendance. • Children aged 0-15 who have no Birth Certificate	US\$20 a monthly per household	Targeting is in two stages: first, geographic targeting (a poverty map) and second, a means tested procedure to identify poor households within 'priority' areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Household heads and spouses: to attend training sessions 3 times per year. Children aged 0-55, to visit health centres, as per government requirements. Children aged 6-16 to be enrolled in school and attend 85percent classes
Ecuador	Bono Solidario, 2003	To reduce the poverty gap in poor households with children, elderly and the disabled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Households with children age 0-16 in the poorest 2 quintiles poor households with elderly and/or disabled members 	Monthly income transfer of US\$ 15 a month per household	---	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For children aged 6–16 years: regular school attendance Children aged under 5 years: regular health post visits for development checkups and immunizations
Honduras	Programa de Asignacion Familiar, 1990	To promote human capital accumulation	Poor households with children aged 6-12 and enrolled in primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US\$3-5 per child a month for up to three children per household. A monthly health contribution of US\$3-4 to poor households with pregnant women and/or children under 3 years of age for up to two children per household 	Geographic targeting	Conditional on visits to health centres by children and women as well as children's school attendance
El Salvador	Red Solidaria, 2005	To assist extremely poor households through short-term improvements in child and maternal health and nutrition; basic education, and drinking water, sanitation, electricity and roads improvements to the poorest rural communities of the country	Mothers or another female family member in charge of children's care.	Each stipend is worth US\$15 per month per family	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic targeting based on a poverty mapping, technique and Household targeting which selects population in poverty 	School enrolment and attendance to 6th grade amongst children aged 5-14. Register the family in health programmes, attend child and maternal health check-ups and ensure compliance with the basic child and maternal health protocols and immunizations. Attend family training sessions
Mexico	Oportunidades, 2000 (1997 as Progresa)	Improve schooling, health and nutrition of poor households	Poor households	• Monthly cash transfer for food and energy consumption; and educational expenses	A three-stage selection procedure: (1) localities are identified through a poverty map; (2) extensive household surveys are conducted in the selected localities to gather data on a number of welfare indicators; and (3) data is then used to identify the beneficiaries	Conditional on visits to health centres by children and women as well as children's school attendance

					according to a wealth index that determines who is in a state of extreme poverty.	
Paraguay	Red de Protección y Promoción Social, 2005	To reduce extreme poverty and to improve both human and social capital	Households in extreme poverty and with children aged 0-14.	US\$ 10-30 per family per month. An additional transfer for up to 4 children for health and educational expenses	Geographic selection of communities and means tests for the selection of households in extreme poverty and with children aged 0-14.	Conditional on visits to health centres by children and mothers, and school attendance
	Tekopora/P ROPAIS II, 2006	To encourage investment in human and social capital through school matriculation and attendance, and by increasing access to health services for children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extremely poor families with children under age 15, and pregnant women. only households living in the poorest districts in the country 	About US\$6 per child or pregnant women, up to a limit of four beneficiaries per household.	Geographic targeting plus household-level targeting. Households classified as extremely poor or moderately poor are eligible to participate	Conditional on school attendance and health checkups.
Peru	Programa Juntos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To provide poor rural households with nutritional support, health care, education, and identification documents in order to improve maternal and child health status; To decrease school dropouts; and promote registration and identification. 	Poor households with children under age 14.	US\$ 30 monthly grant per household	---	To attend health checkups school and register personal identification.

Source: Barrientos, A., Niño-Zarazúa, M. & Maitrot, M (2010). *Social Assistance in Developing Countries Database*, Version 5.0. Manchester; Brooks World Poverty Institute

Note: --- No information given in the above source

Table A3: Cash transfer programmes in sub-Saharan Africa, 2011

Unconditional cash transfers					
Country	Name of Program and year started	Objectives	Target Populations	Selection of beneficiaries	Transfer
Botswana	Orphan Care Programme , 1999	Poverty relief for orphans	Households caring for orphans and other vulnerable children	Categorical	Monthly food basket for households with orphans aged 18 years
Botswana	Old Age Pension, 1996	Support for vulnerable groups	All citizen aged 65 and over	Categorical; for citizens aged 65 years and above	± US\$ 27 per month
Kenya	The Hunger Safety Net Pilot Programme 2009	To alleviate extreme hunger and poverty in Kenya	Old Age Persons: persons aged 55 +	Community-based targeting	± US\$27/ household every two months
Lesotho	Lesotho Old Age Pension, 2004	To provide a non-contributory pension to all Basotho older than 70.	±US\$29 monthly	Categorical	All Basotho older than 70
Mauritius	Old Age Pension, 1958		Monthly income of: ±US\$ 58 (age 60-89); ±US\$220 (age 90-99: and ±US\$ 252 (age 100+)	Universal	Every person aged 60 years or over
Mozam-Bique	Food Subsidy Programme (in Portuguese, Programa de Subsídio de Alimentos),, 1997	To reduce extreme vulnerability	Destitute people with no capacity to work(older, disabled and chronically ill people, and malnourished pregnant women	Categorical and means tested	±US\$5-US\$10 per month) depending on the number of dependents in the household
Namibia	Old Age Grant, 1949	Preventing poverty among older people	Men and women aged 60 and over	Categorical	±US\$ 58.44 per month
	Maintenance grant	Social maintenance grant for children with disabilities aged under 16 years	Biological parent with child under the age of 18, whose gross-income is not more than US\$1300 per month	Means tested	US\$ 26 / month for first child plus US\$ 13 per month for every additional child. Maximum of 6 children in total
Sierra Leone	Social Safety Net Program , 2007	To reduce extreme poverty and vulnerability	Older persons with no other means of support	Community-based targeting	±US\$18 –US\$125/ year/person
South Africa	Child Support Grant, 1998	To reduce poverty and vulnerability among children	Poor children up until the age of 17	Means tested	±US\$21/month
	Care Dependency Grant	To support households with children with special needs	Caregivers of children with severe disabilities and chronic illnesses	Means tested	± US\$ 132/month
	Disability Grant	To provide financial support to adults with disabilities who are unable to work	Adults unable to work because of a mental or physical disability and are in need of financial support	Income and asset tested	The amount changes every year and depends on income and assets. As of April 2009, Grant was about US\$132/month
	Old Age Grant, 1928	To prevent poverty in old age.	Cover all men and women aged 60+	Categorical and means tested	±US\$127/month
Swaziland	Old Age Grant , 2005		US\$15.4 per month	Near universal for citizens over 60 years	Older poor aged 60 years and above,
Zambia	Pilot cash transfer schemes 2004	To reduce extreme poverty	US\$10.00/month/household. Those with children get a bonus of about US\$ 2.50.	Community-based targeting	households in extreme poverty

Unconditional cash transfers						
Country	Name of Program and year started	Objectives	Target population	Selection of beneficiaries	Transfers	Condition
Ethiopia	Productive Safety Net Program, 2006	To prevent food insecurity in the household	Chronically food-insecure households	---	±US\$1.75 30/ person/ month	
Ghana	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty programme , 2008	To supplement the incomes of dangerously poor households	Households with OVC and highly vulnerable elderly and disabled	Complex targeting methods, involving the selection of deprived districts and then a mix of community-based selection and proxy means testing.	Monthly transfers from US\$ 6.90 for one dependent up to a maximum of US\$ 12.90 for four dependents	No engagement in harmful forms of child labour or human trafficking; regular school attendance, registration of children's births attendance of postnatal check-ups and immunization schedules
Kenya	Cash Transfer for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To encourage fostering and retention of OVC within families and communities to promote their human capital development. 	Poor households fostering OVCs aged 0-17	Combination of community targeting mechanism and data collection and analysis on various social economic indicators	Bimonthly transfer s of: US\$13.50 for 1-2 OVCs US\$20.50 for 3-4 OVCs US\$27.40 for 5 OVCs	Regular health facility visits for children's immunization and health check-ups; at least 80 per cent basic school attendance
Liberia	Pilot cash transfer scheme, 2010	To help reduce poverty, hunger and starvation in extremely poor and labour constrained households	Most vulnerable families without any adult who can work.	Community selection based on work capacity criteria	Between US\$ 10 – US\$25 / month/ household, depending on household size.	
Malawi	Mchinji Social Cash Transfer Pilot Scheme, 2006	To reduce poverty and hunger in all households living in the pilot area which are ultra poor and at the same time labour constrained	Households in extreme poverty in rural areas	Community based targeting	US\$4- US \$13 per household based on household size Child bonus if the child attends school	Community based targeting : Community Social protection Committee
Mali	Bourses Maman , 2002,	To promote school enrolment and attendance in villages and areas with high poverty level and where drop-out rates are high.	Women in poor families	Community based targeting	About US\$ 10 a month	children attend school at least 80 per cent of the school year
Nigeria	Care of the Poor, 2008	To increase school attendance among children; antenatal care for pregnant women; life vocational, health, and sanitation skills for head of households	Female households with OVCs; Aged parent-headed households; Physically challenged people-headed households; Transient-poor-headed households, HIV affected households	Community based targeting	Basic Income Guarantee based on the number of children per households	A compulsory monthly saving of in favour of the participants to be disbursed as a lump sum after a year for the establishment of viable microenterprises after undergoing training

Source: Barrientos, A., Niño-Zarazúa, M. & Maitrot, M (2010). *Social Assistance in Developing Countries Database*, Version 5.0. Manchester; Brooks World Poverty Institute

Note: --- No information given in the above source

Table A4: Cash transfer programmes in South Asia, 2011

Unconditional cash transfers					
Country	Name of Program and year started	Objectives	Target population	Selection of beneficiaries	Description of transfers
Bangladesh	Old Age Allowance Scheme (OAAS) and Assistance Programme for Widowed and Destitute Women (APWDW), 1997	To reduce extreme poverty and destitution among older people and widows	People 65 years of age. Beneficiaries must have worked in the formal sector.	OAAS targets the ten oldest and poorest members in each ward with unions (the lowest administrative unit). APWDW targets the five poorest women in each ward. The selection is done by Ward Committees.	±US\$ 3.27 per month
India	Indira Ghandi National Disability Pension Scheme, 2007	---	Destitute, physically handicapped and blind people, age 45+	---	±US\$8 month
	Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme, 2007	To support the destitute old people	The monthly pension varies by state: and ranges from± US\$4-20	Categorical	Persons aged 65+ and belonging to a household below the poverty line
	Annapurna Scheme , 2008	To ensure food security in old age	Destitute senior citizens	---	10 kilograms of food grains every month at no cost.
	Destitute Agricultural Labourer Pension Scheme	---	People aged 60+ with no source of Income and not being professional beggars	---	±US\$ 8, in addition to the provision of salaries and food
Maldives	The New Pension System, 2009 (replaces the old age allowance)	To provide both a minimum income transfer to all Maldivians in old age to alleviate poverty, and to help working people to save money to spend in their retirement years	For all citizens aged 65 and older, resident of the Maldives, regardless of working history	Categorical	Monthly pension of up to about US\$156. The basic old age pension is paid monthly and is the same for everyone, except that the basic amount will be reduced by an amount equal to 50% of any other retirement pension income that beneficiaries may receive such as the Maldives Retirement Pension.
Nepal	Old Age Allowance Programme (OAP); Helpless Widows Allowance (HPA); Disabled Pension (DP) , 1995	To reduce poverty among the very old, widows and disabled groups	OAP: citizens aged 70 and older; HPA: women aged 60– 74.	Categorical for the very elderly and disabled, but means tests are applied to widows, and a disability test to the disabled	Monthly pension of US\$2 to US\$7 per person .At the age 90, the pension benefit is more than tripled, and, at the age 100, it increases further..

Conditional cash transfers						
Country	Name of Program and year started	Objectives	Target population	Transfers	Selection of beneficiaries	Conditions
Bangladesh	Female Secondary School Stipend Programme, 1994	To increase girl's enrolment and retention in secondary school; and to delay girls' marriage	Girls reaching secondary school age	Monthly transfers of \$3 for grade 6 rising to \$6 for grades 9 and 10; plus school fees rising according to grade, plus a book allowance and the examination fee	Categorical: gender The guardian / parent of the student are the owner of less than 50 decimals of land. – Yearly income below threshold. – Very helpless (i.e. Orphan, Parentless) – Children of insolvent freedom fighters, – Unable to earner – Very poor earner – Disable learners	Transfers are conditional on 75% school attendance and minimum grade of 45% in evaluations and examinations; and on the beneficiary remaining unmarried
	Primary Education Stipend Project, 2003	To increase schools access, participation and completion in primary schools from poor rural households	Children from rural poor households	±US\$1.5 month for one child (US\$1.65/month if children in primary school.	Geographic and community assessment	Attending 85 per cent classes and obtaining at least 40 per cent on annual examination
Pakistan	Pakistan Bait-ul-Maal, 1992	To assist in improving the welfare of widows, orphans, disabled, needy and poor persons	Poor households with young children (5 to 12 years of age)	US\$3,5 per month if the family has one child and US\$7 per month if the family has more than one child enrolled and attending school. Programme combines a food subsidy with an income transfer	---	Child should be enrolled and attending regularly (at least 80 per cent attendance) school
	Child Support Programme, 2006	To promote the investment in human capital for poverty reduction	Poor households with children aged 5-12 enrolled in primary school	About US\$ 3.5 for one child and US\$6 for two or more children enrolled and attending school. Households can receive benefits for maximum of 5 years.	Means tested	Children must pass the final examinations and attend 80 per cent classes
	Benazir Income Support Programme, 2008	To help low-income households meet their everyday needs	Widows and divorced women, without adult male members in the family. Any physically or mentally impaired person in the family; any family member suffering from a chronic disease.	About 22 US\$ every alternate month; for households earning below a threshold. Payment is made only to female head of families	Geographic targeting	Women should have a CNIC and the family, a monthly income less than Rs.6000

Source: Barrientos, A., Niño-Zarazúa, M. & Maitrot, M (2010). *Social Assistance in Developing Countries Database*, Version 5.0. Manchester; Brooks World Poverty Institute

Note: --- No information given in the above source

Chapter II

Family-Oriented Anti-Poverty Policies in Developed Countries

Dominic Richardson⁵ and Jonathan Bradshaw⁶

⁵ OECD. The views expressed in this paper are not those of the OECD or its member countries. Any errors are the responsibility of the authors.

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I. Introduction

Prior to the onset of the Great Recession in 2008, governments in all OECD countries were investing more than ever before in policies for families with children. In many countries a key driver of this increased investment was the explicit goal of reducing child and family poverty.⁷

Yet despite clear goals for poverty reduction and increased spending, relative family income poverty across most developed countries did not fall. In the decade leading up to the financial crisis, the average OECD income poverty rate for families with children rose by more than 2 percentage points (from 11 per cent to around 13 per cent).⁸ During the same period, average family incomes rose in every OECD country. Together these statistics show that in 'good times' too many families were not able to take advantage of economic growth, and anti-poverty policies – in many cases – were not making absolute gains.

Since the onset of the financial crisis, the consolidation of public budgets in many countries has not bypassed family policies, and as such the resources needed to reverse the trend of increasing family poverty are becoming scarce. It is critical therefore, that governments get good advice about what works for reducing family poverty, and that such advice acknowledges present fiscal constraints – and competing and complementary interests – in diminishing public budgets.

In this context it is important to acknowledge that families are changing, and family behaviours are changing. Demographic and socio-economic trends are introducing to the poverty reduction discussion new policies and new constraints. Families are becoming less formal: across many developed countries, marriage is down and cohabitation is up, and sole parent family forms are more common,⁹ which means more often families are being headed by women. In a number of countries fertility rates are significantly higher in low income households, meaning families are often 'born poor'. Moreover, over recent decades, in established families, parents are working more, and two-earner families are more common. On the basis of these factors alone, one might predict that means-tested cash benefits for at-risk families, gender equality policies, strategies to combat intergenerational inequality, and supports for working parents – such as childcare – are policies of increasing importance in the poverty reduction discussion.

The purpose of this paper is to introduce and assess policies that focus on families with the aim of reducing overall poverty rates and family poverty in particular (poverty will be measured in terms of relative income, material deprivation and social exclusion). The strength of the comparative analysis undertaken here is that lessons can be drawn from countries that have been bucking the trend of increasing poverty rates, and others which have been successful in reducing forms of poverty by family type. Throughout the paper, examples from these countries will be used to guide later recommendations.

⁷ Förster M. and Richardson D. (2011) "Réduction de la pauvreté des enfants : comparaisons internationales", *Politiques sociales et familiales* n° 104, Cnaf, juin 2011.

⁸ OECD (2011) *Doing Better for Families*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

⁹ Ibid.

It is important to acknowledge here, that the policy analysis in this paper mainly covers tax and benefit policies and their impacts on income poverty. Tax and benefit policies alone are not the full picture in addressing poverty; services such as child care, and health care services around the time of birth, are important family policies that can impact on parental earnings and income during important periods of childbirth and child rearing. These policies are referred to where relevant in the text.

The report is structured as follows: Section 2 provides background information salient to the discussion of anti-poverty policies for families in developed countries (for example, definitions and trends in poverty measures and in family types). Section 3 reviews and analyses family policies, and includes analysis of taxes and benefits and their poverty reduction effects. Section 4 concludes the paper with recommendations for developing anti-poverty family policies that meet the evolving needs of modern families in developed economies.

2. Rates and changes in poverty and family types in developed countries

This first section of the paper will begin by introducing the concepts of income poverty, material deprivation and social exclusion as defined in developed country settings. It will also present and explain family typologies and changes in family types in developed countries over a generation, and explore the potential effects such family changes can have on present poverty reduction policies and strategies.

2.1 What is understood by poverty and social exclusion in developed countries?

2.1.1 Poverty

In the last 60 years or so, poverty in developed countries has moved away from understandings based on physical necessities or minimum subsistence and has generally been understood as 'relative'. Relative poverty measures refer to poverty measures defined on the basis of a national standard, and in doing so account for general living standard in that society. Many formal definitions, by national and international bodies, tend refer back to the definition of relative poverty of Peter Townsend.

"Individuals, families and groups in the population can be said to be in poverty when they lack the resources to obtain the types of diet, participate in the activities and have the living conditions which are customary, or at least widely encouraged or approved, in societies to which they belong. Their resources are so seriously below those commanded by the average family or individual that they are in effect excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities".¹⁰

A variety of methods have been employed to operationalise this relative concept of poverty, but the most common in international comparative studies is to measure poverty using an equivalent income threshold. The European Union reports "at-risk-of poverty" rates using a variety of thresholds but has settled on a headline threshold of 60 per cent of national equivalent median income. The OECD's preferred headline threshold tends to be 50 per cent of the median equivalised income.

¹⁰ Townsend, P. (1979) *Poverty in the United Kingdom*, London: Allen Lane and Penguin Books

There are four main sources of comparative data on income poverty.

The EU publishes data every year based on the secondary analysis of the European Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). A considerable body of research has now been undertaken on poverty using EU SILC.¹¹ Child poverty has been the focus of much of this work.¹² The latest data is from SILC 2010 which is income data for 2009. As a part of its 10-year economic plan, the June 2010 European Council set the target to reduce poverty and social exclusion in the EU by 20 million (European Council, 2010) – the main source of data for monitoring this aspiration is EU SILC.

The OECD collects poverty data every five years or so. For the EU countries this is based on SILC data, but for non EU countries and EU countries with national sources, governments are asked to provide the statistics based on a common protocol. At the time of writing the latest OECD data is for circa 2008.¹³

The Luxembourg Income Study obtains micro data sets from countries, puts them into a common format and makes them available to users. It also publishes key statistics on poverty and inequality on its website.¹⁴ The latest data is circa 2005.

UNICEF Innocenti Centre has published Report Cards on children over recent years and child poverty was the main subject matters of Report Cards 6¹⁵ and Report Card 10.¹⁶ These cover OECD countries and have used LIS, SILC and national informants as the source of data.

At present, EU SILC is the most up-to-date source.¹⁷ Figure 1 presents the child poverty rate and child poverty gap from EU SILC 2010. It shows that child income poverty varies from about 10 per cent in Denmark, Norway and Finland to 30 per cent in Romania. Poverty gaps range from 10 per cent in Finland to over 35 per cent in Bulgaria and Romania.

¹¹ Atkinson, A.B. and Marlier, E. (2010) *Income and living conditions in Europe*. Luxembourg: Eurostat. Bradshaw, J. and Mayhew, E. (2010) 'Understanding extreme poverty in the European Union', *European Journal of Homelessness*, 4: 171-186. Fusco, A. Guio, A-C. and Marlier, E. (2010) 'Characterising the income poor and the materially deprived in European Countries' in A.B. Atkinson, and E. Marlier (eds) *Income and living conditions in Europe*. Luxembourg: Eurostat.

¹² Bradshaw J. and Chzhen, Y. (2009). 'Child poverty policies across Europe', *Zeitschrift fuer Familienforschung/Journal of Family Research*, 21 (2): 128-149. Tarki-Applica (2010) Child poverty and child well-being in the European Union, Report prepared for the European Commission. Budapest: Tarki Social Research Institute. Tarki (2011) *Child well-being in the European Union: better monitoring instruments for better policies*. Paper was commissioned by the State Secretariat for Social Inclusion of the Ministry of Public Administration and Justice. Budapest: Tarki Social Research Institute.

¹³ OECD Database http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3746,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html

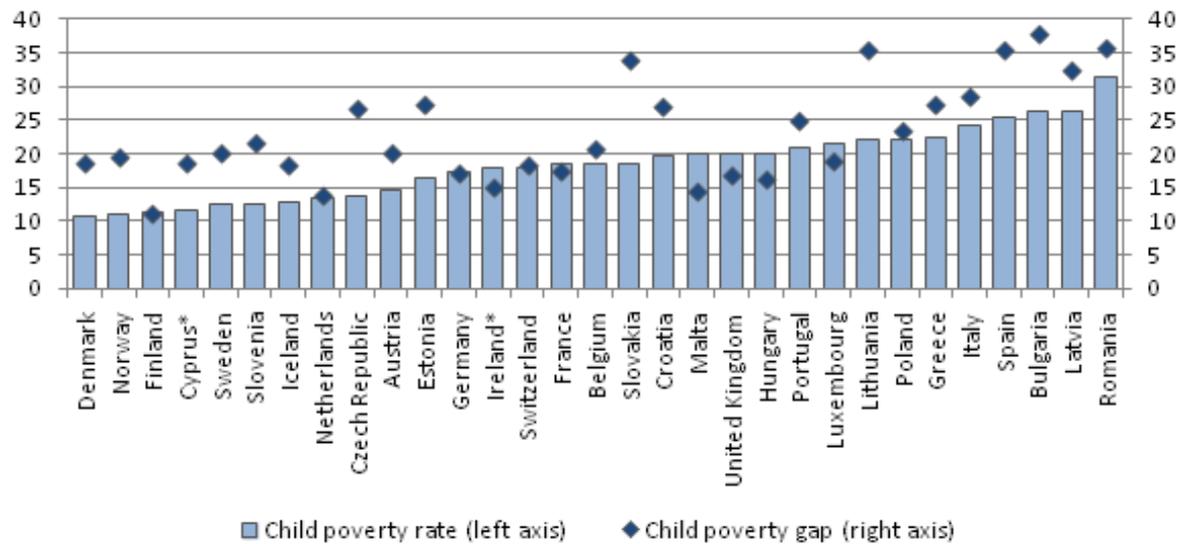
¹⁴ <http://www.lisproject.org/key-figures/key-figures.htm>

¹⁵ UNICEF (2005) Child Poverty in rich countries 2005, Innocenti Report Card 6, UNICEF: Florence

¹⁶ UNICEF (2012) New league tables of child deprivation and relative child poverty in the world's rich countries, Innocenti Report Card 10, UNICEF: Florence

¹⁷ Relative income poverty estimates (50% of median income) also available for most of the non-European OECD countries from the OECD Income Distribution Questionnaires (see source below). The European figures are used here because they are more recent estimates of relative poverty, and more likely to reflect changes in poverty experiences during the early part of the financial crisis.

Figure 1: Child poverty rates and gaps. Percentage of children <16 in households with equivalent income less than 60 per cent median and the average child poverty gap. SILC 2010 (2009 incomes)¹⁸



Note: *2009.

Source:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database

2.1.2 Social exclusion

Social exclusion is a fairly recent concept that originated in France (*Exclusion sociale*). It came to prominence when, at the 2000 Lisbon summit, the EU members committed themselves to a social inclusion strategy. The so-called Laeken indicators were adopted and included a wider range of measures than income poverty, such as: unemployment rates, jobless household rates, early school leaver rates, and self-defined health status. It is debatable what social exclusion adds to Townsend's definition of poverty which covers exclusion from "ordinary living patterns, customs and activities".

As efforts began to operationalise it – particularly after the UK government established a Social Exclusion Unit in 1997 – new indicators have begun to emerge. Thus for example, at the Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion, Burchardt¹⁹ defined an individual as '...socially excluded if he or she does not participate in key activities of the society in which he or she lives' represented in four dimensions: Consumption (the

¹⁸ The information in this document with reference to 'Cyprus' relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue". The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

¹⁹ Burchardt, T., Le Grand, J. and Piachaud, D. (1999) Social Exclusion in Britain 1991—1995 *Social Policy & Administration* 33, 3, 227–244.

capacity to purchase goods and services); Production (participation in economically or socially valuable activities); Political engagement (involvement in local or national decision-making); and Social interaction (integration with family, friends and the community).

The 1999 Poverty and Social Exclusion Study²⁰ defined four dimensions of social exclusion: impoverishment or exclusion from adequate income or resources; labour market exclusion; service exclusion - utilities, financial and social; and exclusion from social relations, including: Non-participation in three common social activities; Isolation (no contact with family/friends daily); Perceived lack of support (in four areas); Disengagement; and Confinement. This was since developed in the Bristol Social Exclusion Matrix.²¹

One reason why these methods have been developed is due to the problems inherent in income-based poverty measures. Briefly these are:

- Income is only an indirect indicator of living standards.
- Income is probably not as good an indicator of command over resources as expenditure, not least because it does not take account of capacity to borrow, savings, gifts and the value of home production. In the case of families, multiple needs, including those of children, may or may not be met due to competing interests or parents' consumption patterns.
- 60 per cent of the median (and any other) relative income threshold is arbitrary.
- The equivalence scales adopted have little basis in science.
- The poverty threshold is not comparable in cash terms – for example the relative poverty threshold for a couple with two children in Hungary in 2010 was €5343 per year and in the UK €21,553 per year. The child at-risk-of-poverty rate in both countries was 20 per cent.
- In some poorer EU countries 60 per cent of the median is very low – only €2 per person per day in Bulgaria.

2.1.3 Multi-dimensional aspects of poverty - Deprivation

Because of the limitations of using income as the only measure to identify 'who is poor', deprivation indicators were first introduced into poverty measurement by Peter Townsend²² to broaden the range of resources taken into account. Townsend listed items and activities that he believed no one should go without, and then counted as poor survey respondents who lacked three or more items regardless of their income levels. Criticism of this early method focussed on his choice of deprivation items, the fact that he did not distinguish between affordability and desirability of the items, and why 'poverty' was distinguished at the 3-item threshold.

Mack and Lansley²³ made the next important step in the study of deprivation by developing the concept of socially perceived necessities: or items that more than half

²⁰ Gordon, D., Adelman, L., Ashworth, K., Bradshaw, J., Levitas, R., Middleton, S., Pantazis, C., Patsios, D., Payne, S., Townsend, P. and Williams, J. (2000) *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation: York

²¹ http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/social_exclusion_task_force/publications/multidimensional.aspx

²² Townsend, P. (1979) *Poverty in the United Kingdom*, London: Allen Lane and Penguin Books.

²³ Mack, J. and Lansley, S. (1985) *Poor Britain*, London: Allen and Unwin

the population thought were necessities for life in modern Britain. They also only counted deprivation in cases where items were absent if respondents said they lacked them, wanted them but could not afford them.²⁴

At the European level, Guio²⁵ explored the deprivation indicators in EU SILC 2005. She distinguished between a set of five indicators of economic strain: The household could not afford: To face unexpected expenses; One week annual holiday away from home; To pay for arrears (mortgage or rent, utility bills or hire purchase instalments); A meal with meat, chicken or fish every second day; or To keep home adequately warm. The set of four indicators of durables included when a household could not afford (if wanted): to have a washing machine; to have a colour TV; to have a telephone; or to have a personal car.

This index was adopted by the EU, and the battery of indicators of social exclusion published by the Social Protection Committee included the proportion of households lacking 3 or more of these items. When the EU adopted the 2020 strategy they set a target to reduce by 20 million the number of households in the EU living in households below the 60 per cent median threshold or lacking four or more deprivation items or living in a workless household. The EU deprivation index does not scale very well for families with children and in the 2009 SILC a special module was included that contained a battery of 19 child items (Table 1).

²⁴ The methods were used again by Gordon and Pantazis (1997, *Breadline Britain in the 1990s*, Ashgate: Aldershot.) and techniques were developed for weighting the items by the proportion of the population who already possessed them – now known as prevalence weighting. The last study in Britain using this method was the Poverty and Social Exclusion Survey (PSE) (see Pantazis, C, Gordon, D. and Levitas, R. (Eds) (2006) *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Britain*. Bristol, The Policy Press. Gordon, D., Adelman, A., Ashworth, K., Bradshaw, J., Levitas, R., Middleton, S., Pantazis, C., Patsios, D., Payne, S., Townsend, P. and Williams, J. (2000), *Poverty and social exclusion in Britain*. York, Joseph Rowntree Foundation). The UK government introduced a suite of deprivation items into the main income survey - the Family Resources Survey, drawing on the results of the PSE study, and that study was also influential when the EU Social Protection Committee developed indicators for EU SILC.

²⁵ Guio, A.-C. (2009) "What can be learned from deprivation indicators in Europe? Paper presented at the Indicators Sub-Group of the Social Protection Committee", Eurostat Methodological Working Papers

Table 1: Nineteen children's deprivation questions in 2009

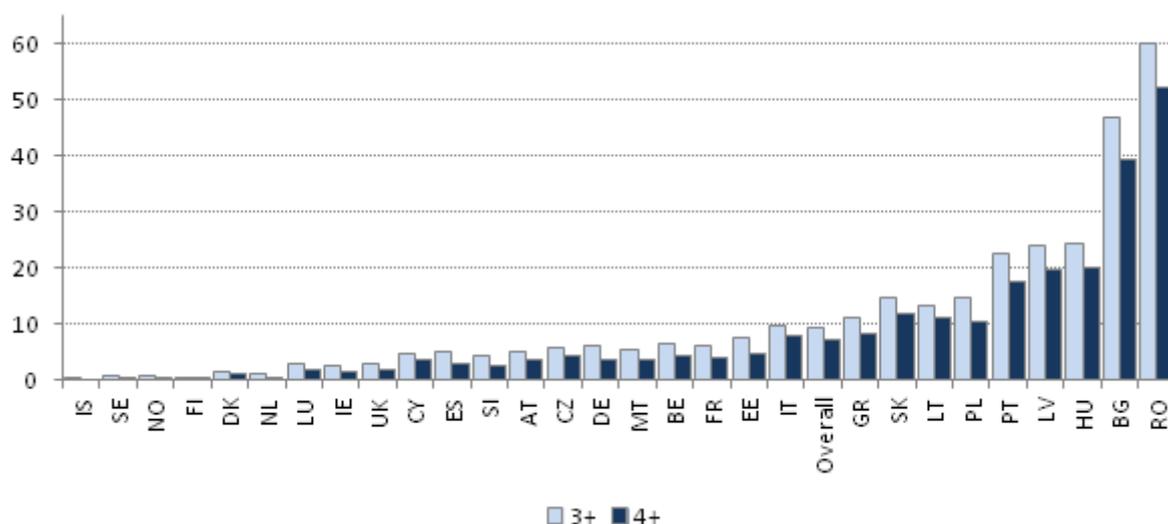
1	Clothes: Some new (not second-hand) clothes	11	Festivity: Festivity on special occasions (birthdays, name days, religious events, etc.)
2	Shoes: Two pairs of properly fitting shoes (including a pair of all-weather shoes)	12	Friends: Invite friends around to play and eat from time to time
3	Fruit: Fresh fruit and vegetables once a day	13	School trips: Participate in school trips and school events that cost money
4	Three meals: Three meals a day	14	Home work: Suitable place to study or do homework
5	Meat: One meal with meat, chicken or fish (or vegetarian equivalent) at least once a day	15	Holidays: Go on holiday away from home at least 1 week per year
6	Books: Books at home suitable for their age	16	Unmet need for GP specialist
7	Leisure: Regular leisure activity (swimming, playing an instrument, youth organization etc.)	17	Reasons for not consulting GP specialist
8	Equipment: Outdoor leisure equipment (bicycle, roller skates, etc.)	18	Unmet need for dentist
9	Outdoor: Outdoor space in the neighbourhood where children can play safely	19	Reasons for not consulting dentist
10	Games: Indoor games (educational baby toys, building blocks, board games, etc.)		

Source: EU SILC, 2009.

At the time of writing, the Social Protection Committee is reviewing these with a view to developing a new deprivation index. Meanwhile, for UNICEF's Report Card 10 an index has been produced²⁶ based on these items. Figure 3 gives the proportion of children living in households lacking 3 or 4 child deprivation items. In Iceland, Sweden, Norway and Finland deprivation rates are low, with almost no children reporting lacking 3 of these items. In contrast almost half of the children in Bulgaria lack 3 items, and over half of the children in Romania do.

²⁶ de Neubourg, C., Bradshaw, J., Chzhen, Y., Main, G., Martorano, B. and Menchini, L. (2012) *Child Deprivation, Multidimensional Poverty and Monetary Poverty in Europe, Background*. Paper 2 for UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 10, UNICEF Innocenti Working Paper 2012/02

Figure 2: Child deprivation rates EU SILC 2009



Source:
http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database

Some developed countries (Ireland and the UK) have gone further and adopted a combination of income poverty and deprivation in a so-called consistent or overlapping poverty measure. Given the complexity of relative representations of poverty, and the limitations of the use of any one indicator to represent ‘who is poor’, it is desirable to adopt combined indicators as monitoring tools in developed countries.

Box 1. Policies to support school children²⁷

To break the cycle of deprivation, and to achieve intergenerational earnings and educational mobility, it is critical for children to succeed at school. Because success at school depends not only on attendance and what is available in the school (in terms of teachers’ abilities or school equipment for instance), but on parental engagement with the learning process and what is available in the homes, policies that support families with school-aged children are likely to be key in reducing future poverty risks.

All OECD countries provide some sort of child allowance for poor families (as is covered in detail in parts of this document), what is less well known however, is that in some countries there are also specific benefits for families with school-aged children. The policies can be designed to encourage attendance at school (overall or at critical stages) for low-income children, or may be designed to meet specific costs for school equipment, uniforms and meals that might otherwise be a burden on disposable incomes in poor families.

For education to be successful in breaking the cycle of poverty, first and foremost, it is important for children to go to school. Examples of policies designed to encourage timely attendance in OECD countries include an increase in the means-tested Family Tax Benefit in Australia between the ages of 13 and 15. This increment is designed to increase family income, and encourage children to stay in school, when leaving school to earn and supplement the family income is an option considered for the child. A broader-coverage policy designed to encourage enrolment in school in poorer families is Mexico’s *Oportunidades*, which conditions its cash payment on children in the families attending school between the third grade of primary school until age 16 in some regions. Finally, in a number of OECD countries when children get older and may consider leaving school, families cash benefits or tax breaks are provided if children stay in further or higher education. Examples of countries applying these policies include: Austria, the Czech Republic Germany, and Switzerland (higher education); and the United Kingdom (further education).

²⁷ This box draws on a review of family policies in OECD countries in OECD (2011) *Doing Better for Families*, OECD, Publishing, Paris – see Annex 2.3 of Chapter 2.

For children to be successful in school, it is important for them to have the correct equipment not only for learning, but to avoid bullying and other negative consequences of not having the 'correct' equipment. Policies specifically designed to enable families to provide school equipment for children can take the form of regular or one-off cash payments, or income tax reductions for primary and secondary school children: an example of the former comes from France, which provides a periodic tax allowance for families with school-aged children, and examples of the latter include the school-clothing grant in Ireland, an annual child allowances for school-aged children for the purposes of buying school equipment in Israel, an educational care subsidy paid as part of the *Patriot's Pension* in Korea, and the Portuguese schooling compliment (paid as an element in the main Portuguese Family Allowance). Luxembourg also pays a one-off cash 'new year' school allowance per child, but it is unique in that the payment is sensitive to the age of the child: for a child aged 6-11 the payment is 105.07 EUR, for those over the age of 12 it is 150.13 EUR.

Finally school support can come in the form of services, and most often this means support with food costs. Breakfast clubs, free meals, and free milk all contribute to the nutritional needs of growing and learning children. Support for poor children in the form of food supports (milk or school meals) are found in Mexico, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

2.4 How do poverty measures differ, and which ones should we focus on in different contexts?

The sections above have outlined the various ways of measuring poverty in EU countries. It has shown that poverty levels remain unacceptably high, with 1 in 5 children on average in our sample of rich countries living in income poverty and 1 in 10 living in conditions where they are deprived of child-specific necessities.

What is clear is that no one measure can fully capture the experiences of poor families, and that at times a family may experience any one of these outcomes (income poverty, deprivation or social exclusion) without necessarily experiencing the others.

Moreover, how poverty is measured will decide which policies are better suited to combating poverty, and in turn what constitutes best practise and/or progress in combating poverty.

So which poverty measures should be used in different contexts? The consensus in academic and policy circles in developed nations seems to be that income poverty and deprivation, as well as joblessness and various forms of social exclusion, are all important and any one cannot fully represent the others. In a family and child setting, household spending patterns and intra-household sharing of disposable income may mean deprivation of essential items for certain family members exists (such as children's school equipment – see box 1 for a discussion of policies for supporting school children) when disposable incomes are high.²⁸ Moreover, in times of economic crisis or changes to family circumstances, these indicators will evolve at different speeds (when a job is lost, income falls before housing conditions worsen) meaning that both family needs and poverty measures are time sensitive, and without a suite of indicators the ability of policy makers to take advantage of the most efficient form of policy – preventative interventions – will be severely limited.

²⁸ Many governments acknowledge the issues of spending patterns and intra-household sharing in cash benefit delivery, either by clearly naming the cash benefit after its purpose (immunisation allowance in Australia) or paying the benefits to the mother and not the father to try to influence the extent to which the whole family benefits (Irish family allowance for instance).

Box 2. Family poverty measurement, surveys and missing populations

An important part of fully understanding who is poor in developed countries, and which measures best represent their experiences of poverty in different circumstances, is representing 'missing populations'. All key indicators of poverty in developed countries use survey data, and missing populations refer to groups in societies that are not included in official poverty statistics. The reasons for this exclusion is mainly due to the ways in which the surveys are collected (households surveys not including institutionalised or homeless individuals), the geographical areas which are excluded from the surveys (indigenous groups living in remote regions of Canada are missing from the Gallup world poll for instance), or the cultural expectations of the survey coordinators (indigenous groups in Australia can be hard to track in surveys because of their mobility).

Using censuses, and other collections methods to study at-risk populations, provides a picture of acute poverty risks and different policy challenges in the Roma population in Europe, and indigenous populations in countries such as Canada and Australia.²⁹ A recent European report on promoting the social inclusion of Roma provides detailed evidence of how this increased risk of poverty and social exclusion can also vary country-by-country. For instance in regards to income poverty, Roma living in Romania and Bulgaria are four times more likely to live in relative poverty as the general population, in Spain Roma are 4.5 times more likely to live in poverty. In regards to deprivation, ownership rates of important household items in Roma families, such as a fridge or a computer, can be half to one third of rates seen in non-Roma families (these examples are true, respectively, for Romania, In Spain, on an overall deprivation index, Roma families are seen to be almost 6 times as likely to be deprived in comparison to the general population.³⁰

A number of factors drive the poverty risk in these populations, and can include: insecure or unofficial housing, living remote geographical locations, demographic trends (family structure, large families, life expectancy of non-dependants), low levels of education (or engagement with learning and training opportunities) and lack of formal work experience/engagement in the family.

2.2 Changes in family types over time

One of the important factors influencing the extent to which family poverty policies can reduce experiences of poverty and deprivation in advanced economies is the evolution of the family type. Due in part to the different welfare systems, as well as the evolution of family income associated with employment patterns (the increasing need for two-earner families and childcare services for instance), the face of poverty by family type in different OECD countries varies widely. This section briefly looks at the OECD trends in family socio-demographic and employment outcomes, and how these change the picture of poverty and the policies designed to combat poverty.

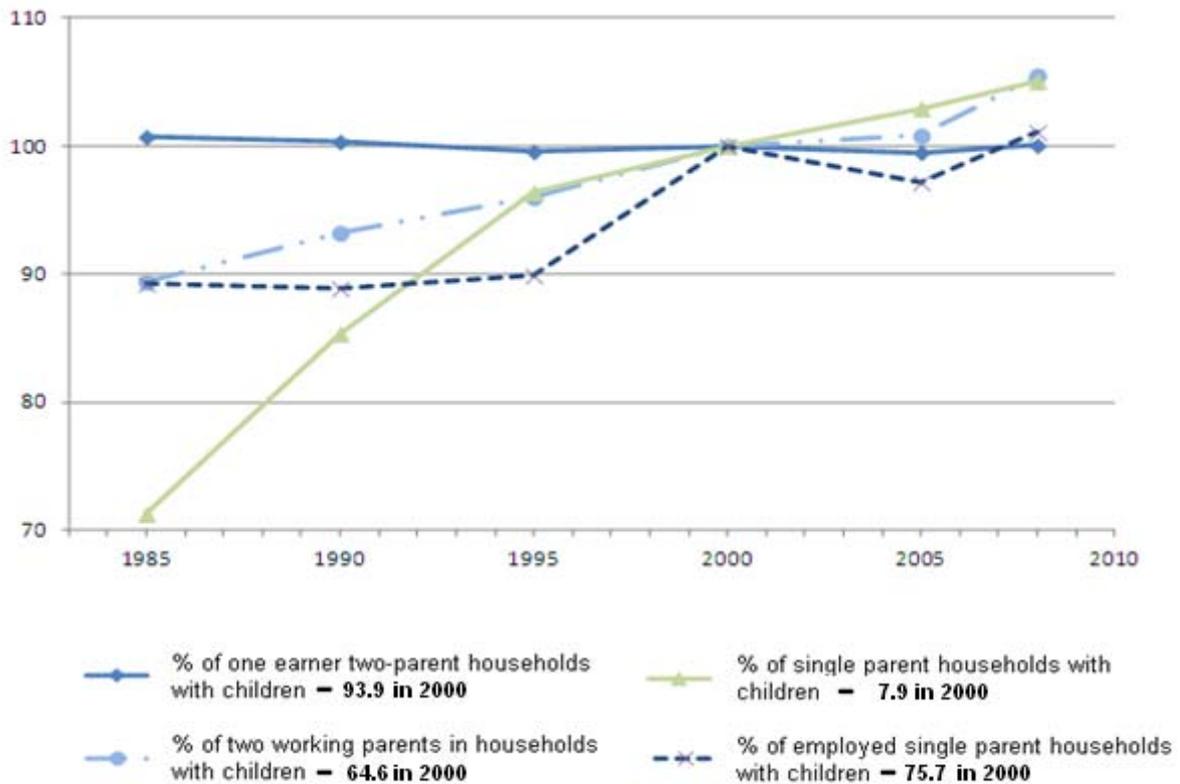
Figure 4 shows the trends in family type and employment in OECD countries between 1985 and 2008. The clearest relative increase in family type is that of sole parents, rising by almost 30 per cent in the years between 1985 and 2005 (from 5.7 per cent of all families with children to 8.2 per cent) before continuing an upward trend. The flip side of this trend (though not presented) is a fall in the proportions of families with two

²⁹ See for example <http://www.eu2011.hu/developing-european-roma-policy> for the Roma population in Europe; for indigenous groups in Australia and Canada see <http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/pubs/fm2009/fm82/bh.pdf>; and <http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/LOP/ResearchPublications/prb0917-e.htm#a9> (see section F).

³⁰ Frazer, H. and Marlier, E. (2011) Promoting the Social Inclusion of Roma: Synthesis Report of the EU Network of Independent Experts on Social Inclusion. On Behalf of the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, Brussels.

parents. Large families are not included in the trend charts due to lack of data over this period, however recent work by the OECD³¹ shows that large families are less common as fertility rates have fallen (a finding particularly strong for already low fertility countries, such as Japan and Korea). In terms of employment status by family type; the traditional breadwinner couple family rate has remained quite stable over the period, however there has been a marked increase in both the two-earner family and the employed sole parent family since 1985.

Figure 3: OECD trends in family type and family employment status (2005=100)



Source: OECD Income distribution questionnaires, 2012.

A number of other important socio-demographic and socio-economic factors will impact on the poverty rates and policy for family in advanced economies. For instance family formation and breakdown are important factors, as is the age of parents, extended family and grandparent support, and details having to do with employment security and earned income, and the costs of raising a family (housing and education markets). Other important variable factors include: divorce rates which negatively associate to family size, re-coupling patterns of sole parents by country, the rates of out of wedlock births which have increased in all countries (where data is available), and fertility rates are often higher in low income and less educated households as female labour market participation increases and many educated women are waiting later to have children or not having children at all.³²

³¹ OECD (2011) Doing Better for Families, OECD publishing, Paris.

³² Ibid, see Chapter 1.

There are a number of important messages for how socio-demographic and socio-economic trends impact on the picture of poverty and the policies designed to combat poverty. First, families that are being formed are more vulnerable to poverty than they were a generation ago, as fertility rates in low income families are increasing relative to high income families. Second, family breakdown is more common leaving sole parent families with limited resources, increasing a reliance on child support policies (for a brief discussion of child support policies see Box 3) and social assistance in some cases. Third, the numbers of large families are falling; a group associated with high poverty risks. Fourth, an increasing number of households, whether single or coupled, are fully employed, which on the one hand should offset some poverty risks, and on the other increases childcare use and childcare costs. Fifth, and finally, these trends vary by country and so the final impact on poverty will vary, and the mix of policies better suited to meeting the needs of families will need to be reviewed on a country-by-country basis.

Box 3. Child support policies

As has been seen in other part of this paper, welfare efforts supporting families with children to live out of poverty are not having a great deal of impact on the average family over time. What might be of more use is to understand the extent to which policies designed to protect certain children from vulnerabilities might be more or less effective in different settings.

Child support is one such policy, designed to ensure that sole-parent families – who lose both a career and a potential earner from the family unit – are not left at an income disadvantage because of family breakdown.

Child support policy is also of particular interest for efforts to sustainably combat income poverty due to increasing rates of family breakdown, and sole parenthood, in developed countries.

Child support policies can take various forms, though generally they are either advanced public child support payments or publically-assisted private payments systems. Based on these two types of payments systems, and using available data on coverage of child support systems and payments to and from families that have experienced family breakdowns, it is possible to test which policies in which countries are the most efficient at reducing poverty.

Using data reported by the OECD,³³ associations between the coverage of sole parents and amounts of child support received by sole parents and overall reductions in sole parent poverty rates show a positive and strong association between the recipiency rate of child support in the sole parent population (the benefit coverage) and reduction in sole parent poverty rates achieved by the policy. In contrast, plotting the fall in the sole-parent poverty rate after child support payments against the value of the average payment as a proportion of disposable income shows no discernable association. Together the data show that in countries with low 'pre-child support' poverty rates and high benefit coverage, small amounts can make big differences (Austria, Denmark, Finland and Sweden), but when poverty is low and coverage is low (as in Italy) low payments make little difference. In general, higher payments are needed to have any real impact on sole parent poverty if coverage rates are low, the example of Poland shows that in countries with low coverage, a high level of child support (above 20 per cent of disposable income) is needed. Countries with low coverage and payments below 20 per cent of average disposable income do not see similar falls in their sole-parent poverty rates (in Poland the fall is around 45 per cent of total pre-child support sole-parent poverty).

A 'good practice' example can be taken from Denmark. Denmark has the second highest post-child support sole-parent poverty reduction rate, has the second highest coverage, and has the second lowest relative payment level. The Danish system is an advanced maintenance system that ensures regular payments are made to the parent with care responsibilities through publically provided advance payments that are later recouped from the non-resident parent obligated to provide financial help (Sweden and Finland also advance payments). The system is simple, paid at a flat rate (lowering administrative costs), and future payments received from the non-resident parent are not offset of social assistance payments the sole parent might be receiving.

³³ OECD (2011) Doing Better for Families, OECD publishing, Paris. Evidence for the Danish example is also drawn from this source.

Despite promising Danish results, there remain a number of real concerns with the advanced maintenance system (including potential disincentives of the system for non-resident parents to meet their financial obligations and the lack of incentives for shared parenting, and in turn higher public costs). Nonetheless, countries prioritizing improved coverage – as a critical aspect of an efficient anti-poverty strategy – could consider advancing payments.

2.3 What are the Characteristics of Poor Families?

To understand what family types are at risk of poverty and why, two questions need to be answered. First which types of family have the highest risk of being poor? Second what type of family contributes most to family poverty? For example, as we shall see, the risk of poverty is higher in large families, but in most countries most poor families are now small. The comparative picture is also slightly different if we use a relative income poverty threshold or if we use a deprivation-based measure of poverty.³⁴

Tables 2 and 3 below are based on the background analyses³⁵ for UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 10 and the on the secondary analysis of EU SILC data for 2009. Table 2 gives the relative risk of income poverty in households with children, by country; and Table 3 presents data on the composition of children in income poor families. The evidence on deprivation risks and rates by family type are in Tables 1 and 2 in the annex. The following conclusions can be drawn:

- In all countries in the OECD, children living in **sole parent families** have a higher than average risk of income poverty. The relative risks vary between countries but it is much higher in Cyprus (4.3 times higher), Germany and Luxembourg (both around 3 times higher). In only one country, Romania, is the risk of income poverty in sole parent families the same as in couple families. In regards to deprivation, children in sole parent families have a higher risk of experiencing deprivation in all countries studied. The relative risk varies from low levels in the Slovak Republic (1.2 times as likely) and southern EU countries (except Cyprus), to over five times the risk in the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Variation among the richer EU countries is likely to be due to the extent to which policy supports sole parents compared with couple families.
- In most northern European countries the risk of income poverty is higher for **families living in urban areas** (though Sweden is an exception). In the southern European countries the risk of poverty is higher in rural areas (no data is available on non-EU countries). As for the risk of experiencing deprivation by location the family lives in, there is a similar story – deprivation is a rural problem in southern and Eastern Europe, whereas in the older richer countries

³⁴ Additional evidence in support of the content of this section is reported in the annex. Annex Table 1 gives the relative risks of children being deprived on two or more child items with the risk for all children in each country set at 1.00. Annex table 2 provides the proportions of children living in deprived conditions (2 or more items missing).

³⁵ Bradshaw, J., Chzhen, Y., de Neubourg, C., Main, G., Martorano, B. and Menchini, L. (2012) *Relative Income Poverty Among Children in Rich Countries: Background Paper for UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 10*, UNICEF IRC: Florence. de Neubourg, C., Bradshaw, J., Chzhen, Y., Main, G., Martorano, B. and Menchini, L. (2012) *Child Deprivation, Multidimensional Poverty and Monetary Poverty in Europe, Background Paper 2 for UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 1*, UNICEF Innocenti Working Paper 2012/02

in the EU, child deprivation is concentrated in urban areas (Sweden again, is an exception).

- The most closely associated patterns of risk in income and deprivation are seen in **migrant families**. In most countries the children of migrants have a higher risk of income poverty: this is especially the case in the Nordic countries. In all but five countries (Latvia, Poland, Hungary, Ireland and the Slovak Republic) migrant children have a higher risk of deprivation – it is over four times higher in Finland.
- The **low educational level of parents** is associated with a higher risk of child income poverty, especially in the Czech and Slovak republics. In all countries the risk of child deprivation is also higher in families with parents with low levels of education. However, in some of the poorer countries (Bulgaria, Portugal, Romania) even children of highly education parents can be deprived.
- Children in **families with low work intensity**³⁶ have a much higher risk of income poverty – an unsurprising finding given the important role of employment and earned income in the protection from income poverty. For both income poverty and deprivation low work intensity presents the highest risk factor of all. With the exception of Bulgaria, Greece and Romania child deprivation rates are at least double the average in families with adults working very little.
- Children in **large families** have a higher risk of income poverty, though this varies and the variation may be associated with the structure of support in family benefits. Children in large families are also more likely to be deprived in all countries except Luxembourg.

³⁶ Work intensity is a calculation based on the number of months spent in employment divided by number of months spent in employment/studying/retired/unemployed/inactive for all working age adults in the household. Low work intensity is defined as less than 20 percent. High work intensity is defined as more than 80 per cent.

Table 2: Relative risk of poverty for households with children (all = 1), using equivalent income of less than 50 per cent median.

	Sole parent	High degree of urbanisation	Migrant	No education or primary or lower secondary	Low work intensity	3+ children
Australia	2.2			2.2	4.0	1.2
Austria	2.4	1.8	1.7	2.9	6.3	1.3
Belgium	2.2	1.9	2.1	3.5	5.8	1.4
Bulgaria	1.9	0.6		3.2	4.3	3.0
Canada	1.9			2.9	2.5	1.5
Cyprus	4.3	0.8	2.0	1.9	11.2	2.5
Czech Republic	2.7	1.5	3.1	7.5	8.8	2.3
Denmark	1.7	0.6	3.0	1.0	4.6	1.9
Estonia	2.2	0.8	1.0	2.5	4.7	1.9
Finland	2.3	1.0	2.9	3.2	6.9	1.5
France	2.3	1.7	2.1	2.6	6.8	1.6
Germany	2.9	0.9	1.0	4.9	5.9	1.2
Greece	1.4	0.9	1.8	2.3	2.6	1.2
Hungary	1.3	0.6	0.5	3.8	4.9	1.8
Iceland	2.1	1.0	1.1	0.9	4.4	1.4
Ireland	1.5	0.7	1.0	1.8	2.4	1.4
Italy	1.9	1.3	1.3	2.0	4.3	1.8
Japan	2.5			2.8		1.3
Latvia	1.5	0.6	0.6	2.8	4.1	1.9
Lithuania	2.0	0.4	0.9	4.5	4.4	1.8
Luxembourg	3.0		1.3	2.5	4.1	1.0
Malta	2.7	1.1	1.4	1.7	5.0	1.6
Netherlands	2.0		1.9	2.7	5.0	1.3
New Zealand	1.6			2.0		1.6
Norway	2.8	1.0	2.5	3.5	4.9	1.4
Poland	1.7	0.8	1.2	2.5	3.1	1.8
Portugal		0.9	0.9	1.4	4.3	2.4
Romania	1.0	0.2		2.1	2.5	1.7
Slovak Republic	2.0	1.0	0.3	6.2	7.1	2.4
Slovenia	2.1		1.7	4.8	10.8	1.6
Spain	1.6	1.1	1.6	1.9	3.6	2.3
Sweden	2.3	0.7	2.3	2.7	6.8	1.5
Switzerland	2.3			2.8	2.4	1.8
United Kingdom	1.3	1.3	1.7	1.9	2.2	1.7
United States	1.9			2.5	3.1	1.5

Source: Analysis of EU SILC, 2009, and national surveys.

To complement evidence on relative risk factors, Table 3 presents data on the composition of children in income poor families.

- Despite the risk of income poverty being high among children in **sole parent families**, they constitute only a minority of all poor children in all the countries. The proportions vary from 38 per cent in Sweden to only 3 per cent in Greece. Children in sole parent families also constitute only a minority of all deprived children in all the countries. The proportion varies from 72 per cent in Iceland with very few deprived to only 4 per cent in Greece.
- Child income poverty is concentrated in **families living in urban areas** in many countries but in many of the Central and Eastern European countries (CEE) countries the majority of income poor children live in rural areas - in Romania 95 per cent do. Child deprivation results are similar, again concentrated in urban areas, with many of the former CEE countries having more rural poor.
- Rates of income poverty and deprivation in migrant families are very strongly associated. Children in **migrant families** represent a majority of all the children in poverty in Austria, Belgium, Cyprus and Luxembourg. They are a very small proportion in most of the CEE countries. Children in migrant families represent a majority of all the deprived children in Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Iceland and Luxembourg. They are a very small proportion in most of the former CEE countries.
- There are large variations in the percentage of income poor and deprivation poor children with **parents with low educational levels**, but the proportions are higher in the southern European countries.
- Both the majority of income poor children, and deprived children, live in **families with low work intensity**. In every country there are children living in poverty in households with high work intensity (the working poor). Norway and Iceland are countries with high proportions of working families with children in income poverty or experiencing deprivation.
- As we have seen, the risk of income poverty, and the risk of experiencing deprivation, is higher for children in large families, but in most countries the majority of poor children (of both types) live in small families (1 or 2). For both types of poverty, the exceptions are Belgium, Denmark, Finland and the United States.

Table 3: Percent of income poor children by family type/status

	Sole parent	High degree of urbanisation	Migrant	No education or primary or lower secondary	High work intensity	1 or 2 children
Australia				32	19	55
Austria	28	54	60	21	13	69
Belgium	32	79	62	56	6	48
Bulgaria	6	20	1	76	6	60
Canada				23		58
Cyprus	35	65	52	11	14	71
Czech Republic	34	30	19	28	7	69
Denmark	29	19	43	12	42	48
Estonia	29	32	14	13	20	63
Finland	20	29	29	14	14	49
France	28	60	43	30	15	56
Germany	41	41	11	22	12	72
Greece	3	28	33	35	32	92
Hungary	15	9	1	49	4	53
Iceland	33	67	14	10	54	56
Ireland	35	19	29	31	14	55
Italy	16	42	23	51	11	76
Latvia	20	27	10	27	19	63
Lithuania	28	14	6	23	21	65
Luxembourg	34	67	82	58	25	85
Malta	28	85	16	80	4	73
Netherlands	20		21	22	39	57
Norway	52	55	39	41	39	57
Poland	10	22	1	10	18	62
Portugal	19	32	14	84	25	69
Romania	4	5	0	45	31	56
Slovakia	7	13	1	14	12	50
Slovenia	17		23	23	15	67
Spain	7	42	26	54	21	82
Sweden	38	16	48	10	41	60
Switzerland				13	13	55
United Kingdom	24	88	34	15	21	53
USA				10	27	46

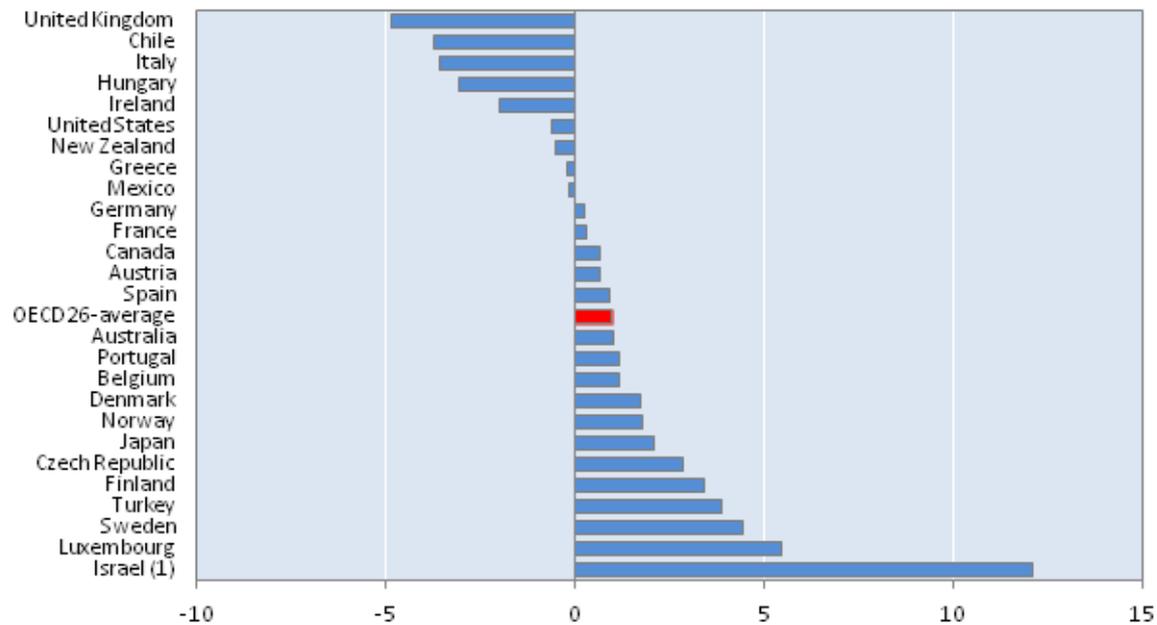
Source: Analysis of EU SILC, 2009, and national surveys.

2.4 Trends in family poverty

Having seen how poverty is measured, the standard at-risk of poverty rates, and which families are most at risk of living in poverty, it is important to understand how poverty risks has been evolving in recent years to understand how successful recent policy initiatives have been. Figure 5 presents OECD data on changes in child income

poverty rates between the mid 1990s and 2008 the latest year for which they have data. It can be seen that over this period the child poverty rate increased in more countries (fifteen countries) than it fell (nine countries). Overall the risk of family poverty in advanced economies has risen by two percentage points.

Figure 4: Percentage point change in child poverty rates mid 1990s to 2008



Source: Table CO2.2.B:

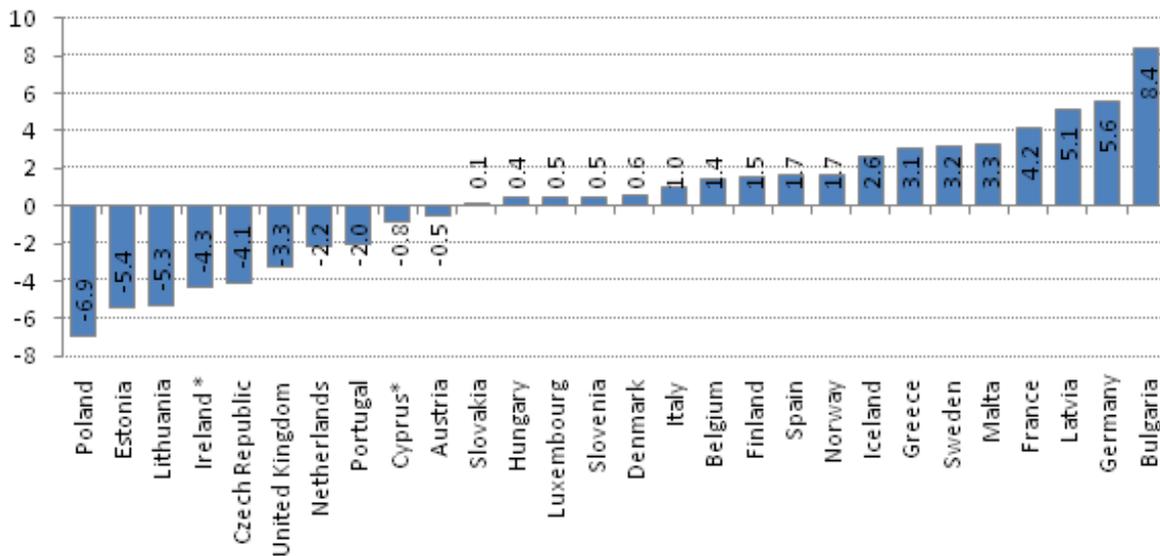
http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3746,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html

The OECD³⁷ reports trends in poverty in five-year periods from the mid 1990s to 2008. Countries showing the biggest falls over this period have reasonably consistent downward trends from above, or well above, average poverty rates. Countries with medium to high increases, again show consistency in trends more often than not, but include this time both traditional low (Denmark, Finland, and Sweden) and high rate poverty countries (Israel, Turkey).

The latest data on changes in child poverty is from EU SILC and takes account of 2009 income after the recession/crisis had begun to bite (data is not yet available for a broader range of high-income countries). Figure 6 shows the changes between 2005 and 2010. Ten out of 28 countries had a decline in child poverty over that period. However in five of those countries this decline was in part the result of the fall in the poverty threshold due to a fall in median income (Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Ireland and the Czech Republic).

³⁷ OECD (2011) *Doing Better for Families*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

Figure 5: Percentage point change in child poverty rates 2005-2010



Note:*2009.

Source:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database

3. What works in family poverty reduction? The role of benefits and wages

This section of the paper introduces evidence of the protective factors of taxes and transfers and employment, as well as new analysis that explores the costs families incur when taking parental leave. Where relevant, it will also touch on changes to poverty rates following austerity measures in some national settings.

3.1 Family anti poverty policies

Welfare states in developed countries have developed a variety of policies to help families with children. They include: maternity benefits; maternity leave; free or subsidised child care; cash benefits paid in respect of children; tax benefits for children; housing and local tax benefits; free or subsidised services (health, education, housing, transport, leisure facilities); and other help - such as food stamps (SNAP) in the US. Each of these benefits is designed to supplement family incomes or provide complementary services in support of having children or raising children. Although all of the benefits have an implicit role in stabilising family income, or supplementing or freeing-up disposable incomes through cash benefits or in-kind services, few are explicitly designed to combat family poverty. Those that are tend to be delivered to guarantee minimum living standards/incomes over a medium to long term period (such as working tax credits or food stamps).

The focus of this paper is on family policies that mitigate family income poverty. For this reason we shall concentrate on examining the financial resources of families with

children, before looking at policies that facilitate parental employment such as parental leave (see section 3.2) and childcare policies (see box 4).

For most families with children the main determinant of their financial resources is what they earn in the labour market. The state may have policies that influence this, including equal pay legislation, minimum wage legislation, regulated wages in certain sectors, maximum hours per week regulations, and they may control public sector wages in various ways (like freezing them in the current recession).

As we have seen children can be living in poverty even though their parent(s) are in employment. There are a number of reasons for this. The first is that earnings are low because parents are working part time and/or in full-time work but their wages are low. The second is that families may be taxed into poverty – the direct taxes taken in income tax and social insurance contributions reduces their gross incomes so much that they fall below the poverty threshold. The third is that the cash benefits paid by the state to help parents with the costs of raising children, or service provided in place of cash supports such as childcare, are inadequate for their needs. And the fourth is that after having paid for housing and other charges, the resources available for consumption are too little.

State supports for working families include: tax benefits or allowances which reduce the direct tax liability in respect of children; child cash benefits whether income tested or universal; housing benefits or allowances that take account of the presence of a child; social assistance top-ups for low wage earning families that vary by the number and/or age of children; any mitigation of local taxes in respect of children; and, for a pre-school child, we also take account of any direct support for the costs of full-time day care in the most prevalent form of full-time day care in each country.

Table 3 shows the child cash benefits available in 30 developed countries, 21 of which have universal child cash benefits. A number of countries provide income related child cash benefits (TANF in the United States, Working Tax Credits in the United Kingdom). In most of these cases, they are the only form of provision but, for instance, in the Netherlands, Ireland and France they are supplements to the universal benefits for low-income families.

The majority of countries combine cash benefits with tax benefits for families with children. Tax benefits include tax allowances and tax credits. Tax allowances are deducted from taxable income whereas tax credits are subtracted from the amount of tax due. OECD (2011)³⁸ shows that public investment on tax breaks for social purposes has increased by around 30 per cent since 2000. A number of countries have tax benefits in addition to universal or income related cash benefits. France has a tax benefit as well as a universal and income related benefit. Germany is the only country with only tax benefits having transformed its cash benefit into a tax credit or allowance.

³⁸ Ibid.

Table 3: Main components of the child benefit packages of working families, 30 countries, 2009

	EU 15 (+NO)	EU 10	Non EU
Universal cash benefit	Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom	Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, the Slovak Republic, and Romania.	Canada, Israel, Japan
Income related cash benefit	France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain.	Czech Republic, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia, and Romania.	Australia, New Zealand, United States
Tax benefits	Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain, Greece, Italy and the United Kingdom	Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, and the Slovak Republic	United States

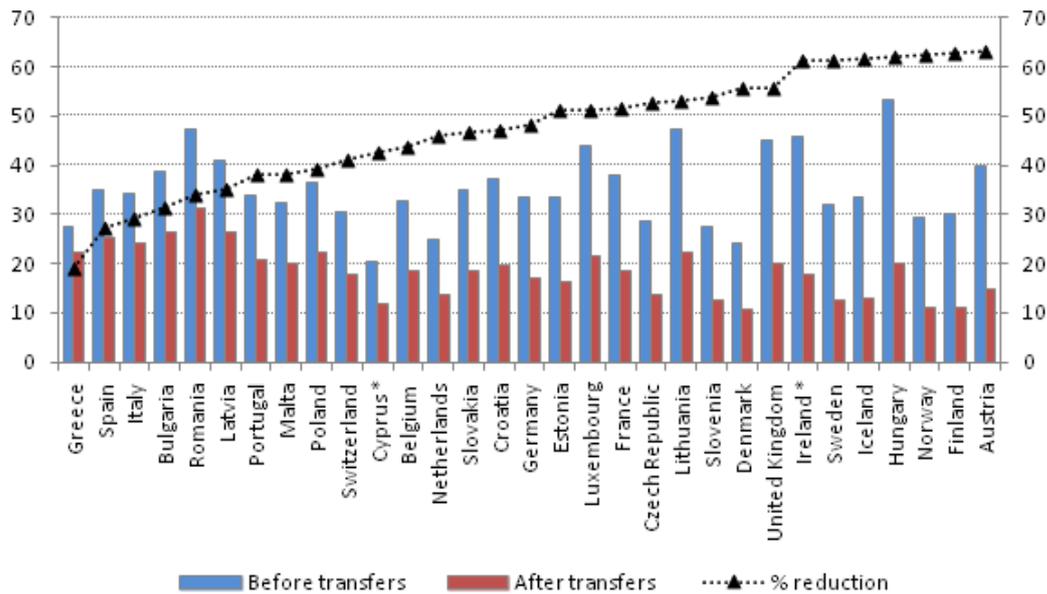
Source: CSB-MIPI Version 2/2011 (Van Mechelen et al 2011) and OECD Benefits and Wages data base

There are a number of ways of assessing the effectiveness of the family benefit package. One technique is to compare the child poverty rate before and after transfers. The before transfer rate is what poverty would be like if there was no state help for families with children and they just relied on the market. The difference between the before and after child poverty rates is a measure of the effort the state makes on behalf of families with children.

Figure 7 presents the before and after transfers child poverty rate using the latest EU SILC data for 2010; countries are ranked by the percentage reduction in their child poverty rates achieved by transfers. Austria reduces its child poverty by 63 per cent compared with Greece that reduces theirs by only 19 per cent. The reasons for differences will not only be due to the amounts transferred to families, but the tax rates imposed on families' earned income, and the underlying market inequality³⁹ (two identical family welfare systems will have differing outcomes based on different levels of market income poverty), and the shape of the income distribution of the poor (see figure 2).

³⁹ Market inequality and poverty refers to the calculations of the income distribution before accounting for taxes and transfers.

Figure 7: Child poverty rates before and after transfers ranked by percentage reduction. EU SILC 2010.



Note:*2009.

Source:

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database

The poverty reduction effect of tax and transfer systems is thus considerable. Overall, welfare systems have had to work harder over the years to reduce the market impact on final poverty rates, but ultimately have not managed to fully offset the increases in market income poverty. Country by country, trends have not been stable.⁴⁰ In Germany, where taxes and transfers have consistently lowered the market income poverty by around half, increases in the underlying market income poverty have driven considerable increases in final income poverty rates from 6 per cent to 9 per cent. In the United States the welfare system seems to be having a somewhat greater effect in recent years on what is a relatively stable market income poverty rate, whereas in France both market and disposable income poverty rates have slightly fallen between 1995 and 2008.

Another method that is used to evaluate the impact of benefit packages is to estimate their impact on model families. A number of studies of this kind have been undertaken⁴¹ and the OECD Benefits and Wages data base⁴² provides some of the

⁴⁰ Förster M. and Richardson D. (2011) "Réduction de la pauvreté des enfants : comparaisons internationales", Politiques sociales et familiales n° 104, Cnaf, juin 2011.

⁴¹ Bradshaw, J. (2010). An International Perspective on Child Benefit Packages. From Child Welfare to Child Well-Being: An International Perspective on Knowledge in the Service of Policy Making. S. B. Kamerman, S. Phipps and A. Ben-Arieh. Dordrecht, Heidelberg, London, New York, Springer. 293-307.

Bradshaw, J. and N. Finch (2002). A Comparison of Child Benefit Packages in 22 Countries. Department for Work and Pensions Research Report No.174. Leeds, Corporate Document Services.

Bradshaw, J. and E. Mayhew (2006). Family Benefit Packages. Social Policy, Employment and Family Change in Comparative Perspective. J. Bradshaw and A. Hatland. Cheltenham (UK)/ Northampton (USA), Edward Elgar: 97-117.

necessary information. A recent comparison of the situation in June 2009⁴³ for the EU and three US States (Nebraska, New Jersey, and Texas)⁴⁴ showed how for one-earner couples with two children on the minimum wage⁴⁵ that many different benefits (social assistance, unemployment benefits and family benefits) can contribute to a countries package at very different levels. Moreover for these same low-paid families, 15 to 20 per cent of their total final income comes from these packages, but on no occasion is a minimum wage plus these benefits sufficient for those families to live above the relative poverty line.

For slightly higher earners, a one-earner couple family on the average wage, benefits are available in each country – but make up a smaller proportion of income (around 10 per cent on average). In a number of poorer countries, one average wage plus benefits does not lift families out of poverty (Bulgaria, Hungary, Portugal, and Slovenia). In some countries (Greece, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Latvia, France and Hungary), the benefit package is responsible for lifting the average-earning family over the poverty threshold. In most other European countries, one average wage is sufficient to raise families above poverty levels.

In the systems described in Van Mechelen et al (2012)⁴⁶ above, there are many differences in the balance and amounts of means-tested and universal benefits. There is considerable debate in the literature about whether or not child benefit packages that consist of mainly income related benefits provide better minimum income protection for low paid workers than universal benefits. In the social policy literature there is considerable disagreement on the link between low-income targeting and the effectiveness of social protection⁴⁷. Although targeted systems may in theory be more generous to low income families, they may be quite ineffective with regard to poverty alleviation due to take-up problems and labour market disincentives⁴⁸. In short, anything less than the most optimal take-up (for example due to stigma) has the largest relative impact on the poorest part of the population (as they are the only recipients); and added to this, benefits paid on the basis of low income may lead to income poverty or benefit traps if recipients do not want to risk the loss of a benefits for short term, or insecure, work opportunities. Evidence supports a mix of universal and means-tested benefits. Countries with the most generous child benefit packages tend to combine universal benefits with income-related cash benefits, housing allowances or supplementary benefits from social assistance⁴⁹.

⁴² http://www.oecd.org/document/29/0,3746,en_2649_34637_39618653_1_1_1_1,00.html

⁴³ For detailed description: see Van Mechelen et al,

2011: <http://www.centrumvoorsociaalbeleid.be/index.php?q=node/2579>.

⁴⁴ Van Mechelen, N. and Bradshaw, J. (2012) Trends in child benefit packages for working families, 1992-2009 in Marx I. & K. Nelson (Eds.) *The State of Minimum Income Protection in the European Union*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan

⁴⁵ Or in the case of countries without a minimum wage DE, DK, FI, IT, SE half the average wage.

⁴⁶ See also Van Lancker W., Ghysels, J. and Cantillon, B. (2012) An international comparison of the impact of child benefits on poverty outcomes for single mothers CSB WORKING PAPER March 2012 No 12 / 03

⁴⁷ Kenworthy, L. (2011). *Progress for the Poor*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Slater, R. (2011). "Cash transfers, social protection and poverty reduction." *International Journal of Social Welfare* **20**: 250-259

⁴⁸ Deacon, A. and J. Bradshaw (1983). *Reserved for the Poor. The Means Test in British Social Policy*. Oxford, Martin Robertson & Company Ltd.

Notten, G. and F. Gassmann (2008). "Size matters: targeting efficiency and poverty reduction effects of means-tested and universal child benefits in Russia." *Journal of European Social Policy* **18**(3): 260-274.

⁴⁹ Or as Titmuss puts it 'The real challenge resides in the question: what particular infrastructure of universalist services is needed in order to provide a framework of values and opportunity bases within and around which can be developed socially acceptable selective services aiming to discriminate positively, with the minimum risk of

3.2 Analysis of the poverty protection from tax benefits systems as children age

The analysis of the tax and benefit treatment of families using a model families approach for 2008 is presented in two parts. The first part aims to assess changes to poverty risks, based on different taxes and benefit for different family types (single, couple, large and mixed) *and* earnings levels. The second part will estimate the costs, and changes to poverty risks, of smoothing income and how this might be achieved by reallocating income from other parts of the family income lifecycle.

Because the model families approach has several assumptions, including stability in earnings levels of families, the working hours, and social contributions, they cannot talk to the experiences of unemployed families, or families that have not met eligibility conditions for receipt of benefits based on working hours, social contributions or residency in the country. These are quite severe limitations when discussing poverty risk, but analysis is available for lower income families, and evidence from their results show that patterns in income trends are very similar, but less pronounced in families on 50 per cent of average wages.⁵⁰ Not addressed in the model families analysis are non-cash benefits delivered to combat or prevent poverty, deprivation and social exclusion; including childcare services (though cash benefits are included – for a discussion of childcare policies see Box 2), and benefits on which cash transfers are conditional (e.g. the Australian Immunisation Allowance, Birth grants in Finland, or more substantial benefits like *Oportunidades* in Mexico).

Box 4. Childcare policies

Secure, good quality, well-paid employment is the single most important factor in combating poverty. One way of helping families take on work, and to be secure in that work, is childcare. Childcare is often considered a panacea for the multiple goals of family policy, reducing gendered burdens of home care responsibilities, supporting child development, and freeing up parents to work and reduce poverty. To ensure that earned income makes it into disposable income, and well-paid employment makes real reductions to experiences of poverty, good quality childcare needs to be affordable.

Using estimates for 23 EU countries, Förster and Richardson (2011)⁵¹ report analysis of how both cash and childcare can substantially lower poverty risks, both together and separately, in households with children aged under 7. Taken together, cash family transfers and childcare services reduce the poverty risk among families with under-7s by more than half on EU average: from around 17 per cent to around 8 per cent. On EU average, family cash transfers reduce poverty among young children to a somewhat larger extent than childcare services (by 37 per cent versus 26 per cent). The authors also report country-level findings for four countries: France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom, and show how the respective strength of poverty reduction effects of childcare services differs across countries.

Compared to cash transfers, the impact of childcare on poverty is weakest in the United Kingdom (childcare costs are high in the UK), whereas in France and Germany the poverty reducing affect of childcare is similar to cash benefit outcomes. In Sweden childcare services have a stronger impact on poverty rates than cash benefits.

In comparison to the European average, the Swedish childcare system has a much stronger independent impact on poverty reduction than its cash benefits for families with children below the age of 7 (it is notable however that the combined effect of French cash and kind interventions has a similar final outcome).

stigma, in favour of those whose needs are greatest?' Titmuss, R. M. (1968) *Commitment to Welfare*, London: Allen and Unwin p.135

⁵⁰ OECD (2011) *Doing Better for Families*, OECD Publishing, Paris - (see pages 74-6)

⁵¹ Förster M. and Richardson D. (2011) "Réduction de la pauvreté des enfants : comparaisons internationales", Politiques sociales et familiales n° 104, Cnaf, juin 2011

One reason for this is that access to childcare does not show any income-level bias – meaning poor families in Sweden have the same access to the service as richer groups. Through equal access, increased earning potential or reduced private costs for poor families, or both, can increase disposable income and reduce overall poverty risks. Equal access to child care by income level is unusual: in most other OECD countries, low-income families are not using childcare as much as higher-income groups.⁵²

Again, as with child support, coverage of the policy is important. But how come Sweden manages to support the access to childcare of low income families when other countries have problems? For one, Sweden is the third highest spender on childcare in the OECD, investing more of its overall family budget on childcare (and other services) than high spenders like the UK and France (who invest more on cash and tax breaks). Second, and because of this investment, childcare fees in Sweden are amongst the lowest in the OECD (for both couples and sole parents⁵³ – see OECD 2011, chapters 4 and 6) and the additional ‘effective tax’ burden on second earners and sole parents entering work is low. Finally, together these factors mean capacity and enrolment in the childcare system is high; enrolment is above the OECD average (around 70 per cent compared to 58 per cent on average⁵⁴).

3.2.1 Family poverty risks and the life cycle

Evidence from OECD (2011) on how equivalised net income trends as their youngest children grow can be used to assess family poverty risks across the life cycle. The main finding from the analysis is that income – regardless of family type – fluctuates most in the early years between birth and around age 4. The fluctuations in income are due mainly to lost earnings, as one or both parents take leave to care for their new child, although these shifts in income can be more or less severe country-by-country due to the length of leave and the depth of income loss after the leave benefit is paid.

For example, in France, parents can take leave for up to three years, but income falls are large, and in the case of sole parents on average wages, income poverty risks are very high. In contrast, in the United States, all families will experiences a very short and sharp fall income due to the unpaid leave policy which provide workers with 12 weeks of leave after the birth of a child (available in larger companies only).⁵⁵ In Australia and Denmark falls in income are short compared to France and less severe than those experienced in the United States; in Denmark income during leave fluctuates due to different earned income replacement rates in their maternity and parental leave policies.

For all countries it is worth noting that sole parent families (due mainly to having fewer earners at home), and then large families (due in part to equivalisation of income) are less well off throughout the child’s life cycle than couple families. Although on occasion, for lower earned-income groups, family benefit packages can substantially reduce difference based on family type (see the examples of 50 per cent of average wage earners in Australia, Denmark, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, in OECD, 2011).

In no country do the pre-birth level of income return after leave, due to equivalisation of income that accounts for the increase in family size. A simple but important

⁵² OECD (2011) *Doing Better for Families*, OECD Publishing, Paris, page 144.

⁵³ *Ibid*, chapters 4 and 6.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, page 143.

⁵⁵ See OECD (2011) for comparisons of family types and income for 31 OECD countries. For each country income changes in three types of working households when a child is born into the family are reported.

message is that in both reality and poverty rate calculations, having a child comes with a small but measurable fall in real income for all family types which is not made up for by tax breaks or benefits provided by the majority of national family policies.

Based on the findings above, and the findings of extended analysis in OECD (2011), it is clear that poverty risks for all families in OECD countries, even those earning relatively well, are most severe in the early years when care and work responsibilities mean families forego part or full amount of their earnings. Once children are in school, earnings for working families and income from benefits are more stable.

Together this evidence and evidence of the importance of labour market attachment for reducing poverty risks raises four key concerns for policymakers:

- i. First, the early years are critical for children's development and early disadvantage can create barriers for children education, health and social skill formation. Income is critical in enabling families to access services and activities for their children's development. Efforts should be made to ensure that families of all types have sufficient incomes to promote child development and access health and education services via parental leave payments, childcare or other benefits.
- ii. Second, high costs, poverty risks or the crowding-out of employment opportunities associated with child rearing can lead to lower or postponed fertility and family formation. In countries with increasing trends for older parenting (e.g. Germany) and smaller families (e.g. Korea), there are valid concerns about future welfare sustainability, dependency ratios, and economic productivity. A balance needs to be struck between the private costs and social benefits of childrearing.
- iii. Third, families that meet the costs of caring for children by using savings or going into debt represent future poverty risks. To maintain living standards at the point of child birth and parental leave either public or private transfers are necessary. In the case of low public support, the use of private savings or credit lines can increase the likelihood of the family entering into poverty or welfare dependency in the future when debts or savings are repaid.
- iv. Fourth, spending early and preventing children falling behind (or future family poverty risks) are efficient and equitable policies with the potential to lower global welfare costs and promote growth through human capital gains.⁵⁶ By ensuring that the number of families at risk of under-investing on their children is not accentuated by early years' family policies (during the prenatal period and during parental leave), policies can be said to be fair (based on the accident of birth argument) *and* efficient, as gaps in ability are not established, later spending in primary school is made more efficient (more children are ready for school) and costly future fixes are not required.

⁵⁶ OECD (2009) *Doing Better for Children*. OECD publishing, Paris. And OECD (2009) *Doing Better for Families*. OECD publishing, Paris.

3.3.2 How might family income be smoothed during family formation?

There are a number of ways to limit the risk of poverty in the early years of family formation. For example, leave policies can be paid at rates to match earned income before leave, parents can be supported into work via good quality and affordable childcare services, business can provide additional support to families enabling a smooth transition from leave to work and vice versa, and gender equitable approaches to parental leave would mean that mothers do not experience biases in terms of lower wages and less security before or after the birth of a child (which is particularly important for single mothers).

Below, analysis looks specifically at the first point, the shortfall in incomes during leave, and the potential costs of making up that difference in earned income (or potentially tax burdens) during the entire 18 years of earnings potential in the child's lifecycle. When incomes are smoother it will affect the likelihood of families to save or to use credit, and so impact on the likelihood of families experiencing poverty persistently or repeatedly.

Using information on the family tax and benefit packages, leave payments and length, the monthly and annual costs (spread over 18 years) of taking full leave entitlements in OECD countries can be calculated as a proportion of one gross average wage. The length and depth of income shifts during parental leave can be read in reference to the months of birth related leave (prenatal and postnatal maternity, parental and child raising leaves) and the monthly gross income offset. The global cost of child raising on earned income (the effective tax rate on household income) is represented by the annual gross income offset.

In terms of months of leave, countries with long leaves (over three years) include the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Norway, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Spain. Countries with short leaves of 6 months or less include Iceland, Switzerland and the United States. Countries with long leave generally have effective parental leave tax rates of above 3 per cent (Hungarian sole parents are the exception). Countries with short leave periods have effective tax rates of equal to, or lower than, one percent.

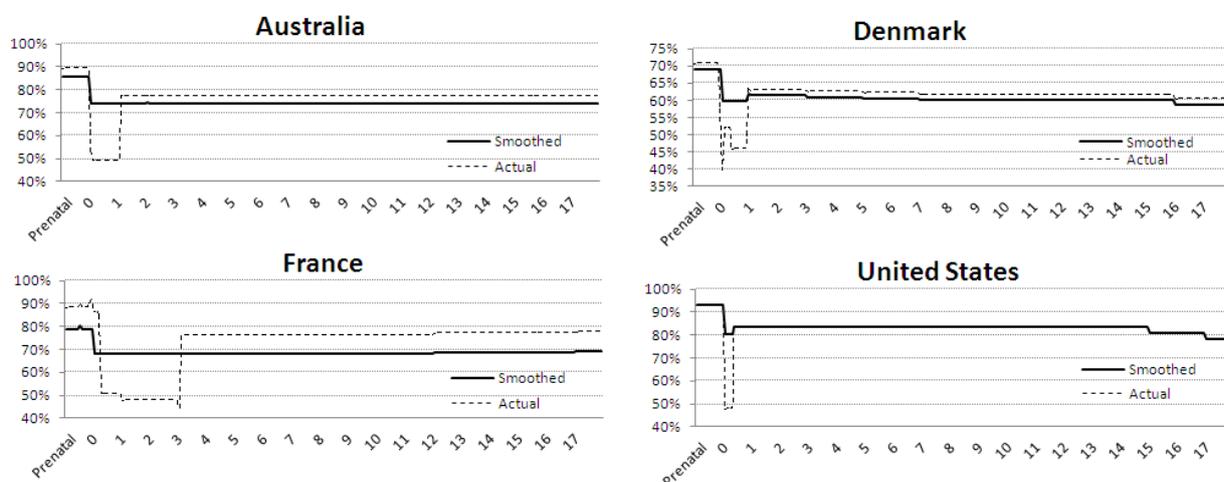
By family type, across the OECD, both large families and sole parent families lose less total income during leave on average than couple families. Sole parents are protected more than large families in relative terms (the effective tax rate on leave is 22 per cent of a single gross wage compared to 32 per cent in large families), but both couple and large families have an additional wage with which to make up the difference.

The length of time that income would fall if full leave entitlements were to be taken, also matters. Overall, large families have slightly more time available for leave, but this is driven mostly by long leave available in Hungary. Sole parents have shorter leave in Belgium, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom; these variations in are reflected in annual gross income offsets in these countries. In New Zealand, Norway, and Poland leave is longer for sole parents, however it is only in New Zealand where this difference means the global cost of parental leave for sole parents is higher than other family types.

Short and generous leave periods are the most effective in reducing global costs on families for child rearing, and in doing so they smooth income both during and after child rearing (low global cost reduces the need for savings use or debt accrual). In countries where global child rearing costs are lower than 1 per cent per year of a gross average wage for sole parents (and less than 2 per cent for other family types), effective replacement rates (parental leave payments plus other benefits and tax policies) are above 80 per cent and often closer to 90 per cent, and replace income for up to 12 months in total.

To illustrate how smoothing income during child raising might be possible, the net income trends in the example countries – under present policies – can be adjusted by global costs by reallocating them. Figure 9 applies the effective tax rates on parental leave to earned (and equivalised) income over the child lifecycle of a child born into a 2 parent 1 child family on average earnings. The results show that smoothing income over longer child related leave would offset future family earnings (via the tax system or disposable income via savings [not debt – which would incur a much higher cost]) to a greater extent. In France, for instance, where net income during leave presently falls for this family type by almost half, a three year period of leave can cost the family almost 10 per cent of annual net income. In the United States, four weeks of unpaid leave could be smoothed via the tax system (or future earnings to repay personal savings) at a rate of around 1 per cent of net income.

Figure 9: Examples of changes in family income patterns to smooth parental leave costs (two-child couple families), 2009



Source: authors calculations using OECD Tax and Benefit models.

4. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The following summary section provides recommendations in terms of short, medium and long-term changes to family policies for the purposes of reducing present poverty rates, recommendations for preventing the transmission of poverty between generations, and reducing the risk of sporadic poverty associated with family formation and child rearing. The recommendations draw from the evidence above, and from the recent OECD analysis in *Doing Better for Families* and *Doing Better for Children*, in

order to expand the recommendations into broader family and child well-being and spending issues.

To start, an important ‘overall’ recommendation is necessary. It is critical that monitoring tools for assessing rates and changes in family poverty include multiple indicators frameworks. Many governments, and notably the European Union through Europe 2020, have recognised that income poverty measures need to be complemented with other measures of living standards to fully understand levels of family well-being by country. Without a multi-indicator tool, only part of the picture of poverty in developed countries is available, and policy efforts based on such a picture will invariably be limited.

4.1 How might developed countries buck the trend of increasing family poverty rates?

Over recent years family policies, and welfare policies more generally, have had to work harder to keep poverty rates low as market income poverty has been increasing,⁵⁷ and overall OECD figures suggest that efforts have not been successful. As shown in the evidence above, paid employment is the only guaranteed way for most families to live out of poverty; but good jobs and well-paid jobs need to be available.

- To encourage families into sustainable forms of employment, training should be provided alongside unemployment or income supports benefit, and paid apprenticeships should be offered to unemployed younger people.
- To avoid potential benefits and low income traps, government should consider providing “grace periods”, or transition benefits, for benefit recipients to reduce perceived risk of entering employment. Another option would be to reduce the level of paid social assistance more ‘smoothly’, to aid the transition from benefit income to earned income.
- Governments need to make work pay, particularly for low income families by ensuring they keep more of their earned income, which means providing as a priority flexible, affordable and good quality childcare, help with transport costs associated with work, and tax credits or allowances for working families (in progressive tax systems).
- As dual earner families increase in response to a range of social and economic pressures, governments need to facilitate making work pay for both parents by reducing childcare costs where necessary, and work towards gender equitable employment and leave policies. Policy should ensure good-quality childcare to assure parents that their children are being looked after properly and enhance child development. Public childcare supports should be conditional on quality standards. For families with older children, most developed countries need to further develop their out-of-school-hours care supports.

⁵⁷ OECD (2012) *Divided We Stand*. OECD publishing, Paris.

- Women play an increasingly important earnings role in families in developed economies, and with increasing sole parent households. Gender equitable wage structures, access to training or certain sector of employment or education (including management), and leave policies will improve women's access to employment, working conditions and in doing so offset risks associated with increasing numbers of sole parent households.

4.2 Which policies are best placed to alleviate family poverty in the short and medium term?

Family benefits such as child allowances and social assistance play an important role in addressing short term experiences of poverty, and going some way to stopping families employing their savings or using debt. For longer term solutions to poverty risks, investments designed to equip families with the necessary skills and tools for good and sustainable employment are necessary. For effective poverty reduction strategies, these two types of interventions need to be applied together.

- The vast majority of jobless families, in all of the developed countries, will live in poverty due to the low levels of welfare benefits in developed countries. Although increasing these benefits may create a new set of welfare dependency problems, and paying above poverty rates for any significant length of time might be undesirable (benefits could be reduced over a period to increase work incentives, whilst effectively combating poverty risks in short periods outside of the labour market), higher levels of cash benefits are undeniably one way to reduce poverty risk in the short term.
- In countries where in-work poverty is common, in work benefits or tax allowances could be increased for short income poverty term-gains.
- To complement short term poverty reduction strategies through cash benefits, strategies such as employment support programs in high unemployment areas, or in-work training, or targeted minimum wage legislation, in areas with high levels of in-work poverty, are more likely to lower poverty rates in the medium term.

Short and medium term gains to poverty in developed countries can be made through changes at the margins of present family policy (OECD, 2009). For instance, improvement to the family investment portfolio could be made today to ensure public support for child rearing has no gaps. Benefits targeted at 'crisis points' in family formation or child rearing, can also help, such as maintenance payments.

- Countries need to ensure that financial transfers, care supports and flexible working-time arrangements for families with young children fit together into a continuum of support without gaps in income or care replacements.
- Public child support or maintenance programmes are important tools in reducing child poverty in sole-parent families, as well as re-formed families. From the child perspective, advance payments systems are best because they maximise coverage and ensure regular support for the parent with childcare responsibilities. Nonetheless, it is important for families to ensure that

disincentives to shared parenting and parental responsibilities, as well as unsustainable public spending is avoided.

- In the longer-term, good quality accessible childcare services needs in many countries are going to be key to improving outcomes for families. The infrastructure required to provide public childcare, or build a market for private childcare, may take years to establish, but is necessary to encourage family formation and parental employment in future generations (OECD, 2011).
- A by-product of greater labour market access for all families will be a reduction in market inequality. To address income poverty, social exclusion and deprivation in the long-term, increasing market inequality needs to be stopped, and then reduced. Recent OECD analysis suggests this can be done by bringing underrepresented groups, such as mothers, into the labour market to increase family earnings, and lower earnings inequality. However, if labour market participation is limited to short-hours or precarious jobs without career possibilities, earnings inequality, and so income poverty, cannot be reduced sustainably.⁵⁸

4.3 Which policies are best placed to break cycles of disadvantage in poor families, and prevent the transmission of poverty risks?

Countries with the highest levels of intergenerational mobility are also those with the lowest market income inequality, and those with lower levels of home-driven variation in educational achievement. To this end, reasonably limiting the influence of private investment on later life outcomes is likely to reduce the transmission of poverty risks.

- Countries should invest in family policies during the early childhood years and sustain investment throughout childhood, in order for children from poorer backgrounds to take more advantage of public investment over the life cycle (OECD, 2009). Such an investment strategy potentially has high social rates of return by avoiding more costly interventions later in life such as welfare dependency or low productivity (both of which transmit poverty risks).

Lengthy experiences of poverty and deep experiences of poverty can lead to the depreciation of housing conditions, the use of credit services and subsequent strains on household budgets, the decrease of savings, and might mean that young people in the household leave school and enter the workforce to support the family.

- Governments should intervene at points in the lifecycle where poverty risks are entrenched (birth, during parent leave (see section 3.2) school entry, the school to work transition, or parental entry in and out of employment), and particularly at points when poor children may decide to leave the education system (see for example Australia's Family Tax Credit supplement for children aged 13 to 15, or the now defunct Education Maintenance Allowance in the United Kingdom), in affect trading-off their future opportunities and transmitting poverty risks.

⁵⁸ OECD (2012) *Divided We Stand*. OECD publishing, Paris.

4.4 Which family policies are best placed to deal with evolving family forms and needs? What role is there for flexibility / innovation?

One key area where innovation is needed is in the workplace. Businesses need to ensure that workplace supports are accessible to all families, including those with young children or without partners. To facilitate this:

- Governments should encourage employers to offer part-time employment opportunities, flexibility in working hours, and a more gender-equitable use of leave entitlements.

There remain few examples of family policies that go beyond the mother child dyad (with the exception of child support policies). However recent policy innovation has included Grandparents support in childcare (see Australia's Child care policies - although with increasing mobile families, and varying geographic constraint country-to-country, this may not prove transferable in all situations); and equal parental leave entitlements (see Iceland's parental leave policy).

- As part of a broader childcare policy, governments should carefully explore the possibilities of involving grandparents as official carers for young grandchildren to account both family interactions and life-cycle issues by providing a safe caring environment for the grandchild, combating poverty through enabling parents to work, and in some cases provided necessary additional income to the grandparents as well.
- A 'full' family approach to parental leave should also be considered, not only for reasons of gender equity, but also to encourage fathering skills (reading and playing) that are positive activities for child and family development.

Despite social policy reforms and growth in family incomes over the past two decades child poverty remains a serious problem. Now, because of the Great Recession, things are likely to get worse. In times of crisis, there remain both equity and efficiency arguments for protecting the vulnerable (OECD, 2009). To achieve this, further reform and public service efficiencies are required.

- Efforts should be made to ensure that available benefits are taken-up by eligible recipients at maximum levels. Underinvestment on vulnerable families today will create additional costs in the future.
- Service delivery efficiencies should be made to free up more funds for vulnerable families, and improve the use of, and outcomes from, family services. To begin, governments could consider efforts to collocate services to take advantage of economies of scale, and build systems to assist collaboration between family services (welfare, school and health for instance) to reduce the costs on the family of accessing multiple supports, and to facilitate the best possible outcomes for families.

In the past 20 years the family service sector has seen the fastest growth in family policies, and a closer linkage to cash benefits through an increasing number of conditional cash transfers.

- Countries should review options for progressive universalism / cascaded service delivery to improve efficiency without leaving children behind. Single systems of family service delivery that provide universal services with more intensive delivery to targeted populations based on initial assessments; enhance social fairness and social integration of all the children, in the most cost-effective manner. Who to target would vary policy-to-policy, but importantly would be decided on a case by case basis only possible due to the initial universal coverage.

Finally, with recognition of the limited impact of the main family benefits to address increasing poverty rates, and appreciated the fast moving policy change (and changing priorities of government) during the Great Recession, governments and stakeholders need to help build the evidence base with robust evaluation of existing policies, and experimentation with new policies. Innovation is necessary at the very heart of the family policy debate, if over the next generation of children present negative trends are to be reversed.

There is a role for international organisations, working with national governments to coordinate these efforts, and provide for the exchange of good practice and good policy for the reduction of family poverty in developed economies.

Annex

Table1: Relative risk of deprivation. All=1.00. Lacking two or more child deprivation items. Own analysis of SILC 2009.

	Sole parent	High degree of urbanisation	Migrant	No primary or lower secondary ed.	Low work intensity	3+ children	Income poverty
Austria	1.9	1.6	2.1	2.2	4.7	1.9	3.9
Belgium	2.2	1.4	2.2	2.9	4.5	1.4	3.9
Bulgaria	1.3	0.8	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.6
Cyprus	4.9	1.1	2.1	3.2	9	3	3.9
Czech Rep.	3.4	0.9	2.1	6.8	5.7	2.5	3.9
Denmark	3.9	1.8	3	4.5	8.7	2.7	5.3
Estonia	1.8	0.9	1.3	2.4	3.7	2	2.7
Finland	2.7	0.9	4.7	1	8.5	1.6	4.8
France	2.1	1.3	2	3.4	4.2	1.6	3.2
Germany	2.7	1.1	1.9	4	4.7	1.3	3
Greece	1.4	0.9	2.5	3	1.3	1.5	2.5
Hungary	1.5	0.8	0.8	2.3		1.6	1.8
Iceland							
Ireland	2.7	1.1	0.6	2.4	3.8	1.8	3.4
Italy	1.3	1.1	1.8	2.1	2.6	1.8	2.3
Latvia	1.6	0.8	0.9	2.1	2	1.5	1.9
Lithuania	1.7	0.6	1.6	2.8	2.4	1.5	1.8
Luxembourg	5.3	1.1	1.1	2.3	5.9	0.9	3.2
Malta	3.5	1	1.1	1.8	4.3	2.2	2.3
Netherlands	5.5		2.9	5.1	8.8	1.3	4.3
Norway	2.2	1.5	1.8	3.1	8.2	1.5	6.8
Poland	2	0.8	0.6	2.9	2.3	2	2.2
Portugal	1.7	1	1.2	1.4	2.6	2.1	2
Romania	1.2	0.8	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
Slovakia	1.2	0.8	1	4.4	3.7	1.9	2.5
Slovenia	2.1		1.9	4	4.5	1.8	3.2
Spain	1.9	1	2.4	2.4	3.9	3.2	2.7
Sweden	3.3	0.8	2.1	5	10.9	2.1	5.3
United Kingdom	2.2	1.2	1.3	3.5	2.4	1.6	2.6

Source: Analysis of EU SILC, 2009.

Table 2: Percent of deprived children with characteristics

	Sole parent	Low degree of urbanisation	Migrant	No education or primary or lower secondary	High work intensity ⁵⁹	1 or 2 children
Austria	18	18	72	17	14	54
Belgium	31	2	63	46	14	46
Bulgaria	6	61	1	39	33	80
Cyprus	28	31	57	17	31	67
Czech Rep.	30	50	13	23	24	65
Denmark	62	12	49	43	14	39
Estonia	23	56	20	13	24	58
Finland	27	59	46	4	13	46
France	29	13	42	38	27	53
Germany	35	22	18	18	23	69
Greece	4	56	45	43	28	89
Hungary	12	58	2	30	20	55
Iceland	72	34	51	52	66	100
Italy	11	11	31	55	22	75
Latvia	16	65	14	21	32	68
Lithuania	20	72	11	16	33	69
Luxembourg	49	19	80	51	38	86
Malta	20		13	80	8	65
Netherlands	46	*	30	45	32	58
Norway	43	13	31	30	44	43
Poland	9	54	1	11	28	56
Portugal	15	16	21	80	33	72
Romania	4	75	0	28	44	67
Slovakia	5	48	3	11	34	57
Slovenia	12	*	25	19	42	64
Spain	9	25	41	67	18	72
Sweden	47	67	43	18	27	40
United Kingdom	38	1	28	25	23	47

Source: Analysis of EU SILC, 2009.

⁵⁹ Here defined as 1.0.

Chapter III

Work-Family Balance Policies

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Introduction

Even though the global economy has undergone a major financial and economic crisis, with another weakening in GDP growth since late 2010, work-family balance remains a central issue for employed parents and employers alike (World of Work Report 2011). Pressures from an increasingly competitive work environment are leading to conflicting priorities for employers and governments creating considerable stresses for employees trying to “juggle” work with family responsibilities. In some European countries, financial strains have led to cuts in existing policies or postponement and cancellations to previously announced changes (International Network on Leave Policies and Research Report, 2011). Whereas in other less economically stressed regions of the world, paid parental leave policies are being introduced for the first time.

Despite the global economic downturn, work-family balance continues to be of great importance for societies because in more and more countries women’s labour force participation has increased. Finding and retaining enough employment to economically provide, as well as having time to properly care for the young, old and vulnerable members of family groups is a key challenge for contemporary parents-“the squeezed middle generation” in many families. This pressure is intensified for parents raising children alone after separation or widowhood, a growing family form in developing and developed countries (Mokomane, 2011; OECD, 2011). For those in employment, work intensity has increased, due to a combination of new information technologies and the associated quickening pace of communication and production methods (ILO, 2006). Heightened work-load and worries about job security can lead to stress and health problems with emotional “spill-over” to home (Byron, 2005). In developing countries there is disquiet about jobs creating “a care deficit” for children where employees are less available to care for very young children who may be left alone for many hours due to the absence of nurseries or alternative care (Heymann, 2006).

Since the 1970s governments have tried to respond to work-care challenges, with varying success, by introducing specific policies/strategies and new benefits. The private sector has also made adjustments and in some cases provided a testing ground for small-scale innovations (Maitland & Thompson, 2011). Similarly intergovernmental bodies such as the ILO have formulated significant protective frameworks including two major conventions relating to work-family balance. The ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention (No. 156) and Recommendation No. 165 in 1985 stipulate that the full exercise of the right to work implies that family responsibilities cannot constitute cause for discrimination or restrict access to jobs (ILO, 2011). The instruments recommend that States implement policies ensuring more equal distribution of care responsibilities. However, many workers in the informal sector are not protected by existing legal or regulatory frameworks and a number of countries have eased regulations to lower the costs to employers of hiring and firing and/or introducing new work arrangements (ILO, 2006) leading some commentators to call for “raising the global floor” (Heymann & Earle, 2010). Other NGOs and grass roots activists are promoting a fundamental re-think and societal resetting in the balance of work and family life, for example a transition to a 21 hour week for all (New Economics Foundation, 2011). Whatever their position an increasing number of

stakeholders are recognizing the importance of finding more effective solutions to managing the distribution of paid work and family care time.

The purpose of this paper is firstly, to provide evidence on the key challenges faced by families today as members attempt to manage work and care and secondly, to critically examine policy solutions and initiatives, offered by governments, employers and civil society actors to ensure work-family balance.

I. Parents-Working Patterns

The work-family debate of the 1990s, in developed countries in particular, was dominated by discussion about the impact on family well-being of long weekly working hours – “*the long work hours culture*” (Burke & Cooper, 2008). Despite the slowdown in economic activity in many regions of the world, the working life of parents, particularly fathers and increasingly also mothers, can make sustaining a meaningful family life hard to manage. This section presents recent international comparative data available on parental employment patterns.

Women’s increased participation in paid work

As shown in Table 1 women are increasingly participating in paid work, mirroring advances in women’s education and aspirations (OECD, 2011). The timing of the resultant increase in female employment has varied across countries. For example, the rise in female employment began in the early 1960s in Australia, New Zealand, the Nordic countries, and the United States, whereas the main gains in Ireland, the Netherlands and Spain were recorded over the past two decades. However, female participation in paid work remains low in the Middle East and North Africa. A recent gender analysis for the World Economic Forum showed that North America held the top place on female economic participation followed by Europe and Central Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific and Middle East and North Africa (Global Gender Gap Report, 2011). Several Middle East countries are generally closing health and education gaps but show low levels of female participation in the paid labour force.

However, since 2009 it is notable that across OECD countries female participation in paid work rate dropped in almost every country (Table 1). The global recession and retrenchment in public sector occupations, typically a female domain, in part account for this trend but also gender discrimination practices may have contributed. Some of the countries with the largest differences in female and male earnings are also those where the growth in female employment has been the fastest, such as Chile, China, Republic of Korea and Singapore (ILO, 2006). For instance while Chinese women’s labour force participation, at 74 per cent, is high, men’s wages are growing faster than women’s wages (Global Gender Gap Report, 2011). Women have made significant progress in the workplace, but still tend to have lower pay and far fewer high status occupations than comparable men (The Economist, 2011). Similarly in poorer regions of the world women are more likely to be in “vulnerable” unsalaried employment (contributing family workers or own-account workers). At a global level, women made up 52.7 per cent of the vulnerable employment sector in 2007, compared to 49.1 per cent for men (ILO, 2009).

The prevalence of the male breadwinner family model has diminished in those countries which experienced the expansion of female participation in the labour market. For example, it accounted for only 27 per cent of households across the 12 EU (Lewis et al., 2008) and over 40 per cent in Mexico and Turkey (OECD, 2010). Comparative direct family based measures of parents' employment status are not readily available for non-OECD countries but UN country reports suggest that solo male earner families are only significant in prevalence in Gulf countries (e.g. El-Haddad, 2003) and amongst the richer families within developing countries (e.g. Jelin & Diaz-Munoz, 2003). Elsewhere the global increases in women's employment have resulted in families where most young children are raised by parents, if both present, employed in some form of paid work.

The global movement of women into the labor force without equally large reductions in men's labor 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. (Heymann, 2006: 7)

In other developing regions with major public health issues or conflict settings, for instance in Africa, the male breadwinner household structure is not applicable, as many households are maintained by women (Mokomane, 2011).

Variation by family type and life course

Most mothers are in paid work, especially when children go to school (Table 2) and indeed just over half of mothers (51.9 per cent) across the OECD 26 countries are in work before their child reaches 3 years of age. An even earlier return to employment after childbirth is becoming more common in certain industrialized countries. For example, in the United States, 50 per cent of mothers have returned to employment by the time their child was 3 months old (Hofferth & Curtin, 2006). In this context, supporting the transition to parenthood and the reconciliation of work and care for very young children is becoming a crucial family policy goal as the economic well-being of families with children is increasingly reliant on maternal as well as paternal employment.

At later stages in the life course, men and women face challenges in confronting earning and care responsibilities on multiple fronts- for elders and young adult family members (Kröger & Sipila, 2005). Increased longevity and lower mortality rates in many countries have extended reproductive, caring and employment trajectories. Ageing effects will increase the potential for more generations to co-exist for longer periods (Bengston, 2001). As the later life course becomes more extended, varied and complex, men and women may begin to have overlapping multiple opportunities and obligations to family and work. There is a need for more sensitivity to elder care oriented work family packages to support adults workers who wish to contribute towards informal family oriented care of their parents or elder kin group. Also in many developed societies young people leave their family of origin at an older age than previous youth generations, in many EU-countries even beyond the age of 28–30 (Eurostat 2009). Employed parents are at risk of experiencing escalating multiple family responsibilities to several generations at the same time.

Working hours

The countries found by the ILO's global report on work time (Lee et al, 2007) to have the highest prevalence of long working hours (i.e. more than 48 hours per week) included Peru (50.9 per cent of workers), South Korea (49.5 per cent), Thailand (46.7 per cent) and Pakistan (44.4 per cent). This compares, for example, with 18.1 per cent of employees working more than 48 hours per week in the US and 25.7 per cent in the UK. In developing countries long full-time weekly hours are particularly common in agriculture, self-employment, management and some professional occupations (ILO, 2006). In Bangladesh, under the Factories Act, the law stipulates that a standard working week is 48 hours but can be extended to 60 hours if overtime allowances are paid. Overtime allowances, which double the normal wage, are a great incentive to workers to increase hours (Human Rights and Business Dilemmas Forum, 2012). In lower-income activities, such as agriculture, long hours are not a barrier to women's entry; rather they are an economic necessity for both sexes. Although legal protective frameworks against excessive work time are emerging, without enforcement compliance can be low and global thresholds culturally unacceptable (e.g. implementation of the 40-hour limit in the Forty-Hour Week ILO Convention, 1935 (No. 47)). In many developing countries it is customary to normally work beyond standard hours. For example in South Korea, although *"maternity leave has become normalized, it is somewhat common to be asked to resume work before the 90 days of entitled leave or for workers to hesitate to request the mandated leave* (Chin et al, 2011). Similarly part-time or reduced hours work can bring social stigma as well as loss of earning, as reported for many Indian women (Desai et al, 2011).

OECD analysis has also charted wide variation in working hours for parents, leaving little time for family commitments in some countries (Adema & Whiteford, 2007). In many couple families with children, paternal hours in paid work are much longer than for mothers (OECD, 2011). For example, while a considerable proportion (nearly a third) of fathers in couple families work more than 45 hours per week (especially in Turkey and the UK), the proportion of mothers working long hours is relatively small (around 9 per cent), except in Greece (19 per cent) and Turkey (38 per cent). South Korea, USA and Japan make up the top three countries (in order) where the overwhelming majority of both male and female employees usually work 40 hours or more per week. An exception to the gender pattern is the Philippines, where employed women are two to three times more likely than men to work exceptionally long hours in paid work, sometimes more than 64 hours a week (ILO, 2009).

In terms of other emerging economies, there are differing profiles. For example, in the mid-decade period average weekly working hours grew in China and declined in Brazil: China (urban areas) 44.9 hours in 2001- 45.5 hours 2004; Brazil 41.5 hours in 2001 - 40.6 hours in 2001 (Demetriades & Pedersini, 2008). In general, in developed countries the incidence of long weekly working hours seems to be plateauing or declining (European Foundation for the Improvement in Living and Working Conditions, 2007) whereas in developing countries working hours remain high, especially in Asia and China. Also it is important to note that national averages in work time disguise regional and local variation and refer only to the formal labour market sectors. The likelihood of even higher weekly working hours is strong in informal and

unregulated labour markets, which, amongst the G20 economies, are most prevalent in India, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil and South Africa (ILO/OECD, 2011).

Anti-social working hours

What constitutes “anti-social” working hours varies across cultures. Typically night working, regular working away from home and regular employment on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays depending on region fall into this generic category. These working-time practices vary from the traditional reference point of ‘standard hours’ (full-time, daytime and weekday) and offer both risk and opportunity for work-family balance measures. European data show that non-standard “atypical working” is becoming more common for both fathers and mothers (Fagan, 2007). For instance, in the UK, about a quarter of parents (27 per cent of fathers and 22 per cent of mothers) normally work on Saturdays and 16 per cent and 15 per cent respectively on Sundays (La Valle et al, 2002). These data only cover workplace employment, not “bringing work home” and so may underestimate the volume of non-standard working by parents.

Weekend work is also common in emerging economies where data are available- an ILO survey showed that 25 per cent of respondents worked at weekends in three urban areas of China, in particular for the wholesale and retail trade (Demetriades & Pedersini, 2008). Night-time working is also not uncommon for parents as the global economy moves to operate on a 24-hour timeframe. In some developing countries new legislation has opened up opportunities for women to “work the night shift” especially in transnational call and global communication centres. For instance in India before a legislation change in 2005, women were not allowed to work between the hours of 7pm and 6am (Patel, 2010). The night time shift can be extended for female workers as typically lengthy social shuttle transportation is often arranged to protect women during their commute. While shift work can enable both parents to be in paid work, and be economically liberating for some women, the resultant “tag parenting” can be stressful reducing shared family time (e.g. La Valle, et. al, 2002). In addition, since most time use studies suggest that employed mothers continue to take more responsibility for domestic housework, despite an increase in fathers’ participation in the care of children, long weekly work hours can be hard for families, particularly mothers, to manage without extra support.

National and local labour markets provide an important context to work-life balance with regard to working hours. In a study of working time preferences among men and women in 22 countries, Stier and Lewin-Epstein (2003) found that preferences were linked to a country’s economic vitality. The wish for longer working hours was more common in countries with low rates of economic growth, high rates of inequality and inflation. In countries with higher levels of economic development, individuals were more likely to prefer time reductions in paid work. A broader macro-economic context influences individuals’ aspirations and decision-making about working hours.

2. Impact of Work pressures on Family Life

During the 1990s a vocabulary developed to describe the time pressures many contemporary families lived by - ‘the time squeeze’, the ‘second shift’, the ‘time crunch’, ‘the time famine’, and ‘juggling work and family’ have become common

currency (Hochschild, 1989; Daly, 1996). These pressures remain despite the economic downturn and are increasingly approached as a life course issue and for men as well as women. Across developing countries and emergent economies, the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities is increasingly becoming an important phenomenon with high policy relevance for instance in Latin America and the Caribbean (ILO-UNDP, 2009), Asia (Caparas, 2011), China (ILO, 2009a) and in many sub-Saharan Africa countries (Makomane, 2011). With the growth of dual earner families there is increased awareness of the limitations of a policy approach which concentrates solely on mothers. Higher levels of maternal employment can mean that wives and partners are not as available to look after the male worker despite cultural norms assuming “business as usual”. As reported in an analysis of work-family challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean, *‘The cultural problem is not solely about men. How society works in general, with its unwritten rules, institutions and schedules tends to assume that someone is still working fulltime on family care’* (ILO-UNDP, 2009: 41).

There is a strong body of academic literature on the relationship between work and family life, with an historic preoccupation on *conflict* (Biggart, 2010; Lu et al, 2011). Greenhaus and Beutell’s (1985:77) psychological definition of work-family conflict as *‘a form of inter-role conflict in which the pressures from work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respects’* has been widely adopted. At a policy level, the goal has been to reduce work-family conflict for individuals through *work-family reconciliation* measures in order to achieve harmonization and work-family *balance*.

Striking the right balance between the commitments of work and those of private life is central to people’s well-being. Too little work can prevent people from earning enough to attain desired standards of living. But too much work can also have a negative impact on well-being if people’s health or personal lives suffer as a consequence, or if they cannot perform other important activities, such as looking after their children and other relatives, having time for themselves, etc. The way people allocate their time is determined by both necessity and personal circumstances, which in turn are shaped by individuals’ preferences and by the cultural, social and policy contexts in which people live.
(OECD, 2011:22)

The cultural context is a significant factor in shaping the relationship between work and home. In countries with more collectivistic orientations, sacrificing family time for work may be viewed as a self-sacrifice for the benefit of the family, unlike in more individualist cultures where intensive investment in work time can be perceived as being less family oriented (Yang et al, 2000). However, what constitutes a normative working hour pattern is primarily influenced by economic necessity. For instance, in many Asian countries Caparas (2011:3) notes that *‘work taken to the extreme of putting in long hours, often merely to make ends meet, is most pronounced’*. Despite these diverse orientations, most international surveys show strong endorsement of the importance of work-family balance, particularly from parents (Burchill, Fagan et al 2007). For example, a UK study found that 80 per cent of fathers and 85 per cent of mothers agreed or strongly agreed that *‘everyone should be able to balance their work and home lives in the way they want’* (O’Brien & Shemilt, 2003). Employers also supported work-life balance but at a lower level than parents- 62 per cent suggesting a

'commitment in principal' amongst employers with regard to facilitating work-life balance.

Quantity and Quality of work impacts: adults and children

There is growing evidence, mainly from developed countries, that the *quantity* of work (hours and lack of fit with personal preferences) has a negative impact on workers' well-being but that the *quality* of work (demands of the job, personal autonomy) is also highly important (Marmot & Brunner, 2005; Auer & Elton, 2010).

A recent Australian national survey (Pocock et al 2010) found that the majority of women (60 per cent) felt consistently time pressured, particularly women in full-time work and working mothers and nearly half of men also reported these high levels of pressure. Over a quarter of those in full-time employment worked 48 hours or more a week. Poor work-life outcomes are associated with poorer health, more use of prescription medications, more stress, and more dissatisfaction with close personal relationships. Many recommendations are made in the report including the importance of taking vacations that some workers did not take because of workload pressures.

"The economic slow-down in Australia has not been associated with less work-life interference despite a seven per cent fall in aggregate hours worked between 2008 and 2009. Instead work-life interference has stayed fairly steady. Unfortunately, negative work-life interference appears to be recession-proof." (Pocock et al, 2010:1)

Also of note is the body of scholarship linking long hours of work with higher absenteeism and lower productivity (Holden et al, 2010). Research on Japanese men has shown that high weekly working hours are related to progressively increased risk of acute myocardial infarction particularly when weekly working hours exceeds 61 hours (Spurgeon, 2003). Long hours of work tend to lead to increasingly high rates of absence and sickness, which have a serious impact on workers' productivity and on production scheduling. This is related to poor occupational safety and health conditions.

Excessive working hours also reduces the time parents spend with their children. Yeung et al (2001:11) have been able to estimate that:

"for every hour a father is at work, there is an associated one-minute decrease in time a child spent with him on weekdays (mostly in play companionship activities)".

As well as time pressures, the quality of parents' work can impact on family life. Crouter, Bumpus, Head and McHale (2001) examined the separate influences of long work hours (overwork) and role overload (feelings of being overwhelmed by multiple work commitments) on fathers' relationships with both their children and their wives. This American study included working and middle class families with adolescent children. Overwork had a greater impact on fathers' relationships with their children than on their marriages. Long working hours and less time together appeared not to effect wives' evaluation of their marriage but when the ingredient of role overload was added, wives tended to report partners being less loving and couple relationships as

being more conflictual. By contrast, for children role overload emerged as a more significant influence on father-child relationships, even when fathers worked shorter hours. As the authors reflect:

“Indeed, when fathers worked long hours but (miraculously) reported low overload, relationships with sons and daughters were as positive as those of fathers who worked fewer hours.” (Crouter et al. 2001:13).

During the adolescent years when children spend less time with their parents anyway, the amount of time a father is away from his child might be less important than his capacity to be emotionally available when he is *present* in the home. The authors suggest that feelings of workload may be associated with fatigue, stress and a ‘turning inwards’.

Other research has found that atypical working may have a more deleterious impact on couple relationships and their stability particularly when both partners are frequently affected by unsociable schedules (Presser, 2000; Han, 2008). Lavelle et al (2002) found that 41 per cent of those in couples where *both* partners frequently worked atypical hours were dissatisfied with the amount of time spent together as a couple, compared with 17 per cent of those couples where neither regularly worked at atypical times. The distribution of parental work schedules across the day matters in families as lack of overlap or fit means that there is limited time to spend together to engage in even basic, but emotionally, salient activities such as eating.

Studies of high-stress occupations have indicated a negative impact on family interaction. For instance, Repetti’s (1994) study of air-traffic controllers has shown them to be more emotionally and behaviourally withdrawn from interactions with children and partners after difficult shifts. However, this transfer process or ‘spill over effect’ can also be beneficial, for instance when parents have high levels of job satisfaction. Parke’s (2002) review of studies exploring the impact of paternal occupation on father-child relationships found strong evidence for more emotional responsive and intellectually supportive parenting styles when fathers had stimulating and challenging occupations. Job attributes and work cultures create ‘emotional climates’ which clearly parents do not leave at the workplace.

There is less research on the impact of parental work schedules on child-well-being in developing countries but the growing evidence on poor families and low income countries suggests a major care deficit, particularly when extended family kin groups are unavailable to cover for hard pressed parents (e.g. Heymann, 2006) In comparative fieldwork in five regions (Botswana, Mexico, Russia, USA and Vietnam) researchers found that the risk of preschool children being left alone when parents worked was highest in poorer families- 56 per cent vs 45 per cent in Botswana; 40 per cent vs 31 per cent in Mexico. (Heymann, 2006: 191).

No parents want to leave their preschool child home alone. Parents take the course of action when they have no other choice. Some children are locked in one-room shacks or apartments for their own “safety” – or at least to lower their risk of injury compared to wandering outside alone – while others are brought to unsafe workplaces. Others are left with very young brothers and sisters. (Heymann, 2006: 190)

When these preschool children are left alone they in turn are at risk of injury, or accident: reported by 53 per cent of Botswanian, 47 per cent of Mexican and 38 per cent of Vietnamese parents in this study. Formal and affordable child care provision was rarely present in these communities and Heymann found that parents were not always confident in the level of supervision afforded to their children by informal community carers, in the absence of kin. The impact of these experiences on the children was not investigated although studies in richer countries have shown deleterious effects of poor quality and non-standard jobs on children's emotional and behavioural outcomes (Strazdins et al; 2004, 2010). Evidence shows that when parents held poor quality jobs (defined as without control, security of flexibility and any leave option) preschool children reported more emotional and behavioural difficulties - for both mothers' and fathers' jobs (Strazdins et al. 2010). In more developed countries the negative impact of poor job quality is most striking for children in low income households and also in lone mother households where women often have the least choice over their work schedules and lower resources available for finding quality child care (Han, 2008).

3. Work-Family Balance policies and programmes for families

This section presents an overview of the main work-family policies adopted to reconcile work-family pressure. There is international variation in the amount of financial investment governments are willing or able to invest in family benefits and in how the investments are implemented (OECD, 2011). For example the OECD average percentage of investment in family benefits is 2.19 per cent of GDP with a range between 0.57 per cent (South Korea) and 3.68 per cent (France).

ILO Work-family measures are policy solutions intended to facilitate all workers' access to decent work by explicitly and systematically addressing and supporting their unpaid family responsibilities. [ILO Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities, 1981 \(No. 156\)](#) and its accompanying [Recommendation No. 165](#) provide considerable policy guidance and represent a flexible tool to support the formulation of policies that enable men and women workers with family responsibilities to exercise their right to engage, participate and advance in employment without discrimination.

ILO Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities - Article 22

(1) Either parent should have the possibility, within a period immediately following maternity leave, of obtaining leave of absence (parental leave), without relinquishing employment and with rights resulting from employment being safeguarded.

(2) The length of the period following maternity leave and the duration and conditions of the leave of absence referred to in subparagraph (1) of this Paragraph should be determined in each country by one of the means referred to in Paragraph 3 of this Recommendation.

(3) The leave of absence referred to in subparagraph (1) of this Paragraph may be introduced gradually.

Source: ILO Database on Conditions of Work and Employment Laws. ILO, Geneva.
Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail>

3.1 Parental Leave Policies

Parental leave policies have continuously evolved and their implementation is responsive to local political and cultural agendas and more global processes such as work intensification, flexible labour markets and emerging child well-being norms (Kammerman & Moss, 2009). The societal challenge is to reach a settlement on the

relative contribution of public and private (family) resources to create a sustainable framework for employment and care of young children. The tensions between ensuring a high quality of child care, respecting parental preference, and supporting gender equality, are higher in the first few years of children's life than at any other period because of the dependency needs of young children.

This section describes the diverse set of parental leave schemes which are evolving across the world. Maternity leave, paternity leave and parental leave are increasingly used interchangeably (Moss, 2011) although they have distinct origins related to women and men's biological and cultural roles in pregnancy, childbirth and postnatal care. Each national or regional jurisdiction has its own formal definition and entitlements, however, in general:

Maternity leave is normally defined as a break from employment (usually a statutory entitlement) during pregnancy and /or after childbirth related to maternal and infant health and welfare; for this reason it is available only to women and is usually limited to the period just before and after birth.

Paternity leave is normally defined as a break from employment (usually a statutory entitlement) just after a child is born to enable a father to be at home to support and care for his partner and child.

Parental leave is normally defined as a break from employment (usually a statutory entitlement) after early maternity and paternity leave to care for the child.

However, parental leave in a number of countries includes a period of time that only fathers can take (sometimes referred to as a 'father's quota'). The distinction between paternity leave and father-only parental leave is blurred.

Each type of leave can be paid or unpaid and varies considerably in duration. World patterns are difficult to chart as policies change rapidly and national level summaries mask local variations (see Tables 3, 4 and 5 in the Annex).

Maternity Leave

According to an ILO (2011) review of maternity legislation, many countries worldwide provide insufficient benefits for pregnant women. In Africa, only 39 per cent of countries reviewed provided benefits in accordance with ILO standards, while in Asia, only two of the 23 countries reviewed met the same requirements. Some countries, including Lesotho, Papua New Guinea, Swaziland, and the United States, provided no paid maternity leave. Among the developed economies, including the European Union, 78 per cent of countries met ILO standards (ILO, 2011) which is more extensive but not yet comprehensive. The ILO argues that it is vital that maternity leave benefits are provided to ensure that women can maintain an adequate standard of living and health for themselves and their children in the early years, according to the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183). This provision acts to ensure that they are not being structurally disadvantaged in the labour market as a consequence of pregnancy.

New legal provisions continue to be introduced. For example, Australia introduced its first universal paid maternity leave in 2010 (not captured in published tables yet) and committed to introduce paid paternity leave in 2013 (Alexander, Whitehouse & Brennan, 2011). Similarly over recent years, significant company and governmental family support is being offered to Chinese employed parents in urban areas. In November 2011, the Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council announced plans to prolong maternity leave from 90 days to 98 days (14 weeks) (China Daily, 2011). Private and public sector organizations sometimes “top-up” with extra maternity leave provision and flexible work arrangements after mothers return to employment. Across the world employee organizations and governments are responding to the co-earner family role of modern women but coverage and income replacement levels remain patchy, especially for women in insecure labour markets who do not reach local eligibility criteria.

Most OECD countries have ratified the ILO recommendation of 14 weeks paid maternity leave and the average duration is 19 weeks (OECD, 2011) although there is wide variation globally (Table 5). Maternal labour market attachment is greater with shorter leave periods but what constitutes “short” varies across countries. In Sweden an absence of 16 months from employment has been found to create a negative impact on women’s careers, in a country with a generous leave policy for both mothers and fathers to enable infants to be cared for at home in the first year of life (Eversston & Duvander, 2011).

Ford Motor Company UK offers generous support and benefits including assigning each woman a specific HR associate for the duration of her pregnancy and leave. They currently offer 52 weeks maternity leave for all employees and 100 per cent maternity pay for the entire 52 week period (providing employees have 26 weeks service after the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth). Ford’s rationale was to attract more female employees, in recognition that 70 per cent of car purchasing decisions are influenced by women, and that women’s skills are under used in the labour market. The outcome has been high satisfaction levels among staff and a 98 per cent rate of return of women from maternity leave.

Source: working families <http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/>

Maternity benefits in Jordan

In 2007, the ILO conducted a feasibility study on the implementation of a maternity cash benefits scheme for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The full cost of maternity leave, which was being borne by employers, had given rise to discrimination against women workers, because of the perception that they cost more than men. The study pointed to a fair and affordable maternity protection scheme for Jordan that would benefit women workers, labour markets and society as a whole. The findings showed that the introduction of a maternity cash benefits scheme in Jordan appeared to be feasible and financially sustainable. A proposal for its adoption has been presented to the Jordanian Parliament in 2008 and is to be implemented.

Source: ILO, 2009

Paternity Leave

Since the 1990s policies to support fathers manage their home and employment responsibilities after the birth of children and, while children are young, have been developed by employer organizations and governments. In one study fathers were found to have a paid entitlement to paternity leave or paid parental leave in 66 of 173 nations examined (Heymann et al, 2007). European countries have led innovation and experimentation in strategies to enhance the visibility of fathers' entitlements and uptake of paternity and parental leave including: incentives, compulsion and non-transferable daddy months (O'Brien & Moss, 2010). Father-sensitive leave policies from employment are less extensive in developing countries although emergent economies are beginning to innovate. In several Latin American countries fathers are given between two to five days paternity leave but unpaid (see Table 5). Amongst African countries, three have *paid* paternity leave days Mauritius (5), Tanzania (5) and Uganda (4) (Mokomane, 2011). As with maternity leave, some private and public sector organizations "top-up" local national paternity leave benefits, such as allowing prospective fathers to attend antenatal scans without loss of pay.

Paternity leave innovations in the UK private sector

Lloyds Banking Group introduced a "Leave for Partners" policy in 2002 which allowed partners to take up to 52 weeks' leave to care for their birth or adopted child after the mother/primary carer had returned to work.

Nationwide Bank offers full pay for two weeks to fathers on paternity leave (without a service requirement) and paid leave to support partners at antenatal appointments. Their rationale is to retain skilled staff, and they use their family friendly employer status as a recruitment and retention tool.

British Petroleum offers enhanced paternity leave of two weeks paid and two weeks unpaid as well as encouraging new fathers to take advantage of flexible working options. They argue that helping their people to be the parents they want to be ensures that their employees go the extra mile to deliver a good service and create a better business.

Source: Working families: <http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/>

Longer parental leave and incentives for fathers agreed by EU ministers

Parents will have the right to longer parental leave, under the Parental Leave Directive (2010/18/EU) adopted on 8 March 2010 by EU ministers for employment, social affairs and equal opportunities. The revised Directive on Parental Leave will give each working parent the right to at least four months leave after the birth or adoption of a child (up from three months now). At least one of the four months cannot be transferred to the other parent – meaning it will be lost if not taken – offering incentives to fathers to take the leave. The new Directive also provides for better protection against discrimination and a smoother return to work. It puts into effect an agreement between European employers and trade union organisations. All matters regarding the income of workers during parental leave are left for Member States and/or national social partners to determine. The Framework Agreement on parental leave, on which the Directive is based, was signed by the European social partners (BUSINESSEUROPE, ETUC, CEEP and UEAPME) on 18 June 2009. It revises an earlier agreement from 1995. The new Directive will replace Directive 96/34/EC, which put into effect the 1995 social partner agreement and established for the first time minimum standards on parental leave at EU level.

Source: Eurofound/ www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2009/07/articles/eu0907029i.htm

Best practice- effective design features to increase uptake of parental leave by fathers

Fathers can be wary or reluctant to take leave if not supported by cultural or workplace norms and practices. In addition, economic costs are a major constraint particularly for low income men. The research evidence highlights the importance of a country's policy framework, particularly financial incentives and father targeting, in shaping men's propensity to take paternity and parental leave. Fathers, and some mothers, tend not to use unpaid leave and their use of leave is heightened when reimbursed at least over 50 per cent or two thirds of regular earnings. For example, in Slovenia, 0.75 per cent of eligible fathers used unpaid parental leave in 1995 rising to 66 per cent a decade later in 2005 after introduction of enhanced father targeted provision (Stropnik, 2007). Similarly Erler (2009) reports that since the introduction of a new German Parental Leave system, incorporating paternal incentives, the proportion of fathers taking leave has more than tripled from 3.5 per cent in the last quarter of 2006 to 13.7 per cent in the second quarter of 2008.

Designated father targeted or reserved schemes enhance fathers' utilization rates. Blocks of time which are labelled 'daddy days' or 'father's quota' are attractive to men and their partners (Haas & Rostgaard, 2011). At this point in time fathers (and their partners) may need more explicit labelling to legitimise paternal access to the care of infants and children. Even when conditions are favourable, it takes time for utilization to become the dominant pattern: in Finland, 46 per cent of eligible fathers took paternity leave in 1993, rising to 63 per cent in 2000 and to 70 per cent in 2006 (Salmi, Lami-Taskula, & Takala, 2007). Fathers' use of statutory leave is greatest when high income replacement (50 per cent or more of earnings) is combined with extended duration (more than 14 days). Father targeted schemes heighten utilisation (O'Brien, 2009).

Even when there are statutory formal provisions, research in developed countries (Haas, Allard & Hwang, 2002; Tremblay & Genin, 2011) has found that work-place cultures can hinder utilization of family leave by men. Of great importance are supervisor and colleague informal support in creating positive family friendly environments which is inclusive of fathers as well as mothers taking leave.

ICELAND 3+3+3 month parental leave model

Within Nordic countries, one of the most innovative 'father-targeted' leave entitlements so far developed, in terms of combined time (three months) and economic compensation (80 per cent of prior salary) is to be found in Iceland (Einarsdóttir & Pétursdóttir, 2007). In 2000, the Icelandic government introduced a total of nine months paid post-birth leave (to be taken in the first 18 months) organized into three parts: three months for mothers (non-transferable), three months for fathers (non-transferable) and three months which could be transferred between parents as they choose. In addition there is 13 weeks unpaid parental leave available each year for each parent. The bill *Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave* was passed by the Icelandic government in 2000, following several years' deliberation about men's societal role and gender equality, including a government committee on the Gender Role of Men (Eydal & Gíslason, 2008).

The Iceland 3+3+3 month model has significantly altered male behaviour in a relatively short period of time. By 2006, over 90 per cent of Icelandic fathers take parental leave. Gíslason (2007: 15) notes: '*Probably, there have never been more Icelandic fathers active in caring for their children than there are today.*' Gender differences occur in the sequencing of leave-taking: generally Icelandic fathers tend to utilise some leave days to be with their infant and partner immediately after childbirth and then resume leave after six months when mothers' leave comes to an end. Icelandic mothers' post-birth leave tends to be taken in a continuous block without return to employment breaks.

Source: O'Brien & Moss, 2010

Diversity and Income in use of parental leave

- Country level eligibility criteria (e.g. length of continuous service) restrict access to parental leave for many fathers and mothers. Significant excluded groups include; those with insecure, temporary or unstable labour market histories prior to a child's birth (over-represented by low income and immigrant families). Requirements for the application of maternity protection by vulnerable workers may be too onerous.
- Lower take-up rates by fathers in less secure and poorly regulated occupations indicate the significance of financial loss as a disincentive.
- A socio-economic profiling of fathers' utilisation of leave indicates: higher rates are generally associated with high income occupations (self and partner), high levels of education (self and partner), and public sector occupations (self and partner).
- In countries where there is no statutory father-care sensitive parental leave taking time away from employment is more difficult for low-income fathers. Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel's (2007) community study shows that that the likelihood of taking the longer leave of two or more weeks was associated with fathers being U.S.-born, more educated, and in middle or high prestige jobs.
- In countries with high statutory income replacement, father-care policies may promote gender equality but reinforce income inequalities, as cash transfers are being made to families which are already well-paid. This risk of greater economic polarisation between '*parental leave rich* and '*parental leave poor households*' can be offset by distributive tax policies (e.g. higher tax for wealthier households, a fiscal strategy only acceptable in some countries).

In the absence of a formal paid job protected leave, poorer and less economically secure parents may be less able to spend time with their infants and partners in the transition to parenthood. It is possible that, from the earliest period of life, infants in

poor households are experiencing less parental investment than infants in more affluent households.

Impact of parental leave on family life

Reduction in infant mortality and morbidity

Ruhm (2000) and Tanaka (2005) have conducted large scale secondary analyses of parental leave arrangements and child health outcomes for 16 European and 18 of 30 OECD countries respectively. In both programmes of work, where the subject of inquiry has been on maternal rather than paternal leave taking, infant mortality and morbidity gains have been associated with parental leave. Tanaka's analysis, which attempted to control for some confounding variables, in particular national investment in child welfare, found a positive independent effect for paid parental leave on specific child health outcomes, notably infant mortality. The strongest effect was on post neonatal infant mortality (28 days - 1year) when compared to neonatal mortality (under 28 days) suggesting that parental availability to care beyond the first month may be an important parenting practice to enhance child outcomes. Further positive gains were indicated for immunization. The particular features of parental leave provision which were most significant in promoting child-welfare were difficult to disentangle but the secondary analysis suggests that internationally, parental leave positive child effects are maximized when the leave is paid and provided in a job secure context.

Breast feeding

Secondary analyses of national data sets also show that job protected paid maternal leave is associated with higher rates of breast-feeding (e.g. Galtry, 2003; Ruhm, 2000). In a cross-national analysis Galtry traces onset and duration of breastfeeding patterns and finds that duration of breast feeding is sensitive to parental leave provision. For example in Sweden 73 per cent of mothers were still breast feeding at 6 months, in contrast to 29 per cent and 28 per cent of American and British mothers respectively.

Parental perceptions of benefits

In terms of fathers, the evidence to date (primarily Nordic) focuses on men's experiences of paternity leave, parental leave and flexible work schedules and does not always independently track child outcomes. For example, research has shown that Swedish fathers who use a higher proportion of leave than average (20 per cent or more of all potential leave days) at least, in the short term, appear to sustain more engaged family commitment, work fewer hours and are more involved in child-care tasks and household work (Haas & Hwang, 1999). Similarly Huttunen's (1996) survey of Finnish fathers who had taken parental leave found that the opportunity it gave to develop a closer relationship with infants was valued most by the fathers. Norwegian research suggests that fathers who take the 'daddy quota' in a 'home alone' manner become more aware of infant life and 'slow time' than those who take parental leave with their partner (Brandth & Kvande, 2001). Brandth and Kvande's (2002) research also highlights the importance of taking a couple perspective in understanding fathers' personal experiences of leave from employment. They found a complex process of

couple negotiation and bargaining influenced by couple values and preferences as well workplace and economic factors. The couple relationship is a key one, setting the scene against which parents negotiate and balance their family and employment roles and responsibilities.

Two father-focused studies build on this earlier body of work by conducting large scale secondary analyses of longitudinal nationally representative samples, enabling statistical control for some confounding variables such as paternal pre-birth commitment. Using the UK Millennium Cohort Study, covering a large birth cohort of children at age 8 to 12 months, Tanaka & Waldfogel (2007) find that taking leave and working shorter hours are related to fathers being more involved with the baby, and that policies affect both these aspects of fathers' employment behaviour. They examine fathers' involvement in four specific types of activities: being the main caregiver; changing nappies; feeding the baby; and getting up during the night. Analysis showed that fathers who took leave (any leave) after the birth were 25 per cent more likely to change nappies and 19 per cent more likely to feed and to get up at night when the child was age 8 to 12 months. In addition, higher working hours for fathers were associated with lower levels of father involvement. The authors conclude that policies which provide parental leave or shorter work hours could promote greater father involvement with infants, but caution against definitive causality claims.

Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel (2007) find a similar association between paternal leave taking and later higher levels of father involvement, but only for those fathers able to take two weeks leave or more. The positive relationship, between longer duration of leave taking and greater participation in caring for the child, was maintained after controls for a range of selectivity factors including indicators of paternal pre-birth commitment (attendance at antenatal classes and the birth itself).

The findings from these two studies suggest that paternal leave taking has the potential to boost fathers' practical and emotional investment in infant care. Further follow-ups and direct assessments of child well-being and the influence of maternal leave taking are required to reveal underlying mechanisms at play (e.g. Dex & Ward, 2007). Fathers' leave-taking cannot be seen in isolation or in purely quantitative terms as it is embedded in a complex web of parenting styles, parental work practices, infant behaviour and wider socio-economic factors.

Paid parental leave, in particular when parents are sure of employment on return to work, can create a more financially secure context for caring. As well as family benefits of parental leave, evidence shows significant economic and business benefits in particular on staff retention and loyalty, although more research is needed (OECD, 2011).

3. 2 Flexible working arrangements

Over the decade, there has been strong policy steer to increase flexible working options in the spirit creating "family friendly" work places or more broadly work environments that enable "work-life balance" for all. Although informal voluntary flexible working arrangements have been in place for many years in many countries, they are not always promoted or commonly available. Examples include: flexi-time around daily start and finish times; working from home; part-time work, and working

time adjusted to school timetable, without loss of pay. These practices are normally regulated by collective agreements, which may be formal or informal and in some developed countries there are well advanced schemes such as time credits or accounts (OECD, 2011). Belgium is an example of the latter with its 'Time Credit' or Sabbatical Leave 1985 Law allowing an employee up to one year's leave over their working life (Deven & Nuelant, 1999).

Evidence shows that flexible working arrangements are popular, with the right to work part-time, or reduce working hours being the most utilized flexible work provision and overwhelmingly chosen by women with children (OECD, 2011). There is some evidence that when men become fathers their need for flexible work practice is heightened. In a UK study, 31 per cent of new fathers used flexi-time and 29 per cent occasionally worked from home, both substantial increases from levels among new fathers from an earlier survey (Smeaton and Marsh, 2006). Very few other forms of flexible working were adopted by fathers; only 6 per cent used a compressed working week, 4 per cent worked part-time, 8 per cent reduced hours for a limited period all lower than comparable mothers. Higher earner fathers were the most able to take advantage of reduced hours whether occasional or on a part-time basis.

Generally, employers report less availability of flexible working options in smaller organisations and male dominated sectors. Lack of cultural acceptability and a 'macho' work ethic can act as barriers for parents, fathers in particular, to work flexibly. In countries with more collectivist embedded values, for example South Korea, fathers "do not dare to request" the Reduced Work Schedule introduced for parents in 2008. In South Korea only 2 per cent of all claimants were fathers by 2010 (Chin et al, 2011).

Private sector examples of flexible working arrangements in India

Sapient India – offers the option of reduced hours considering that Indian women often take a career break to concentrate on the family. Women employees, including many managers, have taken this option to work for half a day without affecting their careers.

IBM India – has a compressed/flexible work week, which entails that the full, regular work week is compressed into less than five days; individualized work schedule, where employees have flexible timings; part-time reduced work schedule; and a work-from-home option. An equal number of men and women avail themselves of flexi-timings IBM India has 43,000 employees, 26 per cent are women.

Tata Group – provides a second career internship program for women professionals, consisting of live business projects to be done in 500 hours in 5-6 months on a flexi-time basis. This is a move to tap women professionals who have discontinued work for various reasons. The program portal received 5,500 hits and nearly 500 resumes were posted on the first day of the launch in March 2008.

Source, Caparas, 2010

Private sector examples of flexible working arrangements in Malaysia

Under the banner of diversity and inclusion, **Shell Malaysia** has implemented tele-working and flexible hours to enable all employees “to achieve a work-life balance in fulfilling family duties without sacrificing performance or career advancement”. **Microsoft Malaysia** is moving towards developing a more comprehensive work-from-home policy to boost employee morale and increase productivity.

Source, Caparas, 2010

The ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), and its accompanying Recommendation (No. 165), provide considerable guidance in the formulation of policies that enable men and women workers with family responsibilities to engage and advance in employment without discrimination. Such policies include more flexible arrangements as regards working schedules. The revised Law for Child and Family Care Leave 2010 in Japan, for example, allows employers to shorten a worker’s working hours upon request, if the worker is responsible for the care of a child below 3 years of age but does not take childcare leave.

In some developing countries informal codes of good practice have emerged (see South Africa Box below) but a legal right to request flexible arrangements is rare. While supporting the new informal agreement entitlement in South Africa, scholars argue that the agreement is not sufficient, particularly in light of the increased care giving needs associated with major public health problems such as HIV/AIDS (Dancaster, Cohen & Baird, 2011).

South Africa - Codes of Good Practice in employment

- No general statutory entitlement.
- Codes of Good Practice are guidelines for employers and do not have the status of legislation. The Code of Good Practice on the Protection of Employees during Pregnancy and After the Birth of a Child provides that employers must consider granting rest periods to employees who experience tiredness associated with pregnancy and should also consider that tiredness associated with pregnancy may affect an employee’s ability to work overtime. It also states that arrangements should be made for pregnant and breastfeeding women to be able to attend ante-natal and post-natal clinics during pregnancy and after the birth of the child and recommends that arrangements be made for employees who are breastfeeding to have breaks of 30 minutes twice a day to breast feed or express milk for the first six months of a child’s life. It further recommends that employers identify and assess workplace hazards to the pregnant mother and/or to the foetus and consider appropriate action. The Code of Good Practice on the Integration of Employment Equity into Human Resource Policies and Practices adds that an employer should provide reasonable accommodation for pregnant women and parents with young children, including health and safety adjustments and ante-natal care leave.
- The Code of Good Practice on the Integration of Employment Equity into Human Resource Policies and Practices requires employers to endeavour to provide “an accessible, supportive and flexible environment for employees with family responsibilities”. This is specified to include “considering flexible working hours and granting sufficient family responsibility leave for both parents”. In addition, the Code of Good Practice on Arrangement of Working Time states that the design of shift rosters must be sensitive to the impact of these rosters on employees and their families and should take into consideration the childcare needs of the employees. It adds that arrangements should be considered to accommodate the special needs of workers such as pregnant and breast-feeding workers and workers with family responsibilities.

Source: Dancaster, Cohen & Baird (2011)

Across the OECD countries a formal statutory right to request flexible working hours or part-time work for family reasons is available in eight of 35 countries reviewed, although informal arrangements are present in a majority with varying ease of access (OECD, 2011). Data on access and use of flexible work practices, excluding part-time work, are limited even in countries with robust administrative systems. However, flextime preferences about daily start and finish times are the most comprehensively available and used by most employees, irrespective of family status and commitments.

Benefits of flexible work arrangements

Assessing the benefits of flexible work arrangements or specific programmes is complex as few organizations or governments systematically measure innovations before and after their implementation or utilize comparison groups. In addition companies may have confidentiality issues about public data share. However, some methodological controls have been used in a small number of studies and a series of reviews exist, mostly covering developed countries (e.g. Dex & Smith, 2002; Glass & Finlay, 2002; Hegewisch 2009 OECD, 2011). The evidence suggests a range of multi-level positive or neutral effects both at the company and the individual level.

Company benefits At the company level gains linked with different flexibility schemes have been associated with employee productivity, organizational commitment, retention, morale, job satisfaction and reductions in absenteeism (Glass & Finlay, 2002). Managers predominantly report positive or neutral impacts of flexible working on performance and productivity, with only a small minority reporting negative consequences (Hegewisch 2009) although some employers are concerned about implementation costs.

For example, analysis of a nationally representative survey of British workplaces found flexible working arrangements were associated with improved business performance (Dex & Smith, 2002). Managers were asked to assess their workplace's financial performance, labour productivity and quality of service. After statistically controlling for a wide range of structural and human resources practices, flexible working arrangements were associated with small, but significant, amounts of improvement in the *private sector*:

Above average financial performance was associated with: paternity leave, job share; *Above average labour productivity performance* was associated with: parental leave, paternity leave, the ability to change from full-to part-time hours, having a higher number of family friendly policies in place; *Improvements in quality performance* were associated with; school term-time only working, the ability to change from full-to part-time hours; offering help with childcare; having a higher number of family friendly policies in place; *Reduced labour turnover* were associated with job share; flexi-time; offering help with childcare; working at or from home.

As reported in most studies, Dex and Smith (2002) found that, flexible working arrangements were more common where there were:

- larger organisations
- lower degrees of competition
- recognised trade unions
- public sector
- human resource and personnel capacity
- high commitment management practices
- more involvement of employees in decision making
- stronger equal opportunities policies
- larger proportion of women in the workforce
- a highly educated workforce

Small company case study of flexible working

Clock is a small digital agency employing 32 people, most of them men. The award winning firm designs and builds intranets and extranets, develops brands and creates online marketing campaigns. The firm makes flexible working, and other work-life balance benefits, available to its employees, allowing them to design work around their lives, interests, needs and desires. Clock knows some competitors pay a bit more. However, by offering people a better work-life balance, it says it can attract and retain highly skilled employees. With only five leavers in 11 years, Clock has saved money on recruitment and managed to retain valuable knowledge. Another benefit of implementing flexible working is the low sickness absence rate. Individuals have autonomy over how they work. Rob Arnold, a web designer, was able to work remotely while studying for a university degree. He says the flexible approach is a big draw for jobseekers. 'The remote working gave me just the flexibility I needed, I was treated like a person and given responsibility which gave me the opportunity to shine.' He has progressed with the company and is now a studio manager.

'If you really trust people and give them space, freedom and guidance, you will be repaid with dedication and enterprise,' says Syd Nadim, Chief Executive.

Nadim's tips on making flexible working a success include:

- Let staff know about the benefits and what it means to them financially (for example, a mobile phone is a great tax-free benefit and at £50 per month or more can be worth nearly £1,000 as gross salary).
- Be results-driven so that staff know what's expected and by when. It's two-way and openness is appreciated. Be fair and be firm.

Source: Source: Working Better, 2010

Companies with flexible working programmes tend to be the more profitable but it may well be that the more high performing companies are the most likely to innovate flexibility (selectivity into flexibility) (Hegewisch 2009). More rigorous research is needed to unravel pathways of influence but case studies point to flexible working arrangements enabling cost savings in specific material tangibles for instance office space, utilities and services (especially through home working schemes). But of course home working is only appropriate for some occupations and the absence of co-workers can reduce sociability and informal skills development (Maitland & Thompson, 2011).

Some governments, for instance in the United Kingdom, have conducted cost benefit estimates of specific flexitime innovations, such as extending a statutory 'Right to Request' flexible work to care for parents of older children, in addition to existing

provisions for parents for children under 16 years. Estimates suggested that benefits would outweigh costs: at £21 million resulting from reduced recruitment costs, £6 million in reduced absence costs, and £64 million in enhanced profitability, compared with estimated implementation costs to employers of £69 million (BERR, 2008).

Benefits to individuals and families

Individual level effects of working in companies operating flexible work arrangements include decreases in somatic complaints and improvements in mental and physical health (Glass & Finlay, 2002). Flexible scheduling has been associated with a significant reduction in worker stress and role strain, perhaps linked to feelings of enhanced personal control over time schedules. Research shows that utilization of flexible work provisions offers time to care for children through breast feeding breaks; at the beginning or end of work days, and during school holidays (OECD, 2011).

A systematic review of ten high quality studies covering more than 16,000 people found that “self-scheduling of shifts” led to statistically significant improvements in either primary outcomes (including systolic blood pressure and heart rate; tiredness; mental health, sleep duration, sleep quality and alertness; self-rated health status) or secondary health outcomes (co-workers social support and sense of community (Joyce et al., 2010). No ill health effects have been reported. In one study reviewed, for example, police officers who were able to change their shift start times showed significant improvements in psychological well-being compared to police officers who started work at a fixed hour. A key driver for flexibility is the desire of individuals for greater autonomy in choosing the times and locations of their work. This provision of course has to be balanced and aligned with workplace needs.

More recent evidence has also demonstrated a link between flexible work arrangements and the care of dependent adults (e.g. elderly, disabled and sick kin), For instance, Bryan (2011) has found an association between access to flexible working and the amount of care provided to dependent adults. Out of a range of flexible working practices his results suggests that two of them – flexitime and access to reduced working hours – are each associated with about 10 per cent increase in more hours of informal care to adult dependents. This tendency was most pronounced for fulltime workers, possibly because part-time workers had already increased their care time through major reduction in working hours.

If employees have access to a part-time work option and, if such shorter working hours can be financially accommodated by family units, the provision can offer another form of family-friendly flexible work. This mode of working is more culturally normative for mothers in some developed countries, particularly in Europe; in OECD countries 1 in 10 men and 1 in 4 women work part-time (OECD, 2011). In developed countries, part-time work can reflect workers’ genuine needs and preferences, whereas in developing countries, many part-time jobs fall into the category of “time-related underemployment” consisting of individuals who would like to work more but cannot find sufficient work (ILO, 2006).

Maternal part-time employment is more prevalent in pre-school periods and where affordable child-care of good quality is in low supply but there is increasing evidence on the career penalties linked to this work-balance strategy. Although part-time

workers have some advantages in stress reduction and time autonomy, the penalties are typically lower lifetime earnings and job security. These penalties are moderated to some extent for those who take short breaks from full-time employment and are able to return to the same high quality occupation as is the case in a minority of countries, such as the Netherlands (Connolly & Gregory, 2008). Long spells of part-time employment can be financially deleterious, especially if a transfer from full-time employment has involved a downgrade in occupational status.

Mechanisms to promote the awareness and benefits of flexible work

In the workplace, the attitudes of individual line managers and the work-place cultural support of flexible working, particularly from senior staff ('leading from the top'), are critical in facilitating utilization of formal schemes although as statutory frameworks become more widespread, individual discretion by employers to go against the norm may become less socially acceptable (Hegewisch, 2009). The presence of systematic communication strategies to disseminate information to employees about the practices available (including circulars to staff, staff magazines, e-mail and notice boards) are important as are, informal 'word of mouth' streams. Management research suggests that rewarding and praising agreed outputs with employees can be effective in creating more flexible and creative workplace cultures and so moderate tendencies towards "presentism" (Maitland & Thompson, 2011).

At the country level, celebration of 'family-friendly' workplaces and community practices can help raise awareness and expected standards. For instance in the UK, the NGO Working Families has yearly innovation awards (through private sector sponsorship) and CEO mentors or Champions who model good practice (see Box below). In Germany the Federal Government has initiated a 'Family Atlas', which publicly scores cities and communities on Business Excellence in Workplace Flexibility, which includes work family reconciliation; housing and urban space; schools, further education and training and leisure activities for children and youth. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the ILO working with the UNDP is promoting the concept of civic social co-responsibility as a new form of work-family reconciliation.

Work and Family: Towards new forms of reconciliation with social co-responsibility

Policies to reconcile work and family life can follow traditional formats, in which the family's welfare is considered the domain of women, or can rise to the challenge of encompassing the reality of today's Latin American and Caribbean families, favouring a more seamless interface between work, family and domestic activities.

It is important, therefore, to push for more equity and democratization of tasks, when designing and implementing measures to reconcile work and family. Societies must guarantee both men's and women's right to paid employment without having to sacrifice their family life. An agenda in this sense, which seeks to *achieve reconciliation with social co-responsibility*, must also ensure that men and women have more freedom to choose how their will combine work and family life.

Reconciling work, family and personal life by sharing responsibility for caregiving among men and women, and between *States, markets and society*, should mainstream government policies and social programs.

Source: ILO-UNDP (2009)

Further research is needed on the extent to which these innovations can be effective in developing countries where the incentives for employers to positively respond to family friendly flexible arrangements are less strong. With abundant supplies of workers in these regions, particularly to supply low-skill labour-intensive sectors, a global formal statutory employment legal protection is vital. Global surveillance of illegal employment practices is forming to help mitigate and protect against any so-called “race to the bottom” (Human Rights and Business Dilemmas Forum, 2012).

The Deutsche Bank Best for Innovation and Engagement Award

American Express is focussing on developing its leadership into visible ‘champions’ of flexibility for the whole business and has put in place a programme to develop its top people into effective leaders of a flexible culture. The programme is designed to make sure that the business leaders fully understand and embody a flexible working culture: what it really means, understanding the business case at a fundamental level and how it can benefit the whole organisation and its people. This will, in turn, bring a competitive advantage as flexibility embeds throughout the organisation and managing flexibility becomes a core skill of all senior leaders.

Ashurst has taken a holistic approach to work/life fit. In addition to focussing on individual requirements as they arise, the firm decided to review the way the organisation works as a whole. The senior partner leads a committee which has reviewed work practices and the work/life fit of employees, taking on board the responses of a number of focus groups from around the global network. Being driven by the most senior levels of the organisation ensures that the initiative has the necessary weight and credibility. This has resulted in practical outcomes which support a 'high performance, high support' culture, and avoid a 'one size fits all' approach across the organisation. The firm acknowledges that cultural change requires a long term commitment and takes time.

Driven by a desire to improve retention, especially of women, **Deloitte** have developed a suite of benefits for parents, which includes: mini fridges by your desk for storing breast milk, discounts to family attractions and educational events for parents. These benefits, which complement a comprehensive policy, are designed to make Deloitte a family friendly place to work. In particular, their maternity transition coaching programme helps women who are having a baby transition off and back into work, using a team of coaches. This coaching is currently being made available to all mothers and fathers either through 1:1 coaching or via a webinar system.

Mayer Brown set about developing a number of initiatives which would create greater engagement for their employees. For the first time they rolled out an employee survey and introduced a carers network, while also piloting a mentoring scheme. They have also implemented a backup dependant and child care scheme. The firm aims to be a sector leader in family friendly working, and aligning policies with business goals will determine the way forward for the next few years.

Source, Working Families, 2011 <http://www.workingfamilies.org.uk/>

Additional flexible leave entitlements

Additional leave entitlements, covering a wider range of family members than young children and/or situations of serious illness. For example, most provinces and territories in Canada have compassionate care leave provisions which allow employees to take time off to care for or arrange care for a family member who ‘is at significant risk of death’ within a 26-week period. The length of leave is eight weeks

unpaid within a 26-week period, but benefits of up to six weeks can be claimed through Employment Insurance for this leave (Moss 2011).

The EU Parental leave directive 1996 gave all workers an entitlement to 'time off from work on grounds of *force majeure* for urgent family reasons in cases of sickness or accident, making their immediate presence indispensable', without specifying minimum requirements for length of time or payment.

New Zealand employees have five days sick leave for themselves or their dependents; South African workers are entitled to three days 'family responsibility leave' per year, but this covers a range of circumstances, not only caring for a sick child; while in Australia, all employees have an industrial right to use up to five days of personal or sick leave per year to care for a sick family member (Moss, 2011).

Flexible work-care innovations are needed to support employees with care responsibilities across the adult life course especially those who care for older or disabled adults. Many workplace and care provisions are still primarily designed for working parents of young children and rarely address other family responsibilities. A unique private sector innovation attempting to initiate a more holistic approach is the *passport* scheme offered by BT which has been endorsed by both management and trade unions (see Box below)

The BT* passport

Operating in more than 170 countries, BT is one of the world's leading providers of communications solutions and services. Their main activities include networked IT services; local, national and international telecommunications services; and higher value broadband and internet products and services.

The BT Passport Scheme

The BT Passport is a scheme to document the requirements of employees who have special needs that can sometimes impact on their working life.

Currently within BT there are the following Passports available;

- BT Disability Passport – available to employees with health conditions that the employee believes are covered by the DDA (Disability Discrimination Act).
- BT Health & Well being Passport – available to employees with mental health conditions.
- BT Carers Passport – available to employees who have specific caring responsibilities for someone else.

Benefits

It is a voluntary scheme that allows employees to ensure that any special needs that can impact on them in the workplace, either now or in the future, are documented. It ensures that any reasonable adjustments that are required are documented, so that if the line manager or job role changes in the future, the information is readily available. It therefore guarantees continuity of any arrangements that are required for the employee in the workplace. It allows the employee to explain in their own words their circumstances, the difficulties they experience in the workplace and discuss the help they require in the workplace. Hence, management are made aware and can implement the correct BT support/process, in line with the manager's duty of care.

Access

The contents of the BT Passport are strictly confidential and treated accordingly. The line manager holds a copy, which is kept in the employee's personal file. The employee is provided with a copy, which ensures they have a copy of any reasonable adjustments/support that is agreed. Nobody else has access to the contents. In fact, nobody else within BT is aware who has a BT Passport.

The BT carer's passport can be completed by any BT employee with caring responsibilities that they believe could impact on their ability to work, currently or in the future. The BT carer's passport describes the nature of the caring responsibilities and adjustments that the individual might need to make. It also outlines action to take if they need to leave work suddenly, together with agreed communication between them and BT if they are unable to attend work

* BT – former British Telecom

Source:

<http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/areas/populationandsociety/workingcaring/cases/uk003.htm>
and trade Information for CWU members. <http://www.cwu-eastmidlands.org.uk/equality.htm>

3.3 Working Time Innovations

Imaginative ways to reconfigure work-time have developed at many levels in societies - within companies, at national levels and as civil society initiatives. In the 1990s, time struggles often crystallised around campaigns for tackling 'the long hours culture'. More recently, in the context of the global recession and a need to 'downsize', there are challenges to cut hours rather than cut jobs. One example is the German work-sharing scheme (Crimmann et al, 2010).

The German work-sharing scheme

The scheme is a labour market instrument based on the reduction of working time, which is intended to spread a reduced volume of work over the same (or a similar) number of workers in order to avoid layoffs or, alternatively, as a measure intended to create new employment. Work sharing and partial unemployment benefits are policy responses suggested by the *Global Jobs Pact*, adopted by the ILO's tripartite constituents in June 2009, to limit or avoid job losses and to support enterprises in retaining their workforces. The German Federal work-sharing programme, called *Kurzarbeit*, is by far the largest work-sharing programme in the world. The programme reached a maximum participation of approximately 64,000 establishments and 1.5 million employees at the height of the crisis in mid-2009.

'If the course of the economic crisis is V-shaped (i.e. a deep, but short cut), work sharing has a fair chance to save jobs. But if the crisis is L-shaped (i.e. deep, but also long-lasting), work sharing would end up in unavoidable unemployment anyway and could even hamper necessary structural changes. ...In the long run, one also has to bear in mind that work sharing is not cheap' (Crimmann et al (2010), p. 36).

Crimmann et al (2010) The German work-sharing scheme

Others have promoted a wholesale reduction in work time *"In the 21st century, moving towards much shorter hours of paid employment could be a critical factor in heading off environmental, social and economic catastrophe. In the developed world, most of us are consuming well beyond our economic means, well beyond the limits of the natural world and in ways that ultimately fail to satisfy us."* (Coote, co-author of *21 Hours*, National Economic Foundation, 2011).

21 hours as the new 'norm'

The vision

Moving towards much shorter hours of paid work offers a new route out of the multiple crises we face today. Many of us are consuming well beyond our economic means and well beyond the limits of the natural environment, yet in ways that fail to improve our well-being – and meanwhile many others suffer poverty and hunger. Continuing economic growth in high-income countries will make it impossible to achieve urgent carbon reduction targets. Widening inequalities, a failing global economy, critically depleted natural resources and accelerating climate change pose grave threats to the future of human civilization.

A 'normal' working week of 21 hours could help to address a range of urgent, interlinked problems: overwork, unemployment, over-consumption, high carbon emissions, low well-being, entrenched inequalities, and the lack of time to live sustainably, to care for each other, and simply to enjoy life.

Source: National Economic Foundation (2011)

At a company level, CEOs are beginning to initiate cultural change in excessive working practices. Legislation can help shape norms of appropriate working hours and indirectly influence the working patterns of those who work excessive hours. Global legislation is particularly important in developing countries. However, employers and some employees also stress the importance of an individual's 'right to choose' their own working hours. Employer organizations often point out that formal regulation or monitoring cannot totally protect against informal practices, for instance, 'presentism' or variation in personal preferences. Research suggests that cultural change in work practices itself takes time and needs to be led by line managers and CEOs (e.g. Hwang, Haas and Russell, 2001). For instance, the Australian programme to reduce excessive hours took several years to implement.

Reducing excessive working in a construction company: Probuild

Probuild is a major national Australian contractor with construction and civil engineering operations. The industry is highly competitive, with contracted deadlines and has had a long standing tradition that people work long hours, including most Saturdays.

Probuild's Work-life Balance Program has three key aspects:

- the basic framework which includes a statement of commitment from leaders, program strategy, responsibilities, policy, guiding principles for implementation and a 'Saturday and Excessive Hours Guide';
- a supportive culture necessary to ensure that strategy and policy are effectively implemented and are not just rhetorical;
- appropriate workplace practices are to be determined through consultation with staff.

The 'Saturday and Excessive Hours Guide' identifies that there is no formal requirement to work on Saturdays (except in defined special circumstances) for head office staff, site secretarial staff, administrators and graduates. For staff on award wages, Saturday work occurs to meet project targets, having respect for any particular individual requests not to work. Foremen are expected to be available to work three out of four Saturdays, if the project requires Saturday work, having regard to their leave benefits and any particular requests regarding rosters. For Project and Site Managers, apart from periods of peak activity, working more than two out of every four Saturdays is considered excessive.

The five guiding principles are: 'there must be mutual benefit'; 'it is a team effort'; 'one size won't fit everyone'; 'hard work can be done flexibly'; and 'good communication is fundamental to success'.

Benefits to Employees and Employer.

For employees on Probuild construction sites, informal flexibility is the most prevalent form of flexibility available. Early leaving times are standard across all sites to accommodate personal appointments, sport, family, and social functions. All sites have a foremen roster, so foremen can self roster weekend work. Labourers have the option to work on weekends and a process exists to enable assistance from other sites to be called in to cover labour shortages if required. project and construction managers rotate weekend work.

In the early years of its work-life balance initiatives commencing in 2005/06, Probuild experienced reductions in staff turnover, reduced talent shortage, increased attraction of employees and reduced recruitment costs, reduced burnout, benefits to the company's reputation and improved communication with its employees. During the global financial crisis, the company sought to retain its workforce and limited separations to voluntary redundancies.

Source: McMahon & Pocock, 2011

Avoidance of chronic long weekly working hours can help promote active parental involvement with children and participation in personal and family life more generally. Children benefit from both parental attention and the emotional and practical support which derives from 'at home' parenting. 'Being there' and emotionally available to children can also be rewarding for parents but difficult to combine with work which entails long hours away from home or anti-social hours (Skinner, 2003).

3.6 Early childhood education and care

Places of care for children before they reach the age of compulsory education are another form of support for parents of young children to help them engage in paid work. Typically called nurseries or kindergartens, these centres of childhood education and care (ECEC) are funded through a range of sources including public spending through taxation, employer subsidy or private family resource. With the growth of female aspirations and the necessity to work in paid employment, formal child care policies and provisions have developed across the world. In addition, pre-primary education has expanded. Gross enrolment rates have increased particularly in North America and Europe at 81 per cent, Latin America, 64 per cent and East Asia reaching 44 per cent of eligible children by 2008 (UNESCO, 2011). Rates are much lower and variable in other parts of the world where data are available. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa participation in pre-primary education ranges from nil in Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho and Zimbabwe to over 80 per cent in Liberia, Mauritius and the Seychelles (Mokomane, 2011). In terms of child care enrolment, it is estimated that in OECD countries about one third of children under 3 years participate in some form of formal child care provision (less than 10 per cent in Latin American countries to over 50 per cent in Nordic countries) (OECD, 2011).

Across the world there is lack of coordination between the sequencing of parental leave and children access to ECEC (Moss, 2011). In most countries there is a gap between the end of well-paid leave and the start of an ECEC entitlement. In Moss' analysis of thirty countries the gap ranged from 18 to 67 months emphasising the extensive lack of coordination between these two policy areas.

In some countries concern about labour supply, particularly of mothers, has been a driver behind the development of child care and early year's education but other policy

objectives such as the promotion of child well-being, fertility and gender equity are also significant. Usually, a multiple set of objectives are in play. For instance, in South Korea a family focused policy, including public investment in child care provision and an approach which places obligations on employers as well as citizens are in place (Lee, 2009). Employer mandates to provide childcare facilities dependent on the number of female employees exist in the Middle East and North African countries (e.g. for Libya and Tunisia, mandatory when a threshold of 50 female employees is reached). Publically funded or social insurance based preschool child care subsidies are also in existence across many Latin American countries to expand the provision of childcare services (Hein & Cassirer, 2010).

The ILO Report *Workplace solutions for childcare* (Hein & Cassirer, 2010) showcase interesting innovations in workplaces across urbanised communities in developing countries. The child care centres have taken shape in larger countries with a relatively high proportion of their populations in urban areas and a significant number of workers in formal employment – Brazil and Chile from Latin America, India and Thailand from Asia and Kenya and South Africa from Africa. Many of the developments have been funded from mixed partnerships involving employer organisations, workers, and local government bodies. As yet quality assurance of the centres is patchy, although some are audited by local early child care specialists.

Kenyan workplace nursery in coffee industry for export

Workplace: Nine coffee plantations in Ruiru (around 54,000 inhabitants), 35 km northeast of Nairobi.

Workers: 1,450 permanent agricultural workers, of which around 45 per cent are women. During the peak harvest season, workers can total up to 10,000 people, including casual workers.

Working hours: from 7.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m., 46 hours per week, over a period of 6 days.

Childcare solution: Childcare centre on each plantation, including a crèche for children between 3 months and 3 years; nursery school for children between 4 and 6.5 years.

Partners: Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union (KPAWU); Ministry of Education, District Centres for Early Childhood Education (DICECEs); National Occupational Safety and Health Environment Programme (OSHEP).

Source: Hein & Cassirer (2010) *Workplace solutions for childcare*

Philippines

Multinationals such as **Intel** and **Johnson & Johnson** provide daycare centers for their employee's children. Intel has a vacation bank program, an option to substitute maternity leave for paternity leave for extraordinary reasons, an employee discount program, onsite gymnasium, and benchmarking of child care solutions across Asia. Johnson & Johnson organizes summer programs for kids that relieve working parents of the effort to keep their children busy during school vacations.

Source: Caparas, 2010

The importance of the quality of early childhood education and care services has been underlined in several international strategy documents (e.g. Bennett, 2008) including those focusing on work-family reconciliation (European Council, 2011). Some bodies are attempting to initiate negotiation about quality benchmarks on staff training, ratios

of children to staff and so on, such as the Korean National Child Care Accreditation programme (see Box below on Quality benchmarks of the Innocenti). High staff-to-child ratios of appropriately trained care workers enhance the likelihood that young children will experience a more stimulating and engaged environment. Others have suggested going beyond child care and educational administrative targets to focus on the personalised needs and well-being of children as individual actors (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2010a; Dahlberg, Moss et al., 1999). Key issues here are parental and child involvement as well as strengthening the provision of high quality childcare and education which is accessible and affordable. From the care provider's perspective, high quality care environments require greater levels of investment with higher wage costs per child and infrastructural expenditure. Evidence indicates that the 'return' on high quality ECEC, in terms of children's intellectual and social development, particularly for socially disadvantaged children, can be significant (OECD, 2009; 2011).

Child care centre helps informal sector workers in Guatemala

The Guatemala municipal government supports a childcare and early childhood program serving vulnerable families from marginalized urban areas in the city. Created after studies found child care was a major need among the city's working mothers, the five municipal centres in this program care for over 1,000 children under six years old.

The city's Santa Clara childcare centre, started in 1990, is for children of workers in the informal economy who collect, classify and sell recycled material from the municipal rubbish dump in zone 3 of Guatemala City. Most of these impoverished families, some of them extremely poor, live in precarious conditions, often in highly unsanitary accommodations in the dump itself. Many are single-parent families headed up by women.

The centre looks after over 300 children, providing nutritious foods, care, early stimulation, pre-school education, regular health checks and vaccinations, hygiene and psychological help. It also offers support and training to both parents.

Parents contribute 15 quetzals (about US\$2.20) monthly for this service. The municipality finances, manages, supervises and hires personnel through its social assistance office (*Secretaría de Asuntos Sociales*). Funds come from other sources too, particularly voluntary donations from local employers, and co-operation agreements with other State institutions, local health centres, national and international non-governmental organizations.

Prior to the centre's creation, parents had to take their small children with them to work in the dump. Today, the centre has helped to prevent child labour, since children no longer work with their parents, and improved their social and physical development. Women can work longer hours for remuneration and have fewer problems resolving conflicts between their children's care and work. Big sisters no longer have to care for younger siblings and mothers have noted that the centre's proximity to their workplace is an important advantage.

Source: (ILO-UNDP, 2009, using Cassirer and Addati 2007)

Research suggests that securing parents' trust in the quality of child care is critical as; in its absence the provisions will not be used. Lack of use is even more likely in countries where reliance on kin care is normative. For instance, in South Korea despite incentives, through the Infant Care Act of 1991, by 2005 only 29 per cent of employed mothers with infants used child care facilities while 62 per cent relied on kin-based child care (Chin et al., 2011). Caparas (2011:8) reports that the effectiveness of child care centres *'is highly dependent on the quality of the caretakers, the equipment and facility, sanitation and food.'* In several Asian countries she reviewed, the re-

occurrence of accidents and mistreatment of children had discouraged working parents from using centres for their children.

High cost acts as a disincentive too, especially to the poor and those working in the informal sector. In developing countries Heymann (2006) found that those parents on “high” daily pay rates working in the informal economy, had greater access to centre-based child care than those with lower rates (61 per cent of workers who earned at or above \$10 PPP-adjusted per day had access, versus 11 per cent of those earning less than \$10 PPP-adjusted per day). The differences were less dramatic for those in the formal sector (51 per cent of those earning at or above \$10 PPP-adjusted per day had access to center-based childcare, compared to 41 percent of those earning less than the \$10 PPP-adjusted per day).

The quality benchmarks of the Innocenti Report Card 8

A - Policy Framework

Benchmark 1. A minimum entitlement to paid parental leave

The minimum proposed standard is that, on the birth of a child, one parent be entitled to at least a year's leave (to include prenatal leave) at 50 per cent of their salary (subject to upper and lower limits). For parents who are unemployed or self-employed, the income entitlement should not be less than the minimum wage or the level of social assistance. At least two weeks of parental leave should be specifically reserved for fathers.

Benchmark 2. A national plan with priority for disadvantaged children

All countries taking part in the childcare transition should have undertaken extensive research and evolved a coherent national strategy to ensure that the benefits of early childhood education and care are fully available, especially for disadvantaged children.

B - (Quantitative) access to early childhood education and care services

Benchmark 3. A minimum level of childcare provision for under-threes

The minimum proposed is that subsidized and regulated childcare services should currently be available for at least 25 per cent of children under the age of three.

Benchmark 4. A minimum level of access for four-year-olds

The minimum proposed is that at least 80 per cent of four-year-olds participate in publicly subsidized and qualified early education services for a minimum of 15 hours per week.

C - Quality of early childhood education and care services

Benchmark 5. A minimum level of training for all staff

The minimum proposed is that at least 80 per cent of staff having significant contact with young children, including neighbourhood and home-based child caregivers, should have relevant training. As a minimum, all staff should complete an induction course. A move towards pay and working conditions in line with the wider teaching or social care professions should also be envisaged.

Benchmark 6. A minimum proportion of staff with higher level education and training

The minimum proposed is that at least 50 per cent of staff in early education centres supported and accredited by governmental agencies should have a minimum of three years tertiary education with a recognized qualification in early childhood studies or related fields.

Benchmark 7. A minimum staff-to-child ratio

The minimum proposed is that the ratio of preschool children age four to five to trained staff (educators and assistants) should not be greater than 15 to 1, and that group size should not exceed 24 children.

Benchmark 8. A minimum level of public funding

The suggested minimum for the level of public spending on early childhood education and care (for children aged 0 to 6 years) should not be less than 1 per cent of the GDP). This first set of eight benchmarks is supplemented by two further indicators designed to acknowledge and reflect wider social and economic factors critical for the efficiency of early childhood services.

D - Low child poverty and universal outreach of social services

Benchmark 9. A low level of child poverty

Child poverty rate of less than 10 per cent (using less than 50 per cent of median OECD income threshold)

Benchmark 10. Universal outreach of social services⁶

The benchmark of 'universal outreach' is considered to have been met if a country has fulfilled at least two of the following three requirements: a) the rate of infant mortality is less than 4 per 1000 live births b) the proportion of babies born with low birth weight (below 2500 grams) is less than 6 per cent and c) the immunisation rate for 12 to 23 month-olds (averaged over measles, polio and DPT3 vaccination) is more than 95 per cent.

Source: Early Childhood Education and Care Services in the European Union Countries Proceedings of the ChildONEurope Seminar 2010 www.childoneurope.org using Bennett (2008) *Benchmarks for Early Childhood Services in OECD Countries*, Innocenti Working Paper

There is significant controversy about the impact of out-of-home-care, particularly for infants, with most studies conducted in the developed world where parents have more

options to take longer periods away from the labour market. The OECD (2009) Report *Doing Better for Children* highlights research evidence showing the importance of stable parental care for infants, and recommends that optimally young children should not experience long hours in poor quality non-parental care environments. Greater consensus is found on the benefits of early year's education, with the most positive impact for children from less advantaged backgrounds.

The evaluation evidence on the justification for adopting work-based child care policies and provision are less focused on child outcomes and more on organisational benefits and are mainly conducted in developed countries (e.g. Glass & Findlay, 2002). For developing countries, most of the evaluation evidence concentrates on the process of implementation with rich descriptions of the policy innovation, goals and challenges involved in delivering services (see Box on Mexico, OECD, 2011). For developed countries, the data point to a mix of outcomes with most studies showing positive or neutral effects for both employer supported child care provisions (e.g. vouchers, subsidies) and explicit workplace policy documentation. Gains include: reduced turn-over; reductions in absenteeism; and willingness to accept over-time and promotions. Co-location of nurseries with the workplace was not found to be a necessary condition for positive outcomes; presence of an accessible high quality provision was more important to participants in the reviewed studies.

Developing formal childcare in Mexico

In January 2007, the Mexican government launched a national child day-care programme – *Programa de Estancias Infantiles para Madres Trabajadoras* (PEIMT) – which aims to provide parents in paid work and/or study with access to child day-care services. In 2009, public spending on childcare amounted to 0.04 per cent of GDP, of which 20 per cent was allocated to PEIMT. Parents are eligible for support if they have a child between 1 and 4 years old (or up to 6 years old if the child has some disability) and their household income is less than 6 times the minimum wage (about USD 770), which is equivalent to the mean income of couples with two children. PEIMT has grown rapidly, and by December 2009, the programme included 8,923 day care centres covering 261 728 children and 243 535 parents. However, this is only 6 per cent of all children between 1 and 4 years old in Mexico, of whom 26 per cent grow up in poverty. Day-care centres are open for a minimum of eight hours per day, five days a week (Monday to Friday). The programme supports supply and demand of formal child day-care services in the following way: *Supply*: PEIMT provides a financial support to those who wish to operate a child day-care centre and who meet a series of requirements, including qualifications (having finished secondary school) a psychological test and having the facilities needed for offering services to at least ten children. In 2010, the amount was USD 4,200 for creating a new facility and USD 2,600 for adapting a private residence or retail space into a day care centre. Providers set fees, but they have to admit those children selected by the PEIMT authorities as eligible.

Demand: monthly subsidies to eligible families to partially cover the childcare fees. This monthly subsidy or “voucher” (up to about USD 53) is directly transferred to the centre on behalf of the child, conditional on the child attending services for more than 11 days per month. Parents have to pay a small fee (up to around 23 USD) to the childcare provider, except in very poor areas. This fee represents less than 10 per cent of household's income. Parents who cannot pay this fee may pay in-kind (fruit, tortillas, eggs) or may do some voluntary work (e.g., cleaning day-care centres, sewing uniforms) as agreed with the childcare provider.)

Source OECD (2011) *Doing Better for Families*

Another policy model for the care for young children, only found in a small number of richer nations, is to provide income directly to the main carer – a form of *cash for care*

approach. In Moss' (2011) thirty country analysis he found that six countries offered this form of *Childcare leave* which can usually be taken immediately after parental leave, creating a continuous period of leave, even if the conditions (such as benefit paid) may not be the same. In most cases childcare leave was unpaid, in contrast to a paid parental leave: until a child is 3 years in Croatia; two weeks per year per parent until a child is 14 in Estonia; three months per year per parent in Iceland until a child is eight years; two year in Norway (see Box below); and two to three years in Portugal. Parents with three or more children in Hungary can take leave until their youngest child is eight years old, with a flat-rate benefit. Finland was noted by Moss (2011) as exceptional in that its 'home care' leave is both available to all parents and paid, albeit with a relatively low flat-rate allowance. There is debate about the extent to which this policy instrument can disadvantage the occupational career of the parent who selects, or by circumstance is constrained, to take the benefit, which in most cases are mothers.

Norway 'cash-for-care' scheme

Parents with a child aged 12-36 months are entitled to receive a cash benefit ('cash-for-care' scheme) *on condition they do not use publicly funded ECEC service.*

The full benefit is NOK3, 303 (€420) per child per month. Children who use ECEC on a part-time basis receive a reduced benefit (e.g. if parents use no place, they receive 100 per cent of the benefit; if they use a place for 17-24 hours a week they receive 40 per cent of the full benefit).

The main criterion for eligibility, therefore, is not parental employment status, but parents not using a particular service.

Source: Brandth & Kvande, 2011

A key challenge for societies remains to provide affordable locally based care environments for children of working parents which are sensitive to their developmental needs at different stages in the life course.

Care of older children

Once children enter primary school there are still care and supervision needs, especially at the beginning and end of the day when parents may have to travel to work or search for employment. Across the world a number of *out-of-school hours* (OSH) care programmes have developed to support children and their parents including: breakfast clubs, after-school homework programmes, extended schools. These services are particularly important for children in lone parent families and who have parents who are required to work in nonstandard and inflexible jobs. They can provide adult-supervised care for the periods before and after school when it is not possible for parents to be there.

Typically out-of-school hours care centres are based in school, neighbourhood or leisure centres. Research evidence on their implementation and impact is not extensive and has mainly been conducted in developed countries, although some facilities such as breakfast clubs have been in existence for some time. The concept of a breakfast club originated in the USA and clubs have become widespread there since 1966, when the School Breakfast Program (US Department of Agriculture, 1999) was established to provide federal funding to assist schools serving breakfast to nutritionally needy children in poor areas (Shaw 1988). By 1997, the number of

participant schools exceeded 68,000 with clubs attracting six million children each day. In spite of very low running costs some childcare schemes struggle to survive, especially in low-income areas.

OECD analysis indicates that OSH services are mostly used by the 6-9 year old group and provision is variable - ranging from a 40 per cent participation rate in Denmark, Australia, Sweden and Hungary to below 10 per cent in South Korea, Poland and several Southern European countries (OECD, 2009). These data do not include children's participation in formal out-of-school sporting activities which is extensive and can involve parental participation.

For those developing countries with high levels of child labour, OSH has less immediate priority, but can still contribute to the goal of universal primary and secondary education, through promoting the concept of educational and activities throughout the day (e.g. UNICEF's The Global Out-of-School Children Initiative launched in 2010).

Although robust evaluation evidence is patchy, most research indicates social and academic benefits of OSH with socially disadvantaged children benefiting the most. For example, using a cluster randomized controlled trial (comparing schools with and without breakfast clubs), Shemilt et al (2004) found that at 1 year follow-up, a higher proportion of primary-aged breakfast club participants attended school and also reported eating fruit for breakfast in comparison to non-participants. Interviews with parents indicated that breakfast clubs help ease the strain and pressures of family morning routines, particularly amongst families with several school aged children and lone parents (Shemilt *et al.*, 2003). The school based breakfast clubs were an additional form of support for parents who were working, studying or seeking employment and were perceived as safe, secure and settled environments. Similar academic and social gains from OSH have been reported from American studies of participating young children and youth (Bissell et al, 2002). Activities for children and youth in low-income households may have a larger impact because the alternative home and neighborhood environments are typically less enriching and more dangerous than for middle-income children and youth.

Informal Care and Grandparents

Informal care of children by kin, friends, neighbours and unregulated local child childminders is common across developing countries (Heymann, 2006) and many developed countries (e.g. Plantenga & Remery, 2009). Cross-national European survey research showed that 34 per cent of grandmothers provided childcare almost weekly or more in the last year (Hank and Buber 2009). In some urban areas of China, it is commonplace for grandparents to provide childcare on a full-time basis (Goh, 2009). Grandparent care is most common in areas where co-residence rates are high and grandmothers generally provide more care than grandfathers to grandchildren. A shortage of childcare facilities for infants and, in some countries such as China, a general mistrust of domestic helpers, means that women's labour market participation can be strongly reliant on grandmothers. In China traditional cultural ideals such as *chuan zhong jie dai* (to ensure the passing down of the family lineage) foster grandparental care but new models of autonomous and independent lives for elder people are also developing, which may reduce grandparental 'care supply'. Similarly,

as employees extend their working lives older family members may be less available to support grandchildren's care needs.

Inclusion of grandparents in work-family provisions is becoming more common, especially in Europe for instance in terms of allowing access to parental leave and in 2005 Australia introduced one of the first benefits focused on grandparents- *Grandparent Child Care Benefit (GCCB)*.

Grandparent Child Care Benefit (GCCB) Australia

To assist grandparents with the costs of child care, Grandparent Child Care Benefit (GCCB) is available to eligible grandparents caring for their grandchild and who are in receipt of an Income Support Payment. GCCB covers the full cost of child care for up to 50 hours for each child in approved care each week. In certain circumstances you may be able to get GCCB for more than 50 hours per week.

To be eligible for GCCB, a grandparent must:

- meet the eligibility requirements outlined for the waiver of the work, training and study test;
- and be in receipt of an Income Support Payment

Source:<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Earlychildhood/Programs/ChildCareforServices/SupportFamilyCCS/Pages/GrandparentCCB.aspx>

Conclusion and recommendations

This paper has taken a family-focused perspective on work-care challenges and solutions. It has shown the close interconnections between the 'two worlds' of paid work and family life. As the labour market participation of women has increased, governments and employers in many parts of the world, have 'stepped forward' to find ways to support work-family balance at key family transition points such as childbirth, having young children, or caring for sick and elderly kin. Similarly enlightened employers have become aware of the benefits of a flexible and humane response when employees have family crises such as illness, stress or bereavement. Many of the basic provisions reviewed, such as maternity, paternity and parental leave and early childhood education and care have emerged in richer nations, but not exclusively so. In other countries very little progress has been made on work-family balance or family-friendly initiatives with negative consequences for employee health and well-being, gender equality and child well-being.

There is now a critical mass of research evidence showing the benefits of work-family reconciliation measures. The paper has charted the negative impact of poor quality job conditions on individual workers and their families. It has reviewed evidence indicating that long working hours put workers' health and relationships at risk; in particular for vulnerable groups of employees, and for those without kin help for the essential daily care of dependents and domestic responsibilities.

Profound demographic changes are taking place in family life as family units have become more diversified and the life course less predictable. In many countries across the world, family trends towards smaller households will necessitate more support for families as extended kin may not be available to care for young and old. A new tension in many contemporary societies is how employed parents manage to accommodate 24/7 infant care within a 24/7 globalised working environment. Dilemmas are negotiated against a background of changing cultural norms concerning

the appropriate time for employed mothers to return to paid work after childbirth. In these times of cultural flux parents deploy diverse parenting and employment strategies contingent on their available external resources and internal capacities. The trade-off between time, money and care involves intense personal negotiations within the family and in the workplace. Family-friendly initiatives from employers and governments can and do have a constructive role to play in supporting parents raise the next generation of children. The presence of work-life balance policies in an organization can show positive and harmonious labour relations, and demonstrate a corporation's sense of social responsibility.

Concerns about the welfare of children, and care of older family members needing care, cannot be developed in isolation from gender equity goals. Absence from the labour market carries substantial financial penalties and occupational risk, traditionally mostly borne by mothers. Developing societal policies to ensure work-family policies therefore requires sensitive meshing with gender equity policies (Lewis & Plomien, 2009; Gornick & Meyers, 2009). Central to this ambition is a more father or male-kin inclusive approach to work-family reconciliation. As this report, and other evidence has shown, governments, regional bodies and employers are developing support for working fathers' caring responsibilities and obligations (United Nations, 2011). Expanding national policies and programmes to promote a stronger engagement of men in family care activities through the life course will help modernize work-family policies to catch up with the changing role of women. In the twentieth century many post-war public policies created systems and services which assumed a full-time home female carer, supporting a full-time male breadwinner, a work-family model which no longer fits the circumstances of twenty-first century families.

In order for citizens to have a meaningful work and family balance, the challenge for all societies is to find work-care solutions which are personally, culturally and economically affordable. Taking the long view, it is clear that a range of effective provisions have emerged to help families cope with care of dependent family members and participate in the labour market. However, access to these support systems is mainly in the formal and regulated labour markets of the world, with many workers still experiencing profoundly 'family-unfriendly', harsh and dangerous work environments. In these cases it is essential that global employment protection is implemented and enforced. Starting points differ but a meaningful rather than just bearable work-family balance is an important aspiration for all.

Recommendations

1. A Family-focused Work-Life Vision

- Adopt a family-focused perspective in the pursuit of work-care reconciliation challenges and policy development. This approach integrates *family, work and child policies with an awareness of life course transitions*.

2. Global Compliance with a basic legal framework for work-family balance

- Responsible national entities to endorse and work towards implementing the ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (no 183) and the ILO Workers with Family responsibilities Convention (no 156).
- National entities to increase global awareness, especially by employers, of the ILO decent jobs initiative and its links with human rights legislation.

3. Family Leave

- Phased introduction of leave policies which support optimal child well-being (particularly in infancy) and gender equality incentives, using design features from “best practice” Nordic models.
- National entities should explore systems to recognise and support caring activities by fathers in families, in particular, consider statutory leave provision for fathers at the time of a child’s birth (paternity leave) or later, in the early years of a child’s life (ring-fenced “daddy months” in the parental leave period). A phased approach is recommended.
- Stage Stage 1- Expand Eligibility, improve levels of payment, introduce access to fathers. Stage 2: Introduce dedicated, non-transferable periods of leave for mothers / fathers. Stage 3: Extend periods of paid parental leave for mothers / fathers and introduce a general carer’s leave.
- Engage employers in publicity campaigns drives to raise awareness of the importance of family leave for male and female workers who have infants and young children.

4. Flexible Work Arrangements and Work-Time Innovation

- Introduce a formal right for all employees to request work flexibility to be negotiated subject to workplace/ business needs.
- Invest in training managers to introduce flexibility and manage a flexible workforce (employers and Governments).
- Target campaigns at sectors and workplaces with little flexibility, to open up opportunities.
- Support the development of high quality part-time jobs and short hour working days.
- Consider flexible working as a means to navigate the recession (e.g. reduction in hours not jobs).

5. Early Child care and Education and Youth Care

- Develop higher quality standards, flexible and affordable child care and education spaces in the community and in the workplace to support different working patterns for parents and business' need to deploy workforce beyond standard hours.

6. Mixed partnerships a multi-stakeholder approach

- Encourage wide-ranging consultation and partnerships between, employers, trade unions and employees (at different stages in the life course) to promote a better understanding and celebration of work-family reconciliation.

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APPENDIX Table 1 Female Participation in paid work OECD, 1985 to 2009 as a percentage of the working population (15-64 years)

		YEAR																									
		1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
Australia	AUS	49.6	51.8	52.7	54.2	56.4	57.4	56.0	55.6	55.5	56.9	59.0	58.9	58.9	59.6	60.0	61.4	61.7	62.1	62.9	63.1	64.7	65.5	66.1	66.7	66.2	
Austria	AUT										58.8	58.9	58.2	58.4	58.5	59.3	59.4	59.8	61.0	61.5	60.7	62.0	63.5	64.4	65.8	66.4	
Belgium	BEL	37.0	37.6	37.5	38.4	39.7	40.8	43.0	44.6	44.9	44.8	45.4	45.6	46.7	47.5	50.2	51.9	50.7	51.1	51.4	53.0	54.1	54.0	55.3	56.2	56.0	
Canada	CAN	56.2	57.9	59.4	61.2	62.4	62.8	61.9	61.0	60.5	61.1	61.6	61.5	62.1	63.5	64.6	65.6	65.9	67.0	67.9	68.4	68.3	69.0	70.1	70.1	69.1	
Czech Republic	CZE										60.4	61.0	61.0	60.6	59.9	58.7	57.4	56.9	57.0	57.1	56.3	56.0	56.3	56.8	57.3	57.6	56.7
Denmark	DNK	67.4	70.1	71.0	70.9	69.5	70.6	70.1	70.4	68.7	67.1	67.0	67.4	69.4	70.3	71.6	72.1	71.4	72.6	70.5	72.0	70.8	73.4	73.2	74.3	73.1	
Finland	FIN	69.8	69.5	69.2	69.6	71.4	71.5	68.4	63.8	59.7	58.7	59.0	59.5	60.4	61.3	63.6	64.5	65.4	66.1	65.7	65.5	66.5	67.3	68.5	69.0	67.9	
France	FRA	48.5	49.4	48.8	49.2	49.7	50.3	50.8	50.8	51.1	50.8	51.6	51.8	51.7	52.4	53.0	54.3	55.2	55.8	56.4	56.7	56.9	58.2	59.4	60.1	60.0	
Germany	DEU	47.7	48.5	49.1	49.9	50.8	52.2	56.3	55.7	55.1	54.7	55.3	55.5	55.3	56.3	57.4	58.1	58.7	58.8	58.7	59.2	59.6	61.4	63.2	64.3	65.2	
Greece	GRC	36.1	36.1	36.3	37.2	37.6	37.5	34.9	36.2	36.4	37.1	38.0	38.5	39.1	40.3	40.7	41.3	41.2	43.1	44.5	45.5	46.2	47.4	47.9	48.7	48.9	
Hungary	HUN										52.3	49.3	47.8	45.9	45.5	45.5	47.3	49.0	49.6	49.8	49.8	50.9	50.7	51.0	51.2	49.9	
Iceland	ISL							74.5	74.0	74.0	74.6	76.8	76.5	75.6	78.3	80.2	81.0	81.1	79.8	81.2	79.4	81.2	81.6	81.7	80.3	77.2	
Ireland	IRL	32.4	32.4	34.1	33.7	34.5	36.6	36.3	37.1	38.2	38.9	41.5	43.3	44.7	48.2	51.3	53.3	54.0	55.2	55.4	55.8	58.0	59.1	60.7	60.5	57.8	
Italy	ITA	33.4	34.0	34.5	34.9	35.2	36.2	36.5	36.5	35.8	35.4	35.4	36.0	36.4	37.3	38.3	39.6	41.1	42.0	42.7	45.2	45.3	46.3	46.6	47.2	46.4	
Japan	JPN	53.0	53.1	53.3	53.8	54.8	55.8	56.6	56.9	56.6	56.5	56.4	56.8	57.6	57.2	56.7	56.7	57.0	56.5	56.8	57.4	58.1	58.8	59.5	59.7	59.8	
Korea	KOR (1)	44.1	45.3	47.2	47.4	48.5	49.0	48.8	48.7	48.8	49.8	50.5	51.1	51.6	47.3	48.1	50.0	50.9	52.0	51.1	52.2	52.5	53.1	53.2	53.2	52.2	
Luxembourg	LUX	39.7	40.7	41.9	40.6	41.3	41.4	43.6	46.2	44.8	44.9	42.2	43.6	45.4	45.6	48.5	50.0	50.8	51.5	52.0	51.9	53.7	54.6	56.1	55.1	57.0	
Mexico	MEX							34.2	35.1	36.0	36.2	37.0	37.4	39.9	40.1	39.8	40.1	39.4	39.9	39.4	41.3	41.5	42.9	43.6	44.1	43.0	
Netherlands	NLD	35.5	36.1	42.3	44.3	45.2	47.5	49.3	51.0	52.0	52.6	53.9	55.2	57.6	59.4	61.6	63.0	63.7	64.0	64.2	64.3	64.8	66.4	68.5	70.2	70.6	
New Zealand	NZL		60.2	61.1	59.6	57.6	58.6	57.5	57.5	58.0	59.9	61.7	63.4	62.8	62.1	63.0	63.5	64.8	65.3	65.7	66.5	68.0	68.2	68.7	68.7	67.4	
Norway	NOR	65.6	69.7	70.7	69.8	67.5	67.2	67.0	66.7	66.6	67.5	68.8	70.4	72.2	73.6	73.8	74.0	73.8	73.9	72.7	72.7	72.0	72.3	74.0	75.4	74.4	
Poland	POL									53.1	52.1	51.9	51.8	51.8	52.2	51.6	48.9	47.8	46.4	46.2	46.4	47.0	48.2	50.6	52.4	52.8	
Portugal	PRT	49.4	48.9	51.2	53.1	53.9	55.4	57.6	56.1	55.3	55.0	54.8	55.6	57.2	58.3	59.5	60.5	61.0	60.8	60.6	61.7	61.7	62.0	61.9	62.5	61.6	
Slovak Republic	SVK										52.6	53.0	54.6	54.0	53.5	52.1	51.5	51.8	51.4	52.2	50.9	50.9	51.9	53.0	54.6	52.8	
Spain	ESP	25.8	26.2	28.1	29.4	30.6	31.8	32.5	32.5	31.5	31.5	32.5	33.8	35.2	36.5	39.1	42.0	43.8	44.9	46.8	49.0	51.9	54.0	55.5	55.7	53.5	
Sweden	SWE	76.8	77.8	79.2	80.1	80.7	81.0	79.3	76.2	72.1	70.7	70.9	69.9	68.9	69.4	70.9	72.2	73.5	73.4	72.8	71.8	71.8	72.1	73.2	73.2	70.2	
Switzerland	CHE									66.5	66.6	66.1	64.9	65.6	67.1	67.8	68.8	69.6	69.4	70.7	71.5	70.7	70.3	70.4	71.1	73.8	
Turkey	TUR				32.1	34.3	32.9	33.7	31.9	25.8	30.4	30.2	30.3	28.0	28.5	28.9	26.2	26.3	26.6	25.2	24.3	23.7	22.7	22.8	23.5	24.2	
United Kingdom	GBR	55.6	56.8	57.7	59.8	62.2	62.8	62.2	61.9	61.8	62.1	62.5	63.3	64.0	64.2	65.0	65.6	66.0	66.3	66.4	66.6	66.8	66.8	66.3	66.9	65.6	
United States	USA	59.3	60.5	61.9	63.0	64.1	64.0	63.3	63.5	64.0	65.2	65.8	66.3	67.1	67.4	67.6	67.8	67.1	66.1	65.7	65.4	65.6	66.1	65.9	65.5	63.4	
OECD	OECD	50.8	51.7	52.7	52.4	53.5	53.9	52.8	52.7	52.4	52.9	53.3	53.7	54.2	54.5	54.9	55.3	55.4	55.3	55.3	55.7	56.1	56.7	57.2	57.6	56.7	
Russian Federation	RUS																56.6			61.4	60.2	61.3	62.4	63.5	64.9	64.9	

Source: OECD (2011), Doing Better for Families, OECD using OECD Database on Labour Force Statistics 2010]. For Korea data refers to ages 15-59 prior to 1989. Data missing for OECD countries Chile, Estonia, Israel and Slovenia.

Table 2 Maternal Employment by age of youngest child and number of children under 15 years. 2007

Maternal employment rates, women age 15-64							
Country	by age of youngest child *				by number of children under 15		
	0-16	<3	3-5	6-16	1 child	2 children	3+ children
Hungary	45.7%	13.9%	49.9%	58.3%	53.7%	48.3%	24.6%
Poland	46.4%	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A	42.7%	35.6%	28.5%
Italy	48.1%	47.3%	50.6%	47.5%	48.3%	41.0%	27.4%
Slovak Republic	48.4%	23.1%	46.6%	60.4%	56.4%	49.4%	31.5%
Greece	50.9%	49.5%	53.6%	50.4%	48.4%	44.4%	37.4%
Spain	52.0%	52.6%	54.2%	50.9%	51.1%	44.7%	38.5%
Japan	52.4%	28.5%	47.8%	68.1%	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Czech Republic	52.8%	19.9%	50.9%	67.6%	57.4%	52.5%	34.4%
Germany	54.9%	36.1%	54.8%	62.7%	58.4%	51.8%	36.0%
Luxembourg	55.4%	58.3%	58.7%	52.7%	56.0%	49.8%	33.8%
Ireland	57.5%	55.0%	#N/A	59.9%	55.4%	52.5%	42.3%
Belgium	59.9%	63.8%	63.3%	56.9%	58.3%	58.5%	39.4%
France	59.9%	53.7%	63.8%	61.7%	62.2%	57.6%	38.1%
OECD 26-average	61.6%	51.9%	61.3%	66.3%	61.9%	58.2%	44.0%
United Kingdom	61.7%	52.6%	58.3%	67.7%	67.1%	62.4%	42.3%
Australia	63.1%	48.3%	#N/A	70.5%	63.3%	58.1%	#N/A
New Zealand	64.6%	45.1%	60.6%	75.3%	64.1%	64.5%	56.7%
Austria	64.7%	60.5%	62.4%	67.5%	67.7%	60.1%	46.5%
United States	66.7%	54.2%	62.8%	73.2%	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Portugal	67.8%	69.1%	71.8%	65.4%	63.5%	59.2%	46.1%
Netherlands	69.2%	69.4%	68.3%	69.4%	70.1%	70.6%	59.9%
Switzerland	69.7%	58.3%	61.7%	77.0%	69.5%	65.4%	58.0%
Canada	74.3%	65.1%	72.6%	79.4%	70.1%	73.2%	66.3%
Finland	76.0%	52.1%	80.7%	84.2%	71.2%	70.9%	60.1%
Denmark	76.5%	71.4%	77.8%	77.5%	#N/A	#N/A	#N/A
Sweden	82.5%	71.9%	81.3%	76.1%	80.6%	84.7%	75.6%
Iceland	84.8%	83.6%	#N/A	86.5%	88.5%	82.3%	#N/A

* By age of youngest child table: For Australia, Iceland and Ireland children aged <2 and 3-5 are grouped together as children aged under 6. Panel B: For Australia and Iceland the “two children” group represents “2+ children”. 1999 for Denmark; 2001 for Belgium, Canada and Japan; 2002 for Finland, Iceland and Italy; 2003 for Sweden; 2005 for Australia; 2006 for Switzerland. Data missing for Chile, Estonia, Israel, Korea, Mexico, Norway, Slovenia and Turkey.

Source: OECD (2011), *Doing Better for Families* using Australia, Australian Bureau of Statistics (2005); Statistics Canada (2001 data), Statistics Denmark (1999 data), Statistics Finland (2002 data), Statistics Iceland (2002 data for women age 25-54), Japanese authorities (2001 data), Swiss LFS (2006 2nd quarter data), UK Office of National Statistics (2005 data), and the US Current Population Survey (2005 data); all other EU countries, European Labour Force Survey (2005 data, except for Italy which concerns 2003).

Table 3 Maternity and Parental leave provision compared in OECD countries 2008

Panel A

Length in weeks of maternity leave¹ and full-rate equivalent² for the average worker, 2008

	Total length of maternity leave	Number of paid weeks	Average wage (national currency)	Full-rate equivalent
United Kingdom	52	39	29633	13
Greece	43	43	21693	25
Ireland	42	26	47522	7
Czech Republic	28	28	292461	17
Slovak Republic	28	28	9773	15
Israel	26	14	8075	14
Hungary	24	24	2693557	17
Italy	20	20	27099	16
Estonia	20	20	157030	20
Russian Federation	20	20	207481.2	20
Denmark	18	18	362674	9
Finland	18	18	34828	12
Poland	18	16	35495	18
Chile	18	18		18
Canada	17	15	48812	8
Portugal	17	17	16001	17
Austria	16	16	35260	16
France	16	16	33802	16
Luxembourg	16	16	49260	16
Netherlands	16	16	38936	16
Spain	16	16	24818	16
Turkey	16	16		11
Belgium	15	15	38506	12
Slovenia	15	15		15
Germany	14	14	32047	14
Japan	14	14	4302880	8
New Zealand	14	14		10
Switzerland	14	14	82248	11
Iceland	13	13		10
Korea	13	13	28493329	13
Mexico	12	12		12
United States	12	0	50888	
Norway	9	9	407349	7
Sweden	9	9	329481	7
Australia	6	0	67287	0
OECD-35	19	17	1309594	13

Panel B

Length in weeks of parental leave³ and full-rate² equivalent for the average worker, 2008

Country	Total length of parental leave	Number of paid weeks	Full-rate equivalent
Poland	156	156	21
Germany	148	61	41
France	146	146	28
Spain	144	0	0
Finland	144	144	24
Russian Fed.	132	58	46
Hungary	136	136	59
Slovak Republic	136	136	31
Estonia	136	136	65
Czech Republic	134	156	47
Austria	104	156	19
Norway	91	91	32
Australia	52	0	0
Sweden	51	51	31
Denmark	46	32	23
Korea	46	46	10
Japan	44	44	31
New Zealand	38	0	0
Slovenia	37	37	37
Canada	35	35	19
Greece	30	0	0
Luxembourg	26	26	12
Iceland	26	13	10
Italy	26	26	8
Turkey	26	0	0
Netherlands	26	tax reduction	5
Ireland	14	0	0

1. Total length of maternity leave refers to the sum of paid and unpaid entitled weeks: the numbers above the bars refer to the total length of employment-protected maternity/parental leave in 2008.

2. Full-rate equivalent (FRE) = Duration of (maternity/parental) leave in weeks' payment as a percentage of AW earnings received by the claimant over this period.

3. Information refers to parental leave and subsequent prolonged periods of paid and unpaid leave women can take after maternity leave to care for young children (sometimes under a different name as for example, "childcare leave" or "home-care leave", or the "Complément de libre choix d'activité" in France).

In all, prolonged periods of home-care leave can be taken in Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Finland, Germany, Norway, Poland and Spain (Annex 4.A1) and since 2008 in Sweden. Values for parental leave refer to the number of weeks women can take after maternity leave, and thus can be added to the weeks of maternity leave. Weeks of maternity leave to be taken after childbirth are deducted from the length of parental leave in countries where entitlements are set up to an age limit of the child. Parental leave is unpaid in the Netherlands, but there is a tax advantage to stimulate take-up, which is reflected in this chart. For Canada, the 17 weeks in Panel A refer to the situation in most provinces and territories, but, for example, the provinces of Québec and Saskatchewan provide 18 weeks. In Panel B, the federal Employment Insurance programme provides for 35 weeks of paid parental leave; unpaid leave periods can be longer. For example, the province of Québec provides up to 52 weeks of unpaid leave, during which period eligible clients can claim benefits under the Québec Parental Insurance Plan.

Source: OECD (2011), *Doing Better for Families* using Moss and Korintus (2008); Missoc tables: Social Protection in EU Member States; and information provided by national authorities in non-EU countries.

Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>

Table 4 Maternity Leave Benefits in Selected Asian Countries

Source: Caparas, 2011 using <http://data.un.org>

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)

Table 5 Family Leave- a global snapshot

	Maternity Leave		Paternity Leave		Parental Leave		Additional Family Leave		Funding Source
	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	
Argentina	100%	90 days	100%	2 days	-	-	100%	1-10 days*	Employer/Family Allowance Fund
Australia	-	-	-	-	Fixed amount*	18 weeks**	-	-	General taxation
Austria	100%	16 weeks	-	-	Variable*	2 years	-	-	Statutory health insurance/ general taxation/ employer contributions
Bangladesh	100%	16 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Employer
Belgium	75%*	15 weeks	100%**	10 days	Fixed amount***	12 weeks***	Fixed amount****	1 year (time credit system)	Federal health insurance, general taxation, and employee and employer contributions
Brazil	100%	17 weeks*	100%	5 days	-	-	-	-	Social security and employer**
Canada	55%	15-18 weeks*	-	-	55%	37 weeks	100%	3 days**	Employer and federal and state employment insurance programme
Chile	100%	18 weeks	100%	5 days	-	-	100%	3-7 days*	Social security

	Maternity Leave		Paternity Leave		Parental Leave		Additional Family Leave		Funding Source
	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	
China	100%	13 weeks	-	-	-	-	100%	1-3 days*	Social security
Colombia	100%	12 weeks	100%	4-8 days	-	-	-	-	Social security
Czech Republic	60%	28 weeks	-	-	Variable*	3 years	-	-	Social security/health insurance/general taxation
Denmark	100%	18 weeks	100%	2 weeks	100%	32 weeks*	-	-	Sickness benefit scheme/employer and municipalities through pooled leave funds
Egypt	100%	12 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Social security/employer
Estonia	100%	20 weeks	-	-	Variable*	3 years	80%	14 days**	Social security/general taxation
Ethiopia	100%	13 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Employer
Finland	Variable*	21 weeks	70%	3-6 weeks	Variable**	158 working days	Variable***	3 years****	Health insurance/municipal taxes
France	100%	16 weeks	100%	2 weeks	Variable*	3 years	Variable**	3 years	Social security/health insurance/family allowance fund
Germany	100%	14 weeks	-	-	67%*	12-14 months**	80%	10 days***	General taxation/statutory health

	Maternity Leave		Paternity Leave		Parental Leave		Additional Family Leave		Funding Source
	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	
									insurance/employer****
Greece	100%	17 weeks*	100%	2 days	-	-	100%	3.75 months**	Social security and other government sources/employer funding of paternity leave
Hungary	70%	24 weeks	100%	5 days	Variable*	2-3 years**	70%	Variable**	Health insurance/general taxation
Iceland	80%	3 months	80%	3 months	80%	3 months	-	-	Social insurance fund with employer and employer contributions
India	100%	12 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Employer
Indonesia	100%	13 weeks	100%	2 days	-	-	-	-	Employer
Ireland	80%/fixed amount*	26 weeks	-	-	-	-	100%	3 days**	Social insurance fund
Israel	100%	14 weeks	100%	8 weeks*	-	-	-	-	Social security

	Maternity Leave		Paternity Leave		Parental Leave		Additional Family Leave		Funding Source
	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	
Italy	80%*	20 weeks	-	-	30%**	6 months	-	-	Social security
Japan	60%	14 weeks	-	-	30%*	1 year	40%	3 months	National health insurance/employment insurance
Luxembourg	100%	16 weeks	100%	2 days	Fixed amount*	6 months	100%	2-4 days**	National health fund, through general taxation/employer for paternity leave
Malaysia	100%	60 days	-	-	-	-	-	-	Employer
Mexico	100%	12 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Social security/employer
The Netherlands	100%	16 weeks	100%	2 days	-	-	70%/variable*	10 days**	Unemployment fund/employer
New Zealand	100%	14 weeks	100%*	1-2 weeks	-	-	100%	5 days**	General taxation
Nigeria	50%	12 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Employer
Norway	80%/100%	9 weeks	80%/100%	10 weeks	80%/100%	27-37 weeks for either parent	Fixed amount**	10 days***	General taxation/employer
Pakistan	100%	12 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Employer

	Maternity Leave		Paternity Leave		Parental Leave		Additional Family Leave		Funding Source
	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	
Poland	100%	22 weeks	100%	1 week	Fixed amount	3 years	80%	14 days*	Social insurance fund/employer
Portugal	80%/100%*	120-150 days	100%	20 days	25%	3 months**	65%	30 days***	Social security/general taxation
Russia	100%	140 days	-	-	40%	18 months	Variable*	60 days	Social insurance fund/employer
Saudi Arabia	50%/100%*	10 weeks	-	1 day	-	-	-	-	Employer
Slovak Republic	55%	28 weeks	55%	22 weeks*	Fixed amount	128 weeks	-	-	Social insurance/general taxation
Slovenia	100%	15 weeks	100%/fixed amount*	13 weeks	100%	37 weeks	80%	15 days**	Social security/general taxation
South Africa	Variable*	4 months	-	-	-	-	100%	3 days**	Unemployment insurance fund/employer
South Korea	100%	13 weeks	-	-	Fixed amount	1 year	-	-	Employment insurance fund/employer
Spain	100%	16 weeks	100%	15 days	-	-	100%	2-5 days**	Social security/employ

	Maternity Leave		Paternity Leave		Parental Leave		Additional Family Leave		Funding Source
	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	Pay	Duration	
Sri Lanka	86%/100%*	12 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Employer
Sweden	80%	50 days	80%	10 days	80%	480 days*	80%	120 days**	Social insurance
Switzerland	80%	14 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Social insurance
Turkey	66.6%	16 weeks	-	-	-	-	-	-	Social security
United Arab Emirates	50%/100%*	45 days	-	-	-	-	-	-	Employer
United Kingdom	90%/Fixed amount*	52 weeks	Variable**	2/26 weeks***	-	-	-	-	Employer****

Source: Human Rights Watch (2011) *Failing its Families Lack of Paid Leave and Work-Family Supports in the US (Annexe)*. Report available at <http://www.hrw.org>, using:

•the International Labour Organization Database of Conditions of Work and Employment Laws (<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/travail/travmain.home>) (with many entries last updated in 2009);

- the International Review of Leave Policies and Related Research 2010 (Peter Moss, ed.)
(<http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/employment-matters/docs/i/10-1157-international-review-leave-policies.pdf>);
 - a March 2010 OECD Gender Brief
(<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/31/44720649.pdf>);
- and
- government websites

Chapter IV

Policies and Programmes Supporting Intergenerational Relations

Donna M. Butts, Leng Leng Thang & Alan Hatton Yeo

*The web of mutual obligations between
generations is essential for a civilized society.*
Thomas Jefferson

The authors

Donna Butts is the Executive Director of Generations United, a position she has held since 1997. The mission of Generations United is to improve the lives of children, youth and older people through intergenerational collaboration, public policies, and programs for the enduring benefit for all. For more than 35 years, Donna has worked tirelessly to promote the well-being of children, youth and older adults through nonprofit organizations across the country and around the world. In 2004, Donna was honored with the National Council on Aging's Jack Ossofsky Award for Leadership, Creativity, and Innovation in Programs and Services for Older Persons. She served as a 2005 delegate to the White House Conference on Aging. An internationally known speaker, commentator and advocate, she has written countless articles, chapters and publications regarding the welfare of children, youth and older adults and the imperative of intergenerational solidarity. She is a former chair of the International Consortium of Intergenerational Programmes (ICIP) and serves on the board of the Journal of Intergenerational Relationships. Donna was invited by the United Nations to sit on three expert panels most recently on intergenerational dialogue in Doha, Qatar in 2011.

Leng Leng Thang is Associate Professor at Department of Japanese Studies, National University of Singapore. As a socio-cultural anthropologist working mainly on Japan, she published the first ethnographic study of an age-integration institution in Asia titled, "Generations in Touch: Linking the young and old in a Tokyo Neighborhood." Most recently, she co-edited "Experiencing Grandparenthood: an Asian perspective" focusing on intergenerational relationships in Asian families. She is associate editor of "Journal of Intergenerational Relationships" (Taylor and Francis) and vice Chair of the International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes (ICIP). Leng Leng is known for her efforts to promote intergenerational programmes particularly in Singapore and the region; she has organized several international conferences and workshops on intergenerational programmes and relationships in the country and provides consultancy on issues relating to generational solidarity to the state and various organizations and agencies. Leng Leng serves as Chairperson of Singapore Fei Yue Family Service Centre, a non-profit organization active in ageing, family and intergenerational programmes among others.

Alan Hatton-Yeo worked in the field of special education for seventeen years with roles including College Principal and Principal Education Advisor of the then Spastics Society for England and Wales. Following a period working with the British Red Cross, he joined the Beth Johnson Foundation as Chief Executive in March 1998. The Foundation was established in 1972 to develop new approaches to ageing that link practice, policy and research. Currently its work includes specialist work around advocacy for people with dementia, health promotion for older people, mid life, volunteering, engagement and participation and intergenerational work. Alan has an international reputation for his work in the field of intergenerational practice and his current roles include: Director of the Centre for Intergenerational Practice, Chair of the International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes, Member Steering Committee for Age Action Alliance, Member UK Advisory Forum on Ageing, Honorary Research Fellow University of Keele and Associate Editor of the Journal of Intergenerational Relationships

With the belief that intergenerational cohesion is essential to healthy societies, the authors have taken the lead, in their respective parts of the world, to promote awareness, policies and practices to enhance bonding among generations. We believe investments across the lifespan benefit people of all ages. Governments and other leaders will better serve when they unite rather than separate the generations for the greatest social and financial impact. The increased recognition of the mutual interdependence of strong families and strong communities in Europe and other regions reflects the significance of intergenerational solidarity in these times of uncertainty and economic challenge. We firmly believe we are stronger together.

Introduction

Sound intergenerational relationships are critical to cohesive, healthy families and societies. Generations have always been interdependent in order to survive and thrive. Throughout the life course people receive and give care while collecting, managing and passing on resources. Such a compact between generations ensures a higher level of basic survival but also contributes to the ability of human beings to flourish and make richer contributions at every stage of the life cycle. Families and community invest in the next generation convinced that this is how society progresses. The next generation in turn will reciprocate and be better prepared to care for younger and older generations while advancing the well-being of societies (Butts, 2010).

Family has been defined in many ways and differently in various regions of the world. In 1948, the United Nations declared: “The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State” (United Nations, 1948). Yet the definition of family is expanding rapidly around the globe. Numerous factors influence this evolution including but not limited to increased longevity, growing number of blended families and co-habiting, unmarried couples, single heads of households, childless couples and changing views on gay marriages. Despite these changes, families, consisting of “people related through affection, obligation, dependence or cooperation” (Rothausen, 1999), remain an essential social unit in all societies. As Kofi Annan reiterated in his opening statement on the 10th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, “Families themselves play a vital role in our work for development and peace” (United Nations, 2004).

Intergenerational solidarity is critical for families and societies. Families are units where values are learned, culture is transmitted, and children learn relationship skills (Mitts, N. 2003). As such, they are the foundation of our global society. Intergenerational solidarity has been defined as bonding between and among individuals in multigenerational family networks and among different age cohorts in the larger community (Bengtson and Oyama, 2010). In recent times where the organization of our social and institutional structures has been increasingly along age-specific divisions which segregate one generation from another (e.g. schools are for the young, adults concentrate in work places, and seniors congregate in retirement communities), family is noted as probably the only ‘truly age integrated’ institution (Hagestad and Uhlenberg, 2005, 2006). While intergenerational relationships within the family are key, they are also fundamental to the well-being of the larger community and societies at large.

Policies and programmes promoting sound intergenerational relations and intergenerational solidarity play an important role in contributing to effective public policy by promoting social cohesion, national unity and shared responsibility (Hatton-Yeo, 2002). Intergenerational programmes also play a key role in supporting positive relations between generations. They provide a platform for developing positive relationships across age groups and have been shown to strengthen the quality of ties between family members (Thang, 2006).

Unfortunately the structure of many policies, programmes and services is often age-based. This age-graded approach is not always conducive to intergenerational

harmony and generational integration. Such policy approaches are also reflected in the training of professional groups which is normally age segmented rather than life-course based, which creates further dislocation between the planning and delivery of services for people of different ages.

In a similar vein, family policy is often narrowly focused on families with children. With the advent of nuclear families, it also often narrowly restricts its scope to parents and children only. These policies seek to strengthen the family but in reality have weakened the extended family by excluding grandparents and other relatives. In an ageing society, governments and civil society are challenged to broaden the scope of policies to reflect longer life spans and changing roles and demands on each generation of a family.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing states that solidarity between generations at all levels – in families, communities and nations - is fundamental for the achievement of a society for all ages, yet, policies related to ageing stand alone in many countries and in general have not integrated other family members' needs and concerns, with but a few exceptions.

Policies can provide support or punishment. The values of a society can be upheld and encouraged through acknowledgment and incentives such as Singapore's intergenerational bonding efforts. On the other hand, policies can be enacted to enforce a way of life that is being threatened such as India's support of parent's act requiring family members to look after older relatives or face harsh penalties.

Every generation plays a vital role supporting intergenerational relations. For example, children can be unifiers when families have been separated by divorce, distance or death. Grandparents, uncles and aunts become parents again when children need rearing and parents are not available, sometimes even providing full time care. Extended kin networks can also step in to help parents with child care when they face long work and commuting hours.

Developed and developing countries grapple with demographic changes that threaten the intergenerational social compact. Industrialized regions face dramatically increasing older populations and ageing societies as a result of sustained lower birth rates, and later age of mothers at childbirth. Better health care, higher quality diets and safer work environments have all added to a longevity dividend that should be celebrated. Instead, it is often overshadowed by concerns about how developed countries will absorb and sustain larger elderly populations. As families grow to include more living generations than ever before, governments are revisiting promises made in the past when life expectancy was shorter. At the same time older adults in these countries have watched markets plunge, their savings diminish and, in some cases, their housing values decline dramatically. Escalating debates about pensions, social security and health care create an environment of fear for older people and concern for families worried about how they can support the needs of an older generation while still caring for their children.

Developing countries, on the other hand, generally have large younger populations though this is beginning to change. Regions, such as Latin America, are following the trend of developed countries, witnessing a reduction in family size. It is estimated

that the number of people per household in Latin America will fall by 18 per cent by the year 2020⁶⁰. Still recent tumultuous times in the Middle East brought world-wide attention to youth populations restless for change and opportunity. In some countries this has led to out-migration or a loss of their more highly educated, marketable citizens leaving behind older adults.

While the magnitude varies, young people in developed countries are also concerned about their future. In the United States and some European countries the unemployment rate among young adults is up to 44.3 per cent⁶¹. For the United States, this is the highest unemployment rate among this age group in over half a century. Lacking opportunities, younger generations face a longer period of dependency on their parents and families which can further stress family resources. Some predict this will also lead to a growing competition among generations as they may be in danger of fighting over jobs and resources in a time young people expect to have poorer pensions and less wealth than their predecessors.

Technology has also impacted the family. While some find it easier to stay connected with family members as they fulfil work, school and other responsibilities, others report the increase in time spent watching television, playing electronic games and communicating with others via social media which has increased the isolation of family members and diminished relationships.

The demographic changes and challenges noted above impact families and can strain the cohesion among family members as new roles emerge to meet the arising challenges. Importantly, however, despite these changes that could adversely affect intergenerational solidarity within families and broader society, the majority of people in all cultures maintain close relationships with members of their family throughout their lives.

Some countries are making a concerted effort to support and protect intergenerational solidarity creating mechanisms that act to protect family cohesion amid changing demographics and economic turbulence. They are investing in the development and implementation of policies and programmes to strengthen intergenerational relations within family and larger community. Areas of the globe that are rich with intentional intergenerational programmes have experienced positive results. Studies in Singapore and Europe found younger people engaged in intergenerational programmes show more interest in the older members of their own families. Polls in Europe and the United States found that respondents believed governments could and should do more to encourage intergenerational interactions (EU poll, 2009 and Generations United, 2010).

While much has been written about supporting strong, resilient families, only recently have some researchers begun to look at the role of intergenerational programmes and policies in strengthening families. This paper will focus on elements essential to supporting relationships within families emphasizing the value of extended family and non-familial intergenerational interventions in strengthening familial ties. The authors will discuss intergenerational relations in various regions of the world highlighting efforts in both developed and developing countries. Policies and

⁶⁰ Latin American Herald <http://laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=347561&CategoryId=12394>

⁶¹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/jobs/8564500/Interactive-graphic-Youth-unemployment-in-Europe.html>

programmes that encourage positive intergenerational relations such as caregiving and child care, formal and community education, pensions and financial transfers, housing and community supports will be examined. The concluding section will offer recommendations for governments, civil society and other stakeholders in the areas of policy development and implementation.

Examination of Intergenerational Relations Trends in Developed and Developing Countries

Demographics are changing worldwide. In general, developed countries are growing older and developing countries are trending towards larger youth populations, but in many parts of the developing world populations are growing older at a fast pace. Many factors influence these trends, including fertility patterns, migration trends, gender equality and other issues. Countries need to design proper responses to face these challenges. For example, a region can capitalize on an upcoming youth bulge by investing in education and job training to better prepare a larger, younger population for future contribution to society. A region faced with a growing ageing population can benefit by implementing policies and programmes that call on older adults to continue to be active in communities through paid or volunteer positions. Retirement and pension schemes can also be re-evaluated as demographics shift and lifetimes expand.

North America and Europe

The United States is still in a recession marked by the housing bubble burst, economic downturn and high and extended unemployment. Research indicates that children, parents, and grandparents are coming back together and living in the same home, dependent on each other for financial support and caregiving. These multigenerational households, consisting of three or more generations, have increased to 5.1 million in 2010, a 30 per cent increase from the 3.9 million reported in 2000. In a recent national survey of multigenerational families, 75 per cent said the arrangement made caregiving easier, 82 per cent said living together enhanced family bonds but 78 per cent also acknowledged the multigenerational household can contribute to stress among family members (Generations United, 2011).

The debate about debt and deficit reduction have led some to question long standing social insurance programmes, such as Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare in the United States, that in fact benefit multiple generations. There is a growing concern that current and projected conditions threaten the fundamental American value that the next generation will have greater opportunities than the one that preceded it.

Despite the fact that some politicians and news commentators conclude that conflict between the generations is inevitable, the general public in the United States seems to disagree and consistently favours an intergenerational framework for effective public policy making. According to a 2010 poll, 76 per cent of respondents believed publically funded programmes targeted to a specific age group such as kindergarten through 12 grade education or Social Security are not burdensome responsibilities to certain age groups but investments that benefit all generations. Furthermore, 83 per cent of respondents somewhat or strongly agreed that politicians pit one generation

against another in order to limit public support for government funded child care, health care, Social Security, or other programmes (Generations United, 2010).

Currently, 20 per cent of the population in the United States is under the age of 15 and 13 per cent or 39.6 million people are over the age of 65. By 2030 the over 65 population will grow to be 19 per cent or 72.1 million (AoA, 2011). This ageing of society is taking place within the context of several other factors that influence family and family supports. The United States continues to hold the highest divorce rate in the world at 4.9 per 1000 marriages. At the same time, there are more single, never married women than ever before living in the United States, which, for many, eliminates the first line of defense in old age, the family. Marriage between same sex couples is hotly debated with a few states including New York and California legalizing these unions. Even while Americans express an expansive definition of what constitutes a family, 76 per cent of adults report that their family is the most important element of their life (Pew Research Center, 2010).

In Canada, marriages or common law marriages have remained relatively stable over the last several decades at 84.1 per cent. However, 2006 marked the first time more adults were unmarried than married (47.5 per cent). Childless couples now outnumber couples with children (Vanier Institute of the Family, 2010). Canada is experiencing the same low fertility rates and longer life expectancy as many developed countries. From 1981 to 2005 the over 65 population increased from 9.6 per cent to 13.1 per cent. From 2005 to 2036 it is expected to increase from 13.2 per cent to 24.5 per cent (Turcotte, M. & Schellenberg, G. 2007). While NGOs such as the Legacy Project promote intergenerational approaches in Canada, the government has done little to spur intergenerational solidarity.

In Europe one in every five inhabitants is over 65 and there are 6 million more over-65s than under-14s. In 1980 there were 36 million more children than elderly individuals, by 2007 there were 6 million (5,966,400) more over-65s than under-14s. The under-14 population in the EU25 has decreased from 94 million in 1980 to only 74 million in 2007, which represents a decrease of 20 million young people. By contrast, the over-65 population in the EU25 has increased from 57 million in 1980 to 80 million in 2007, which represents an increase of almost 23 million elderly people. Almost a million fewer babies are born in Europe annually than in 1980. In 2007, almost one million (920,089) fewer babies were born in the EU27 than in 1982. Over this period (1982-2007) the population increased by almost 37 million largely due to inward migration. In addition, people are starting families later in life and the average age of maternity is now almost 30. There has also been a significant fall in the marriage rate in Europe with 737,752 fewer marriages than in 1980. In countries such as Bulgaria, Slovenia and Hungary, the fall in marriage rate has been around 50 per cent, i.e. for every two marriages that took place in 1980, now there is only one.

One out of every 3 children (33.9 per cent) is born outside marriage in the EU27. Marital breakdown has increased by 55 per cent in 26 years (1980-2006). Spain, with an increase of 290 per cent, is the EU country with the highest increase in marital breakdown over the last 10 years (1996-2006). Belgium, Luxembourg and Spain are the EU27 countries with the highest rate of marital breakdown. For every three marriages entered into, two end in divorce. Germany, the United Kingdom,

France and Spain are the EU27 countries with the highest number of divorces.

The size of European households is decreasing with an average of only 2.4 members per household. European households are also becoming more solitary. One out of every 4 households in Europe has a single dweller (27.7 per cent of European households have only 1 person) and more than 54 million Europeans live alone.

While there is a growing awareness of the problems faced by families in the European Union, there is no organization which is in charge of family policy, nor is there currently a Family Observatory, or a Green Paper on the Family. Although there are five Vice-presidencies and 21 Committees within the European Commission, none of them covers the family, which is dealt with by the Committee on Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The Observatory on Family Policies was created in 1989 and closed in 2004, when it was replaced by the Observatory on Demography and the Social Situation. Of the 95 Green Papers written since 1984, none has been on the family.

Of every €13 Europe sets aside for social expenditure (which represents 28 per cent of GDP) only one euro is set aside for support to the family through benefits such as child allowance. Within individual countries, there are significant differences. Some countries target families as a priority for assistance, providing levels far higher than the European average. Denmark, Luxembourg, Germany, Sweden, Finland and Austria set aside above three per cent of GDP for families, 40 per cent more than the European average (2.1 per cent of GDP). Denmark (3.8 per cent of GDP) and Luxembourg (3.6 per cent of GDP) are the EU27 countries that offer most assistance to families. However, other countries do not prioritize families for assistance. Poland, Malta, Spain, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Italy, and Portugal set aside less than 1.2 per cent of GDP for the family, which is far below the European average (2.1 per cent of GDP).

This leads to significant differences for families in each country. A family with two children, without income-related restrictions, would receive 471€/month in Luxembourg, in Germany 308€/month, in Ireland 300€/month and in Belgium 274€/month. By contrast, the same family in Poland would receive 32 €/month (and with strict income related restrictions), 25 €/month in Latvia and 23 €/month in Bulgaria.

The trend in North America and Europe will continue for smaller families and it will become increasingly important to increase the support to individuals and the family from strong multigenerational community networks that can help share support, assistance and skills.

Asia

One of the much discussed topics in Asia today is its rapid pace of ageing as Asian countries experience a fast rise in life expectancy, accompanied by a sharp fall in the total fertility rate. Nonetheless, as a large continent with diverse levels of socio-economic developments and cultural characteristics, the extent and pace of the trend toward ageing differ among Asia's societies, as does their impact on families and

intergenerational relations. While countries in East Asia such as Japan which boasts the world's highest life expectancy, South Korea, Singapore and China are facing a rapid rate of ageing and extremely low birth rate, other countries and South and Southeast Asia, such as India, Indonesia, Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Thailand, although experiencing a rapid increase in the number of older persons, have a relatively high birth rate in comparison with East Asian societies. For countries such as Laos and Cambodia, as well as most countries in South-central and Western Asia, they are projected in 2025 still to have a youthful population with the proportion of people aged 65+ only at 5 to 8 per cent.

Intergenerational relationships may be said to remain more stable and 'traditional' – where mutual support of the old and young is strong in the familial context in the less developed and less urban areas of Asia. Moreover, the expectations of children to provide for their parents expressed in concepts such as filial piety in Chinese culture still remain a culturally perceived ideal in many Asian societies at large. As Croll (2008) states, such reliance on the family instead of the state to care for older persons in Asian countries is often regarded as the essence of Asian values which lay the foundation of not only the family, but also state policies on aged care.

However, although intergenerational relations and support may tend to focus on upward flow from adult children to ageing parents, it has also been increasingly noted that older persons as grandparents and parents are significant source of downward support to their children and grandchildren in the family, serving as household help and caregivers of the young, among others (Hemalin, 1997; Teo et.al., 2006). Similar to the experiences of grandparents who are caring for their grandchildren in the absence of the middle generation in North America and Africa, grandparents, especially those from rural areas are often the main caregiver to their grandchildren when the middle generation migrated to urban areas for employment (Kamnuansilpa and Wongthanasu, 2005; Silverstein, 2005). With more dual working couples in modernized Asian societies, grandparents are expected to continue to play important roles in caring for the children and their families. Besides the family, better health and education among older people in urbanized Asia have also led to more intergenerational activities in the extra familial context (Thang and Mehta, 2012).

Africa

In Africa, the concept of Ubuntu, originally a Zulu term meaning unity, is fundamental to understanding intergenerational solidarity. It basically states that I am a person because you are a person. We are all related, interconnected and responsible for each other. Archbishop Desmond Tutu further explained Ubuntu in 2008. "One of the sayings in our country is Ubuntu – the essence of being human. Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can't exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. You can't be human all by yourself, and when you have this quality – Ubuntu – you are known for your generosity." Yet the changes threatening solidarity in other countries are affecting Africa as well.

Africa is a demographically young continent. In 2004, 44 per cent of its population was below age 15, compared to Europe, where the population under the age 15

stood at 15 per cent. Southern and North Africa are experiencing a decline in fertility ahead of other regions in Africa. The rest of Africa is expected to experience a youth bulge two decades later. However, few people believe that Africa will take advantage of the economic window that the youth bulge will present. This is mainly due to the failure of African governments to implement universal, quality education and the inability of African economies to absorb the bulk of its population into the formal economy. The burdens of disease, particularly HIV/AIDS, as well as unemployment and other factors are generally thought to keep young people from contributing economically to their communities (Makiwane, 2011).

In sub-Saharan Africa, Africa's informal family and community based care systems are being threatened by globalization, urbanization and socioeconomic challenges (Oduaran, 2010). Disease and poverty have threatened the traditional web of support and resulted in a reliance on grandparents, in particular grandmothers, raising a second generation of children.

The African Union has worked with other stakeholders to increase social protections in national development plans among member states. Some countries such as Zambia have included a social protection strategy in part of their national development plans. These social protection strategies need to align with family policy in the areas of education, health, housing and food security (Mutangadura, 2009).

Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean have a history of intergenerational solidarity among family members but this tradition is threatened by several demographic changes taking place in the midst of low GDP and high social and income inequalities. The changes result from a combination of lower child mortality, higher life expectancy at birth, wider adoption of contraception practices and out migration. In 2010, 27.3 per cent of the population was under the age of 14 and 8.3 per cent was 65 or older. By 2040 17.8 per cent of the population is expected to be under the age of 14 and 19 per cent is projected to be 65 or older (ECLAC, 2011).

A long range development strategy created for the region calls for a focus on the life cycle and in particular the situation of the population aged 0 to 29 and the ties these young people today have to other age groups (ECLAC, 2010). While 40 per cent of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean is under the age of 30, better educated and healthier than older adults, they also suffer from organized violence and high unemployment or underemployment. It is estimated that one-third to one-half of all youth are unemployed, double the number of adults (IADB, 2011). At the same time, high out migration in countries such as El Salvador and Peru lead to a higher dependency ratio (Cruz-Saco, 2010). In addition, nearly one quarter of the women aged 15 to 25 are mothers before the age of 20 thereby increasing their chances of living in and continuing the cycle of poverty.

Pensions and social security in Latin America are affected by a significant drop in birth rates and a large informal labour market. It is estimated that 43 per cent of salaried workers are not covered by pension systems. In Mexico, for example, there are 22 million salaried workers but only 14 million are part of the social security

system (IADB, 2011). It is estimated that by 2025, 77 per cent of persons over the age of 65 will not have pensions and will need to be supported by families (Cruz-Saco, 2010).

Policies and Programmes Supporting Families and Intergenerational Relations

Intergenerational perspectives in policy and programme development can hinder or support intergenerational solidarity in families by creating artificial barriers or providing easy to navigate pathways. In the United States, Generations United advises policy makers to use an inclusive framework when crafting legislation. Recently the group issued four principles for policy makers to consider when reviewing policy:

- Make lifetime well-being for all the highest priority.
- Consider the impact of every action on each generation.
- Unite rather than divide the generations for the greatest social and financial impact.
- Recognize and support every generation's ability to contribute to the well-being of their families and communities (Generations United, 2011).

Policies that are intrinsically intergenerational and supportive of family cohesion include but aren't limited to child care and support, education, paid family leave, pensions and social protection, and housing. This section will review various policies and programmes supporting intergenerational relations and solidarity within families and communities in different regions and countries.

Childcare Support and Caregiving

The so called grandparent advantage describes how grandparents were able to care for and educate the young, deepen the cultural transmission of knowledge back into its young (Hawkes, 2004). This recycling of human understanding, experience, and culture from elders back to children, generation after generation, was what established a culture of caring across generations, gave us human capital and our ability to innovate and bring into existence the laws and institutions that undergird modern economies (Generations United, 2010). Tax benefits and policies supporting intergenerational care, such as allowances for grandparents to care for their grandchildren, have the potential to contribute to the strengthening of this process.

In the United States, grandparents play an increasingly important role in raising their grandchildren and provide the largest percentage of child care for young children. More than 6.7 million children live in families headed by grandparents or other relatives, and 2.5 million grandparents report that they are responsible for their grandchildren living with them (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009). The reasons for the increase are as varied as the families themselves but include parental substance abuse, military deployment, death of a parent and poverty. Grandparents and other relatives raising children, also known as grandfamilies, play an invaluable role helping to raise stronger children the second or even third time around while saving

tax payers more than 6.5 billion dollars a year by keeping children out of the government funded foster care system (Generations United, 2011).

While many public policies focus on single age groups, there are exceptions including, in the United States, the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP). Signed into law as part of the Older American's Act in 2001, the NFCSP was designed to provide funding for ageing services to ensure support for families caring for older relatives. Advocates successfully expanded the scope of the programme through the inclusion of grandparents and other older relatives caring for related children. By including older adults as caregivers, the law acknowledges the increasingly important role these family members are playing in supporting the rearing of children.

Both the National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP) and the Lifespan Respite Act were voted into law with the intent of supporting caregiving across the lifespan. Originally designed to provide supportive services to adult children caring for ageing parents, policy makers broadened the NFCSP to honor the fact that while older adults may be the receivers of care, they are also often the givers of care. Therefore up to 10 per cent of the funds can be used to support grandparents and other older relatives who are the primary caregivers of children living under their roof. The Lifespan Respite Act provides funding to state governments to implement respite programmes for caregivers of people of any age. More recently, the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 includes several provisions to support grandfamilies and assist grandparents in more easily caring for the children they take in to raise.

In Europe as in other parts of the world, families have long been responsible for the care of children, grandchildren, disabled, dependent and/or elderly relatives. However, this was very often at the expense of gender equality as women were expected to bear the sole responsibility for caring for their relatives, a contribution which is still undervalued and unrecognized. The objectives of equality between women and men and increased female labour market participation together with changes in family structures and demographic challenges, mean that this vision needs to be challenged and responsibilities for dependent persons have to be better shared with the rest of the community through public funded schemes. Families can no longer be left alone with the duty to care for their dependent relatives and special attention needs to be paid to families who face additional challenges such as lone parents and large families who are at a higher risk of poverty.

Family policies are still unevenly developed across the European Union and are often limited to policies supporting parents with young children, when in fact they should encompass a much broader vision of families, and address the needs of families with dependent elderly and intergenerational issues as a whole. Leaving family carers to provide all the care for dependent elderly people undermines their social inclusion (poverty risk), health (physical and/or mental exhaustion) and gender equality (most family carers are still women). There is also a trend to 'outsource' care to migrant carers – primarily women, which is causing inequalities among women and families of lower socio-economic income.

In Europe, the situation is complex reflecting the diversity of different countries. In Southern Europe countries, the extended family with a strong traditional role for the grandparents is still the norm, while in Northern Europe there is a significant trend for grandparents to take on a more defined caring role either because of family breakdown or to enable the parents to be economically active. The rise of both parents working has led to a variety of state responses. In the UK, the development of a network of 3500 Children's Centres across England was to make sure that all children got the best possible start in life. An unforeseen consequence of this strong state intervention was to weaken the extended family and it is only in recent years that there has been a renewed focus on the role of grandparents and older kin.⁶²

However, the situation is not static and we are seeing a rapid change in families in both Eastern Europe and countries such as Spain and Portugal where incidences of family breakdown, social mobility and lower birth rates are all changing the nature of familial relationships and this has been accompanied by a growing interest in, and incidence of, intergenerational programmes. Spain in particular has been at the forefront of innovative developments in intergenerational programmes and this good practice has extended across to parts of South America.

In Australia, it has also been noted that social trends such as the increase in marital breakdowns and the rise of single parent families have resulted in the need for more grandparents to play a substantial role in grandchildren caring. Although the situation of grandparents raising grandchildren is not explicitly covered in the constitution, they may claim various benefits to support their role based on their living circumstances, such as access to, government pensions, child endowment, pharmaceutical, sickness and hospital benefits, medical and dental services and family allowances under Section 51 (xxii), (xxiii) and (xxiiiA) of the Constitution (Shepley and Dann, 2006). When a grandparent is granted foster parent status and given custody of the grandchildren, they will be provided support by the State. However, for those not under this status, the support tends to be inconsistent depending on legislations in each state. Western Australia, for example, has a predominantly government-funded programme delivered by not-for profit organizations called the "Grandcare" programme which offers grandparent support and programmes to better connect grandparents with grandchildren (Orb and Davey, 2005). Even when policy support is available, grandparents in need may not necessarily access these services and support.

In Asia, grandparents are often sought for in caring for the young as part of a family system based on mutual support. Grandparents can be day care carers, taking care of children when their parents are at work, or near-custodial grandparents, where grandchildren live with them during the week and only return to live with their parents on the weekends, in this case, parents become "week-end" parents only (e.g. Singapore (Teo et al., 2006) and Malaysia (Rahima, 2007)).

Skipped-generation households are not uncommon especially in rural areas of Asia (such as Thailand, China, Vietnam, Philippines, Indonesia) where better job prospects in the urban areas and even overseas have necessitated the able-bodied parents to leave behind their children in custodial care of the ageing grandparents for

⁶² www.grandparentsplus.org.uk

better earnings. Silverstein, Cong & Li (2006) found that as high as 20 per cent of elders may provide full custody of grandchildren in a rural area in China with high migration rate. The norm in migrant-worker parents have resulted in a large number of *liushou ertong* (or children left behind) in rural China in 2010. The estimated 58 million left-behind children have led to concerns about the psychological and educational problems they may face growing up without parental guidance (Stack, 2010). Since 2004, the Chinese Ministry of Education has begun efforts to improve educational facilities and care systems for these children⁶³. In Anhui province where incidence of children left behind is high, measures include training for grandparents to help them assist their grandchildren in school work⁶⁴. Despite expectations for grandparents to serve as primary carers in absent parent families, public policy support for custodial grandparents is absent in China and most of Asia.

In Singapore, where intergenerational support is actively promoted by the state, the advent of ageing society has prompted the Government to extend the intergenerational support beyond immediate generation. Besides tax relief for parents, taxpayers are now eligible to receive tax relief for their grandparents and great grandparents if they are supporting them financially. Moreover, the state passed the Maintenance of Parents Act in 1995 to ensure that children will provide financial support for their aged parents.

In recognition of grandparents' support in the family, Grandparent Caregiver Tax Relief is provided for working mothers whose child is being cared for by his or her grandparents. However, as the benefit is provided only to the middle generation, and only applies to working mothers of Singapore citizens' children aged 12 years and below, the extent of its policy support to grandparents is questioned (Teo et al., 2006).

In Africa, where HIV/AIDS has in some areas decimated the parenting generation, grandparents are the life line for many children. In Uganda, Action for Children began Grand Parent Support to strengthen the capacity of grandparents to provide care to children under the age of eight. At its core is a family preservation and empowerment programme (Oduaran, 2010).

The Circles of Care project was designed in South Africa in 1998 in direct response to concern about the growing number of orphans resulting from the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Focused on creating a community of support to vulnerable children, the project engaged family, local government and civil society organizations in helping to meet the basic needs of the young, threatened by disease and poverty.

In Latin America, differences in policy design have important implications in terms of the opportunities the programmes are able to create for women and children from low-income families and the prospects for mitigating—or reinforcing—existing gender

⁶³ CCTV.com 2/12/2011, accessed from <http://news.sohu.com/20111203/n327744952.shtml> Accessed 5 December 2011

⁶⁴ The New York Times. "The Children left behind: Children in rural China left in the care of relatives by their migrant-worker parents". April 8, 2009. Accessed at <http://schott.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/04/08/the-children-left-behind/> on 5 Dec. 2011.

and class inequalities. Across the region, continuing challenges include enhancing the reach, guaranteeing equity in access to quality services, ensuring their sustainability and improving working conditions and wages of childcare workers. State-sponsored childcare programmes such as those in Chile and Mexico have two principal objectives: to promote child development and to enable female participation in the workforce. Though both countries have responded with an overall expansion of services, their approaches vary considerably. Mexico's Federal Daycare Programme for Working Mothers essentially subsidizes community- and home-based daycare to facilitate the employment of low-income mothers. The programme targets poor women rather than children and does not pursue explicit educational aims. Meanwhile, female employment occupies a secondary place in the Chilean government's programme objectives, although it has been encouraged and the expansion of childcare has been perceived as crucial to achieve it. It has primarily been a strategy to invest in the capabilities and equalize the opportunities for children from low-income families (Razavi and Staab, 2011). In Uruguay the government has developed plans for an integrated national care system which includes plans for expanding childcare and preschool services, enhancing family allowances and introducing parental leaves.

Paid family leave, tax credits & benefits, public child care supports

Family care leave in Europe is widely available to working parents through maternity and paternity leave and to some extent through work-family balance work arrangements. Child-care facilities are widely available in Western Europe, with specific targets established for increasing their numbers and quality. Focus, however is on assisting parents with young children, without taking into account the role of grandparents in care provision.

The United States is one of five countries that does not guarantee pay to new mothers. Employers are not required to provide some form of paid sick leave. However, companies that employ 50 or more workers are required to provide up to 12 weeks unpaid leave through the Family and Medical Leave Act which was enacted in 1993 (National Partnership for Women and Families, 2002). Some employers also provide care through short term disability insurance when having a baby is considered a qualifying condition. Only two U.S. states, California and New Jersey, have public paid leave insurance programmes.⁶⁵ This is slowly changing. The U.S. Census Bureau found that 51 per cent of working women who had their first child between 2006 and 2008 received paid leave, which can include sick days and vacation time, compared with 42 per cent between 1996 and 2000. Those totals are up from just 37 per cent between 1981 and 1985.⁶⁶

The Child and Dependent Care Credit is available to families who work or are looking for work and have a dependent child 12 years of age or younger. They may qualify for up to 35 per cent or \$3000 for one child and \$6000 for two or more children.⁶⁷ In addition, the Child Tax Credit may be claimed for each qualifying child.

⁶⁵ Inc 16/2/2007 U.S. Policies on Maternity Leave "Among the Worst" accessed at <http://www.inc.com/news/articles/200702/family.html> on 16/12/11

⁶⁶ CNN Money 10/11/11 accessed at http://money.cnn.com/2011/11/10/news/economy/maternity_leave_study/index.htm on 16/12/11

⁶⁷ Internal Revenue Service Ten Things to Know About the Child and Dependent Care Credit accessed at <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=106189,00.html> on 16/12/11

This is a nonrefundable credit of up to \$1000 per child.⁶⁸ Grandparents raising grandchildren may qualify for these tax credits as well as the Earned Income Tax Credit (Children's Defense Fund, 2004).

In Canada, the federal government takes responsibility for maternity benefits for working mothers and parents. Canada's Employment Insurance gives paid maternity leave for 15 weeks. To qualify, a woman is required to have worked for 600 hours in the last 52 weeks or since her last claim and she must sign a statement declaring the expected due or actual date of birth. If the baby is hospitalized, the 17 week limit can be extended for every week the child is in the hospital up to 52 weeks. The country also provides parental benefits which are payable either to biological or adoptive parents while they are caring for a new-born or an adopted child, up to a maximum of 35 weeks.⁶⁹

Family care leave is still relatively new in Asia. In Singapore, parent-care leave has just been introduced in the public sector to take effect from 2012, where civil servants are entitled to take a maximum of two days of parent-care leave a year. In Japan, the revised child care and family care leave law in 1999 (under the New Angel Plan) enhances family support in various ways, such as to encourage more fathers to take childcare leave, to assist their wives in childcare and housework. In terms of supporting intergenerational relations in the family, the revised plan allows workers to take short-term family care leave to care for their family members, including taking them to hospitals or providing caregiving for up to 5 days a year, or 10 days /year if there are two or more requiring care.

This new short term family care leave system is established to respond to the difficulties facing workers in an ageing society. From 2002 to 2006, about 500,000 workers are found to have left or change their jobs due to the need to provide family care, while others had to take paid or unpaid leave to take day-to-day care of family members needing care (MHLW, 2011). The definition of family includes a spouse (including a partner in a common-law marriage; the same applies hereinafter), parents, children, parents of a spouse; grandparents, siblings and grandchildren who are the worker's dependents and living in the same household.

A recent study (Heymann and Earle, 2009) reported that Latin America is performing well, compared to the rest of the world in providing paid leave for new mothers and paid sick leave, however, it is doing less well in funding parental leave for new fathers and paid leave for providers of care. No Latin American countries provide more than two weeks paid leave for new fathers and only two countries in Latin America, El Salvador and Nicaragua, provide paid leave for adult caring responsibilities.

Countries in Latin America are making strides in providing early care and education which is now showing up in public policies and develop frameworks. However there is still unequal access to programmes and services based on socio-economic status, place of residence, and cultural identity, and under development of policies and strategies for children with special educational needs, those with HIV/AIDS, migrant

⁶⁸ Internal Revenue Service Child Tax Credit accessed at <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p3961sp.pdf> on 16/12/11

⁶⁹ Canada Immigrant Jobs Issues accessed at <http://www.canadaimmigrants.com/maternity.asp> on 16/12/11

children and children in emergency situations. In addition the programmes and qualifications of staff are often of poor quality (UNESCO, 2010).

Pensions, Financial Transfers and their Implications for all Generations

Pensions for older adults not only provide income for their intended beneficiaries but also increase the likelihood of transfers from the older generation to the next. For instance in the United States, 22 per cent of grandparent-headed households live in poverty. Without social security benefits the poverty rate would be closer to 60 per cent. It is estimated that more than 6.5 million children in the United States receive all or part of their family income from social security benefits targeted at their grandparents (Generations United, 2010).

Moreover, pensions also provide a base of support for older adults enabling them to contribute to the next generation to a greater degree. In the United States, baby boomers report that they want to volunteer and have a purpose in retirement. The majority hope to invest this time working with children and youth. This extra investment in younger generations results in a dividend for all members of the family. In addition, pension plans provide relief for middle generations allowing parents to focus their financial resources on their children rather than diverting them to meet the basic needs of their parents.

While some regions rely on social insurance programmes, others are enacting punitive legislation requiring children to care for their ageing parents and grandparents. In Singapore, the maintenance of Parents Act has been in effect since 1995, where elderly parents may approach a legal tribunal if their children fail to support them financially. The Act was amended in 2010 to focus more on conciliation-first approach. While there are debates on the effectiveness of such an Act and fear of quantifying financial care of elderly parents, the state emphasizes that the legal act is meant to deter children who can afford to care for their parents to shrink from their responsibilities. Similarly, in 2007, India enacted the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act which punishes people found guilty of not caring for older family members. The punishment calls for imprisonment lasting up to three months or a fine of up to 5,000R or both.

In China, the filial responsibility law serves similar purposes of protecting the rights and benefits of older persons by stipulating that family members have the responsibility and duty to take care of their elderly parents. However, as only general principles are provided, it is not considered effective in protecting the elderly parents' rights (Ting and Woo, 2009). More recently in 2011, a new law has been passed in China legislating children to be responsible for their parents' wellbeing by ordering children to make regular visits to their parents. This reflects the growing concerns that the elderly parents may be neglected as a result of rapid social and economic changes in China. Likewise, in Taiwan, Province of China, efforts to ensure support of elderly parents are shown through proposed legislation change to prohibit children from inheriting their parents' property if the children do not provide support for their parents or if they abandon their parents before their parents' death. (Ting and Elder, 2009).

Non-contributory social pensions are gradually being introduced in sub-Saharan Africa. In the early 1990s the benefits and coverage of the South African social pension programme were expanded for the black population. In 1993 the benefits were about twice the median per capita income in rural areas. More than a quarter of black South African children under age five live with a pension recipient. Estimates suggest that the cash transfers received by women had a large impact on the anthropometric status (weight for height and height for age) of girls but little effect on that of boys. No similar effect is found for pensions received by men. It is then suggested that the efficiency of public transfer programmes may depend on the gender of the recipient (Dufol, 2003).

Pensions have also been linked to better nutrition of children within families. In addition, girls are significantly more likely to be enrolled in school if they are living with a pensioner, an effect that is driven entirely by living with a female pensioner. The researchers' findings are consistent with a model in which pensioners have a greater say in household functioning once they begin to receive their pensions. They concluded that a programme targeted toward the elderly plays a significant role in children's health and development. (Case & Menendez, 2007)

Conditional Cash Transfer programmes provide cash payments to poor households that meet certain behavioral requirements, generally related to children's health care and education. Conditional Cash Transfer Programmes are a fast growing part of the safety net with more than 30 countries having some form of the programme (World Bank, 2009). They began in middle income countries in Latin America where they benefit 20 per cent of families with children and youth at a high poverty rate. The World Bank has suggested these programmes are efficient short term tools for reducing poverty measured by income and support the long term development of human capital by maintaining children in school which disrupts the poverty in the region (Goldani, 2011).

PROGRESA (Programa de Educación, Salud y Alimentación) is one of the major programmes of the Mexican government aimed at developing the human capital of poor households. Targeting its benefits directly to the population in extreme poverty in rural areas, PROGRESA aims to alleviate current and future poverty levels through cash transfers to mothers in households. An evaluation of the programme indicates that antipoverty strategies that combine education, health, and nutrition interventions in one package can be quite successful in improving the capacity of families to pull themselves out of poverty that often ensnares generations. The study found that PROGRESA students are entering school at earlier ages, experiencing less grade repetition, and better grade progression. PROGRESA students have lower drop-out rates and higher school re-entry rates among those who had dropped out. The programme is especially effective in reducing drop-out rates during the transition from primary to secondary school (IFPRI, 2001). When effectively targeting the interventions to such disadvantaged groups as the daughters of poor mothers who start having children at an early age, there appears to be a strong linkage between secondary school enrollment and delaying childbearing. The transfers that benefit the daughters of early childbearers appear to be an exceptionally effective

way to reduce the intergenerational transmission of poverty through early childbearing (Merrick and Greene, 2007).

Financial and in-kind Support

Transfers between generations take many forms. Tangible transfers include financial resources, housing, child care, and pension schemes. Intangible transfers include those relating to history, art, language and practical skills all passed down between generations.

Some supports are mandated by law such as custody and child support. Custody laws still focus on the parents and more on women though fathers are included through joint custody on a more frequent basis. In the United States, family law favours biological parents over grandparents or other relatives even in cases where the parent has demonstrated their lack of capacity to parent. Even after years of living with a grandparent, a parent can reclaim a child. Several grassroots grandparent groups have emerged as a result of this. In some countries, like Japan, the law is inadequate in this area and one party could abduct the child and refuse visitation rights to other family members.

Singapore increased its tax relief recently to strengthen filial support. 'Parent/handicapped parent relief' is an aid to promote filial piety and provide recognition to individuals supporting their parents, including parents with disabilities, in Singapore and it can be claimed if one has provided support to one's own or spouse's parents, grandparents and great grandparents. However, there are various conditions that must be met, including the dependent's age, type of disability and income restrictions.

In Australia, family and child tax benefits and other programmes have resulted in the government spending approximately 2.1 billion dollars on child care benefits to assist families with the cost of child care in the financial year ending 30 June 2011.

In Hong Kong, the Financial Secretary proposed to raise the allowance for maintaining dependent parents/grandparents by 20 per cent. This would increase the allowance for maintaining dependent parents/grandparents aged 60 or above from the present \$30,000 to \$36,000, while the additional allowance for taxpayers residing with these parents/grandparents throughout the year will also be increased from \$30,000 to \$36,000. The allowance for maintaining dependent parents/grandparents aged 55 to 59 will be increased from the current \$15,000 to \$18,000. The same increase applies to the additional allowance for taxpayers residing with these parents/grandparents throughout the year. In addition, the Financial Secretary also proposed to raise both the child allowance and the additional one-off child allowance in the year of birth by 20 per cent from \$50,000 to \$60,000 respectively for each child. It is estimated that this measure will benefit about 300 000 taxpayers, costing the government \$650 million a year.

Supports are also a matter of choice. In the United States a survey by the MetLife Mature Market Institute found that two thirds of grandparents were providing an estimated \$370 billion in financial support to grandchildren over a five year period. This averaged out to \$8661 per grandparent household. This did not take into

consideration financial support they may have been providing their adult children as well.

Education

Access to quality education across the life-span results in productive citizens and stronger global competition. Educational institutions, often thought of as the domain of the young, can establish programmes that engage older adults as volunteers and are open to older, lifelong learners. The use of educational facilities by multiple generations will for the most part mean greater use of a community's physical assets and prepare each generation to contribute or continue contributing to their families and society.

Education expenditures vary by country and region. A 2003 Report on Worldwide Education and Library Spending found that in 2001, 29 countries spent approximately \$1.1 trillion dollars on education or roughly 4.1 per cent of their collective gross domestic product. The United States spent the most on education in 2001 at roughly \$500 billion, followed by Japan, Germany and France at \$139 billion, \$89 billion and \$82 billion respectively. While the United States spent the most in absolute dollars, it ranked tenth in education spending as a percent of GDP at 4.8 per cent. Saudi Arabia ranked first investing 9.5 percent of GDP in education. The top five include Norway, Malaysia, France and South Africa. All five countries spent in excess of 5 per cent of GDP on education. (OCLC, 2003).

While some try to compare expenditures on education with expenditures on older persons, it is generally counter-productive and inconclusive. Comparisons on expenditure on children and older people are difficult to make in an absolute fashion because many older people rather than being consumers are actually net contributors to their families, wider society and the economy. In the United Kingdom, a recent report by the WRVS calculated that the net contribution of people over 65 in the country was 40 billion pounds.⁷⁰ In the United States, education spending is largely state based whereas programmes supporting elders are federally funded.

Community Education and Support Programmes Encouraging Intergenerational Solidarity

Public policies in education play an important role in encouraging intergenerational relations. Educational curricula focusing on interdependence between generations are especially important to engage young people in support of older persons. Recent education policy in the United States, "The Race to the Top", has been designed to increase not only the overall educational outcomes but encourage the engagement of older adults in helping the country obtain its educational goals. School districts were challenged to address how they would engage family members and other older adults in their effort to meet educational goals in their written plans. These grants were only recently awarded so the outcomes are yet to be measured.

One well-evaluated programme in the United States is Experience Corps a national programme which engages people over 55 in improving early reading and literacy

⁷⁰ www.goldagepensioners.com/uploads/pdf/main-report.pdf

skills. Experience Corps has recruited over 2,000 members to tutor and mentor elementary school students, help teachers in the classroom, and lead after-school enrichment activities. Research conducted by Washington University in St. Louis and Johns Hopkins University, shows that Experience Corps boosts student academic performance, helps schools and youth-serving organizations become more successful, and enhances the well-being of older adults in the process. Recently, Experience Corps merged into AARP, the country's largest membership organization for people over the age of 50, and is now known as AARP's Experience Corps. The intent is to aggressively grow the programme, refining the model to engage the interests and abilities of an increased number of older adults in order to serve thousands of additional children.

Service learning is another vehicle to enhance learning. These programmes provide a forum for experiential learning while benefitting the community through service. Many schools in the United States require students to perform volunteer service in order to graduate. Service learning takes that requirement and enhances it with an educational component. Some students participate in intergenerational service learning working with older adults and at the same time studying ageing. Research has shown that service-learning programmes can have positive impacts on youth in three general areas: academic engagement and achievement; civic attitudes and behaviors; and social and personal skills (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2007).

Community celebrations also support intergenerational relations. In the United States these include National Grandparent's Day which is celebrated in September each year and Intergeneration Day and Activities week celebrated in October.

In the European Union, 2012 has been designated as the European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity with the overall aim of achieving a Europe friendly to all ages by 2020⁷¹. This builds on the recommendations of the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing and an aspiration, driven by concern over demographic change, to enable people to age as actively and well as possible. Networks such as EAGLE⁷² and EMIL, the European Map of Intergenerational Learning⁷³ have extensive libraries of case studies and background information that reflect the increasing amount of pan-national exchange taking place. The EU has also funded a number of intergenerational learning programmes through its Life Long Learning programmes (MATES, 2008).

Many of these programmes create connection between people of different ages to recreate the supports they might have traditionally got from within the family. For example, Manchester Adult Education Service have run a very successful programme where older learners have mentored young mothers in parenting skills and provided the emotional support their family was unable or not prepared to provide.⁷⁴ This project was part of a major Government funded initiative in England

⁷¹ ec.europa.eu/social/ey2012.jsp?langId=en

⁷² www.eagle-project.eu

⁷³ www.emil-network.eu

⁷⁴ www.manchester.gov.uk/download/4393/generations_together_final_report_intergen_buddy_exchange

called Generations Together that aspired to strategically embed intergenerational work in twelve Local Authorities across the country.⁷⁵

Government support in the form of funding and programme support are important to strengthen intergenerational relationships. In Asia, despite the cultural norm of respect for elders and filial piety, various societies have witnessed a deterioration of these traditional values with rapid social changes, thus recognizing the need for programmes and activities to promote intergenerational relationships and support. To commemorate the contribution of grandparents and promote respect of the elders, some societies have stipulated an annual Grandparents Day where various activities focusing on fostering respect of the elders, filial piety and intergenerational connections are organized (since 2003 in Singapore and since 2010 in Taiwan, Province of China). In Singapore, the state gives out Grandparent of the Year Award to recognize outstanding grandparents who have contributed to the family and community. In Taiwan, Province of China, a new idea in the 2011 Grandparent's Day is the introduction of "grandparents cookies" that come in three colours to represent three generations (Radio Taiwan International, 5 August 2011).

It is most common to promote support of intergenerational relationships through educational efforts, conceptualized as intergenerational lifelong learning activities. In Taiwan, Province of China, the Family Education Division of Ministry of Education has, since 2009, organized competitions for creative ideas to promote intergenerational lifelong learning in pre-schools, primary and secondary schools. These competitions have resulted in various interesting projects focusing on promoting intergenerational interactions within the family.

In Singapore, to provide a platform for both generations, the Council for Third Age has piloted two intergenerational learning programmes in 2011, where seniors attended classes with teenage students and were mentored by the younger generation in information technology skills or health and nutrition.⁷⁶

In Japan, educational involvement of older generations with the younger generations is found in various schools which invite elderly residents in the community to teach children about traditional cultures, history, art and craft, or join with them in various school activities, such as having lunches together and joining in school sports days. With persistent low birth rates in Japan, schools there are experiencing lower enrolment, and some of them have creatively invited older persons in the community into the vacant classrooms converted for senior activities.

As a developed Asian society, Japan has faced the problem of generational segregation earlier than other Asian societies with nuclearization of families. As a result, various intergenerational initiatives have flourished to strengthen intergenerational connections in the community. For example, initiative such as the "multigenerational living" concept have been promoted at some welfare institutions since the 1980s, resulting in age-integrated facilities combining child-care services

⁷⁵ www.centreforip.org.uk/england/generations-together

⁷⁶ <http://www.c3a.org.sg/story/lifelong-learning-programme-build-intergenerational-bonds-between-young-and-old.html>). Accessed 3 December 2011.

with senior-care services, reminiscing the traditional three-generational setting in the past.

Older persons play an important role in the provision of intergenerational support in Japan, for example the Family Support Centers initiated by the Ministry of Welfare and Labour providing support for working mothers in childrearing are now receiving much support from middle-age and older adults who offer to provide care for children of working mothers (Higuchi, 2006).

Such initiatives can be found in many countries as well. For instance Australia has intergenerational learning programmes to introduce lifespan education in primary school and university teacher education programmes (Seedsman and Feldman, 2008).

Over the past 50 years, the concept of intentionally bringing generations together to serve as resources to each other and to their communities has become increasingly popular as a vehicle for addressing critical societal needs and strengthening cross-age relationships. Beginning with the Foster Grandparent and RSVP programmes in the United States in the 1960's, early intergenerational programmes focused primarily on dispelling age-related stereotypes, fostering cross-age understanding, reducing social isolation, and providing financial support for low-income elders (Kaplan, Henkin & Kusano, 2002).

Among entrepreneurs, municipalities and some private funders, there has been an increased interest in intergenerational shared sites or centers, resulting in the creation of innovative models across the country including, but not limited to, adult/child care centers, senior centers within schools, and Head Start programmes in nursing homes. By definition, these programmes share space and include two or more generations that take part in planned activities and unplanned interaction. Some facilities share administration, staff, equipment, meals and programmes, all of which usually result in cost savings and positive outcomes for participants, greater family satisfaction and higher staff retention.

Intergenerational practices also use resources judiciously and can encourage a thriving economy. They represent "economies of scope" wherein a single intervention or programme helps or positively affects multiple issues and populations. For example, a shared child and adult day care site relieves stress on a middle generation of caregivers by providing quality care in one location, eliminating the time needed for multiple trips to various care facilities supporting greater productivity in the workforce. An intergenerational shared site in South Dakota reports an 80 per cent staff retention rate and attributes their success to staff members using the on-site child and elder care programmes.

A growing body of research underpins the belief that intergenerational programmes contribute to healthy development of children, youth, older adults and families. In the United States, experts look to positive youth development principles and guidelines to suggest important elements needed to improve outcomes for children and youth - such as caring adults, safe places, healthy starts, education for marketable skills and opportunities to give back (Generations United, 2010). Increasingly, older adults are becoming recognized as resources ready to help children and youth gain the

knowledge and skills they need to succeed. Their efforts have shown the following positive impacts:

- Children in intergenerational programmes had higher personal/social developmental scores (by 11 months) than children in non-intergenerational programmes (Rosebrook, 2006).
- Youth involved in intergenerational mentoring relationships showed increases in school attendance, positive changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours regarding substance use, as well as improvement in related life skills (LoSciuto, L., and others, 1996).
- Over a single school year, students with older adult tutors made over 60 per cent more progress in learning two critical reading skills – sounding out new words and reading comprehension – than similar students without the tutors (Morrow-Howell, N., and others, 2009).

The benefits for older adults are ripe as well. In their book, *Successful Aging*, John W. Rowe, M.D. and Robert L Kahn, Ph.D., stated that people with strong social connections and a sense of purpose live longer and are better able to maintain good mental and physical health (Rowe, J.W., and Kahn, R.L., 1998). As people age and face a new stage of life, many are seeking opportunities to learn new things and give back to their communities. Rather than move to the adult only communities, most say they want to continue to live in the age-integrated towns in which they have worked, raised families and played (Butts, 2003). Intergenerational programmes offer older adults a venue to do what many believe their role has traditionally been - to help families grow the next generation. This investment by older adults in children and youth pays dividends forward and backward. Research shows:

- Older adults who regularly volunteer with children burned 20 per cent more calories per week, experienced fewer falls, were less reliant on canes and performed better on memory tests than their peers (Fried, Linda P., and others, 2004).
- Older adults with dementia or other cognitive impairments experience more positive affect during interactions with children than they did during non-intergenerational activities (Jarrott, S.E. and Bruno, K., 2003).
- Older people in shared sites who previously would not participate in activities came out of their rooms when children arrived and kept better track of time in order to know when the children would be arriving. Older participants also had more energy and ate better when they shared their meals with children (Lewis, L., 2002).

Leeds City Council in the UK launched "Bringing Generations Together: Leeds' Intergenerational Approach" and released a document by the same name.⁷⁷ Their stated hope is that the document will raise the profile of the effectiveness of intergenerational approaches, providing examples that identify how intergenerational practice can meet key existing objectives, targets and priorities for both local and

⁷⁷ www.leedsinitiative.org/generations/

national, and highlight the benefits of intergenerational work across Leeds. Both the Scottish and Welsh Governments have funded intergenerational work as a core part of their ageing policy. In 2008 the Welsh Assembly Government launched their national intergenerational strategy⁷⁸ which promotes an integrated approach to working across all the ages and includes recognition of the importance of community based schools and family learning across all the generations.

Housing Laws that Promote Intergenerational Relations

Housing policy can encourage or discourage intergenerational relations within families. In the United States for example, senior-only housing age restrictions, whether in federal law or local incorporation documents, prohibit intergenerational interactions. In public housing code, some federal dollars are restricted to building and maintaining housing for people over the age of 60 or 65. Younger generations are also banned from sharing senior housing in many private senior only retirement communities. Often they are limited to short visits lasting up to two weeks (Freedman, 1999).

Other laws are designed specifically to support intergenerational families. In the United States, the American Dream Downpayment Act included provisions supporting the development of housing for grandparents raising grandchildren. Money was appropriated for a competitive bid to build grandparent housing. In 2009, two grantees received funding to build this specialized housing. Both developments are now open and recently began accepting families. Some communities have also allowed their residents to build backyard cottages, known as accessory dwelling units, for elderly family members or younger members returning home.

In Canada, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation actively encourages multigenerational living through its Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP). It offers financial assistance for homeowners to create living spaces for seniors meeting income and disability criteria. Construction loans do not have to be repaid as long as the homeowner continues to adhere to RRAP programme criteria. In Singapore, with more than 80 per cent of the population living in public housing, policies to support intergenerational interaction and mutual help is most effectively implemented through public housing policies. For example, the Multi-Generation Living Scheme encourages intergenerational co-residence by giving priority allocation for public housing to extended-families. Such priority schemes are applicable also for generations living near each other. Housing Grant is also available to married first-time applicants if they buy a resale flat from the open market near their parents' house, defined as within the same town or within a distance of 2 kilometers.

Policies encouraging generations to live together or in close proximity to each other appear to be effective. A survey from the Housing Development Board (HDB) in Singapore has shown that more HDB residents age 55 and above have been living with their married children in 2008 as compared to 2003 (MCYS, 2009).

⁷⁸ wales.gov.uk/topics/olderpeople/publications/intergenerational/?skip=1&lang=en

Policies Supporting Intergenerational Relations in the Workplace

Overall policies supporting intergenerational relationships in the workplace are still relatively underdeveloped. They mainly focus on mentoring programmes and job sharing to promote productivity, reduce generational tension and enhance work satisfaction.

In Europe, in recent years the main focus has been driven by people's concerns for the well-being of young people who have find it increasingly difficult to enter the labour market. For example, in France retired older workers have been undertaking coaching to support graduates. In Germany, there are a number of examples of workshops being created where older craftsman can teach young people engineering and other skills to increase their employability. In addition, there is now a German pilot programme where older workers approaching retirement work alongside a young person to train them to take their job when they leave.

In 2009, the All Party Parliamentary Group on Intergenerational Relationships at the UK Parliament conducted a yearlong enquiry⁷⁹ into the intergenerational workplace and made a series of recommendations on how it could be developed and strengthened. One of the key issues is to understand the different values and life practices of age cohorts' reflection of their own experience of society as they grew up. The exchange of technological skills and interpersonal skills between the generations also created a stronger, more cohesive and effective workforce. Chartered Institute for Personnel Development produced the report "GenUp – How the Four Generations Work" which explored this idea from a Human Resources perspective that highlighted that the sharing of the different skill sets of the generations had potential for improved productivity and greater depth of skills. The multigenerational workplace is also important in producing an age friendly environment which enables people to stay productive and in the workplace longer, and this approach has become increasingly prevalent in Northern European Countries.

In the United States, the multigenerational workforce has garnered the attention of employers, the media and entrepreneurs seeking to fill a need working with companies as they adjust to three or more generations in the workforce. The MetLife Mature Market Institute took a unique approach and created a multigenerational workplace toolkit that includes a workbook designed to facilitate developing an intergenerational workforce versus a workforce of various generations working separately. The premise is each generation has skills and talents that can complement one another and leverage an engage workforce leading to higher productivity and a competitive advantage (MetLife Mature Market Institute, 2009).

In Singapore, multigenerational workplace is a new area of attention due to the fact that there is an extension of employment for reemployment at 62 that will come into force in 2012, resulting in a higher number of older workers. Consequently, the Tripartite Alliance of Faire Employment Practices produced a report on "Harnessing the potential of Singapore's multigenerational workforce" to encourage employers to

⁷⁹ www.centreforip.org.uk/resources/publications?r=0&q=all+party

better cope with the multigenerational workforce for productivity and work harmony (TAEFP, 2010).

Throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, governments cite low productivity and poor-quality jobs as the key workplace challenges. They host larger informal workforces that are not connected to existing services or systems. They also have a tendency to exclude youth, older workers and women. A few programmes have been deemed helpful including those that work with developing young people's basic skills instead of focusing on vocational training. For example, Chile Joven is designed to provide poor, unemployed and out of school youths, between 16 and 30 years of age, with intensive training to develop their technical and social or life skills to ensure their labour placement. An evaluation of the programme found that graduation from the course increased a young person's likelihood of finding a higher quality job in the formal rather than informal workforce and increased their social integration and earnings.⁸⁰

While the World Bank found the impact of active labour market programmes to be minimal, they suggested that these programmes be one tool included in a developing countries' response to the economic and social problems associated with unemployment and poverty in the labour force. The few successful strategies focusing on retraining workers following a mass layoff typically include a comprehensive package of employment services to accompany the retraining. However, these programmes are generally expensive. It was found that for youth training, the programmes were rarely successful and it would be better to invest earlier in the education system to reduce drop-out rates and other schooling problems instead. Evaluations in Latin America did find positive impacts for programmes that integrate training with remedial education, job search assistance, and social services. (Betcherman, G., Olivas, K., and Dar, A. 2004)

Policy Implications

As indicated by numerous examples described above, the idea of using government policy to support intergenerational interdependence is not new. In fact, there are many examples from which to garner successful strategies. To begin with, policy makers need to agree that the family, nuclear and extended with all its generations, is the foundation of a society. This demonstrates the need to take into consideration each generation and its ability to contribute and its need for support at all stages of the life course, rather than developing single-age policies that lead to fragmentation and disenfranchisement. For example, when a child's parents are unable to care for the child whether due to death, migration, poverty or other circumstances, every effort should be made to facilitate placing the child with a grandparent or other relative. At the same time, providing a safety net to support the family may be needed as they take in a new member. Access to child care and adequate housing and/or a financial subsidy may be essential to facilitate such a transition as well.

Countries that have appointed high level government officials to oversee intergenerational relations and families appear to be better prepared and more advanced in their planning. Singapore's Ministry of Community Development, Youth

⁸⁰ <http://www.youth-employment-inventory.org/inventory/view/75/> accessed on 16/12/11

and Sports has helped guide the development of intergenerational bonding programmes, annual grandparent celebrations, and has consistently promoted intergenerational solidarity. With the support of the government, in 2010, the Council of Third Age and National University of Singapore hosted the Fourth International Conference of the International Consortium for Intergenerational Programmes, bringing a comprehensive scope to issues around intergenerational solidarity by focusing not only on the community and family, but also the workplace. The conference brought experts from around the world to share cutting edge practices with representatives of civil society organizations, academia and business; it ignited ideas towards more innovative ways in Singapore to foster intergenerational learning, exchanges and ways towards a harmonious intergenerational workforce.

Caregiving issues are receiving increased attention as society ages; more and more women enter labour force; family structures change and parents in developing countries are lost to conflict and disease such as HIV/AIDS. Programmes that provide caregiver relief have proven effective whether in the form of short term respite or support groups. Flexible workplace policies reduce the stress on working age parents and adult children as they seek to balance work and family responsibilities. Dependent care tax deductions make it more likely for families to afford outside care on a full or part time basis.

Pension and social security schemes are a part of sound social policy that supports the family. First, elders receive income, usually from a system they have contributed to, and do not need to rely on their adult children for financial support so parents can contribute more to their children rather than their parents. Second, when families are dependent on one another such as in a multigenerational household or grandfamily (grandparents and other relatives raising children) the resources are combined and support the entire family. Moreover, grandparents who receive financial assistance are highly likely to invest that money in the children in their care leading to healthier, better educated children. These arrangements are generally far more cost effective while studies have shown the children in relatives' care have better outcomes than children raised in institutional settings.

New policies, currently under implementation in several countries that require a financial maintenance of parents or limit the inheritance adult children can receive if they are unable or unwilling to support their parents raise concerns. It should be kept in mind that the volatile global economy has put stress on families who may be struggling to meet their day to day needs leaving them with few resources to pass on to older relatives. Additionally these laws generally require parents to file a complaint or claim against their children. Many older parents are unwilling to do this fearing that family relations may be further strained.

In Europe, there has been a growth of policy that encourages mentoring, support and exchange between non-familial connected elders and young parents to make up for a deficit in their own family structures. Such interventions are highly effective leading to strong and resilient families.

Conclusions

Families are the foundation of our communities and our global society. Governments, civil societies and other stakeholders need to build and support stronger connections across generations in order to improve the well-being and quality of life of all generations. Three fundamental notions about intergenerational relations have been identified and offer useful principles as each sector of civil society examines the role it can play in supporting families. Firstly, intergenerational solidarity and exchange continue to be the primary foundation for personal and social security as well as human bonding. Secondly, social networks of care develop when policies and programmes reinforce the interconnectivity of the generations. Thirdly, societies need to facilitate human contact and interactions in order to expand intergenerational solidarity (Cruz-Saco & Zelenev, 2010). Supporting the relationships between and among generations in families and societies becomes even more important as global populations and economies shift.

Most families wish to take on their responsibilities, but they cannot fulfill that role alone. They need support through integrated, holistic and sustainable family policies based on the three main elements that all families need - resources, time, and services. Family policies ought to support all generations: children, youth, parents and older persons, taking due account of the gender dimension and specific role that women play within families. They should also specifically support families of persons with disabilities.

Public authorities at all levels should design and implement family-friendly policies and programmes that recognize the changing nature and diversity of family structures and forms, and geographical distances that prevent families from providing care and support to their dependent relatives. Better measures enabling reconciliation of work life and family life are crucial, in an integrated approach combining accessible, affordable, high quality child and elder care services and fully-paid and non-transferable family care leave.

Policymakers and other leaders can better support families by viewing policies and decisions through an intergenerational interdependency lens that promotes and enhances intergenerational relations. The following specific recommendations are put forward for discussion and review.

Recommendations for Governments, Civil Society and other Stakeholders

1. Framework and Public Policy

- At a national level, ensure there is an entity, such as a Ministry, charged with the accountability for reviewing national policies to ensure that they provide adequate assistance to families and take into account the needs of all their members and ensure that people of all generations are viewed and engaged as resources within their families and communities.
- Review existing policies from an intergenerational perspective to ensure that they support family-based approaches and do not isolate individual members such as children or the growing population of older adults.

- Acknowledge the family as the foundation of society taking into consideration each generation and commit to using an all generations approach when developing family policy. This means addressing the needs and potential of all family members and not just parents and their children. The definition of family policy should be broadened to encompass ageing policy and integrate not only the needs but also the strengths of each generation. At the same time, ageing policy must be expanded to include family and family supports. One way of doing this could be to develop and use generational impact statements that use an intergenerational lens when considering new policies. In public policies, governments can look to existing impact analysis to develop criteria such as Bhutan's measurement of Gross National Happiness and the US Environmental Impact Statements.
- Consider developing Gross Generational Interdependence Product (GGIP) which would create a set of measures to monitor and evaluate intergenerational solidarity. The GGIP could provide a framework for releasing a regularly scheduled report on the state of intergenerational understanding and interdependence in a country or a region. An annual release of this report could be timed to coincide with a national family, intergenerational solidarity or bonding day.

2. Financial Supports

- Create or strengthen social protection and antipoverty programmes such as pensions, social security, conditional cash transfers, subsidized guardianships and dependent care credits. Such programmes have demonstrated their ability to alleviate financial stress on families and allowed them to invest in the health and development of other family members and education of their children.
- Encourage financial transfers between generations through positive incentives such as tax credits.
- Ensure there is an adequate supply of affordable housing designed for multigenerational households and grandparents and other relatives raising children.

3. Increase Awareness

- Use the United Nations International Year of the Family follow-up process to promote intergenerational solidarity in all regions of the world calling for the promotion of intergenerational dialogue and mutual understanding. The twentieth anniversary of the International Year of the Family offers an opportunity to educate people around the globe about the importance of family for the well-being of societies as well as the complex challenges families face today. Intergenerational dialogues properly planned and executed can increase understanding across age groups and result in commitments to strengthen those bonds.
- Create celebrations and festivals focused on the family and the importance of intergenerational relations following the examples of the 2012 European Year

of Active Ageing and Solidarity between the Generations, the European Day of Solidarity between the Generations and Grandparent's Day in Taiwan, Province of China as well as intergenerational bonding initiatives. International Days of Families as well as national observances of family days should focus on the importance of intergenerational solidarity within families and communities.

4. Community Centers & Programmes

- Actively encourage community centers to become hubs of opportunity for intergenerational programmes and interactions. These intergenerational shared sites and activities should be planned by age diverse community members and funded by the community blending funding sources traditionally targeted to serve only one age group.
- Provide cross training for staff that work with the community or provide services to children, youth or older adults to educate and enable them to develop quality intergenerational programmes that enhance intergenerational relations.
- Promote and encourage the engagement of extended family and community members in supporting families by providing pathways and support for volunteering and service learning opportunities for all ages but in particular those designed to capitalize on the demographic dividend created by a longer, healthier life span. Consider incentives such as discounts in course fees for families and extended families learning together.

5. Schools and Education

- Encourage schools and educational facilities to open their doors to older adults as tutors, mentors and students. Consider providing incentives to older adults who commit to contributing significant time to improve the school attendance and educational outcomes of children and youth.
- Require courses on understanding across the life course in school and university curricula so as to increase awareness of the need for generational understanding and bonding among generations.
- Enhance teacher's knowledge on connecting different generations by incorporating an intergenerational perspective in teacher's training and ensure that programmes to promote active citizenship include the opportunity to engage in intergenerational activities.

6. Caregiver Supports & Parenting

- It is essential to challenge assumptions that women should be primary caregivers and ensure that family leave policies apply equally to both Men and Women to encourage greater equality in support giving.
- Improve supports and services for caregivers by developing family caregiver support programmes, lifespan respite care, and financial support such as refundable tax credits, stipends, housing allowances and others. Encourage

employers to provide onsite child and elder care, information and referral services and employee assistance and counseling services.

- Initiate or improve family leave policies that offer informal caregivers reasonable time off rights and more generous paid-leave options. In countries that do not have universal health care, extend employer offered health care coverage to the children and elders dependent on family caregivers.
- Provide options for skill exchanges or time banks in which older adults could mentor young parents who may not have grandparents close by and in return they would receive assistance with chores or tasks enabling them to remain independent and in their own homes.
- Childcare centres should be encouraged to provide spaces for grandparents. This will require deconstruction of the formal/informal care dichotomy to provide opportunities for various flexible arrangements to be possible such as setting up child care/infant centers in the lower levels of studio apartment blocks built for older residents, allowing for mutual support of formal and informal care for the children.

7. Workplace

- Promote flexible work place policies throughout the working life to allow people to enter and exit the workforce with more ease to further enhance education and skills, fulfill caregiving responsibilities, begin their work life and retire with security. Job sharing, time banks, up and down mentoring and intergenerational project teams are among the strategies that can be employed to increase engagement and flexibility.

8. Overarching

- Provide basic necessities to support a decent life standard and good health throughout the life course including access to age appropriate health care, clean water, nutritious food, exercise and safe housing.
- Promote national and international research on the patterns of intergenerational transfers, both public and private, focusing on the implications of these transfers for individuals, families and societies and using this analysis in the design of national development plans. (United Nations, 2009)
- Build new alliances between ageing, children and youth sectors to support intergenerational solidarity in families and communities and to promote integrated, efficient and responsive support and opportunities for all.
- Positive action should be taken to encourage and enable existing experienced international expert organisations (such as Generations United and the Beth Johnson Foundation) to collaborate in sharing learning, resources and expertise as part of a UN coordinated approach to building an international evidence and resource base to support future development in the promotion of intergenerational solidarity.

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