

# TACKLING CHILDCARE: The Business Case for Employer-Supported Childcare in Myanmar

**When companies support their employees to balance their childcare responsibilities with their work obligations, there are many benefits.**

Providing childcare support for employees will:

- create a more motivated and committed workforce,
- reduce absenteeism,
- increase productivity, and
- help attract and retain talented employees.

IFC commissioned a study on the childcare needs of employees working in the private sector to help close the knowledge gap on the business case for providing employer-supported childcare in Myanmar.

## Employer support for childcare

There are many different ways a company can provide childcare support to its employees, ranging from relatively low to high cost. Some examples include paid parental leave, breastfeeding rooms, family-friendly work policies, flexible working arrangements, subsidies for childcare fees or an on-site childcare center.

## Key findings

### Nine in 10 employees said their childcare responsibilities impact their work:

- 53 percent have taken time off work.
- 59 percent have arrived late or left work early.
- 41 percent are sometimes distracted at work.

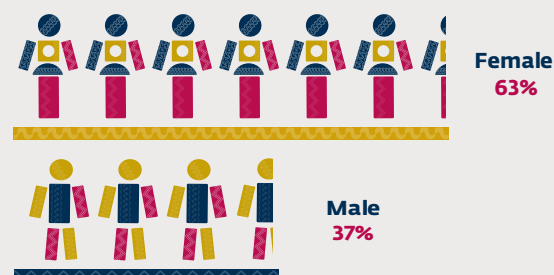
### Childcare responsibilities affect both working fathers and mothers:

- 20 percent of employees said they and/or their partner had left a previous job.
- 68 percent of women had been unable to attend a training course or complete studies.
- 17 percent of men had turned down an offer of a new job.
- 10 percent of women and 8 percent of men have refused a promotion.
- Both women and men reported delaying having children in order to remain in employment.



**1,064** employees from **11** businesses across the finance, agriculture, energy and construction sectors participated.

**794** employees completed an online survey.



**19%** of survey respondents have preschool-age children.

**243** employees participated in focus group discussions.

**27** senior personnel were interviewed.

**In Myanmar, there continues to be pressure on women to quit work when they have children.**

### Most common current childcare arrangements for parents with preschool children:

- Cared for by the child's grandparent (56 percent).
- Cared for by the child's other parent (32 percent).
- Cared for by a private babysitter (12 percent).

**37 percent of parents do not use a childcare center because there is no facility near their home.**

### Most common concerns with current childcare arrangements:

- Safety of the child (61 percent).
- Child's health (56 percent).
- Child's nutrition (46 percent).
- Child's education (39 percent).

**Other concerns included children have too much access to television, the internet and social media.**

## Most commonly requested childcare support from employers:

- Flexible working hours (56 percent).
- Subsidy for childcare fees (49 percent).
- An on-site childcare center (42 percent).
- Health support such as immunizations for children (35 percent).

## The legal framework for employers and childcare in Myanmar



### Parental leave

Paid leave before birth of child

### Mother

6 weeks

### Father

Nil

Paid leave after birth of child

8 weeks

15 days

All leave entitlements are paid at 70 percent of the ordinary wage of the employee (based on a 12 month average).

In the case of the birth of twins, the mother is entitled to an additional 4 weeks of paid leave after the birth of the children.

## Key recommendations for businesses

### Business considerations

- Review the range of childcare support your company currently offers.
- Develop the business case for offering employee-supported childcare.
- Evaluate additional childcare support services that are available in your community.
- Understand the childcare needs of working mothers and fathers.
- Ensure that childcare supports are inclusive.
- Monitor and evaluate your childcare interventions.



### Lower resource-intensive interventions

- Set up a parent's group within your business.
- Create a return to work program.
- Offer flexible work arrangements.
- Review and communicate family-friendly work policies and available benefits to all employees and new recruits.
- Ensure the company training schedule considers the childcare responsibilities of employees.
- Introduce training and support for parents and caregivers.
- Train managers and Human Resources to understand the business' childcare support and maximize its effectiveness.

### Higher resource-intensive interventions

- Reserve places at a local childcare provider or subsidize childcare costs.
- Collaborate with other businesses to operate a childcare center.
- Establish on-site childcare services.

The full report can be downloaded from <http://wrlld.bg/Bd0U50xlNXM>.

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