

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.

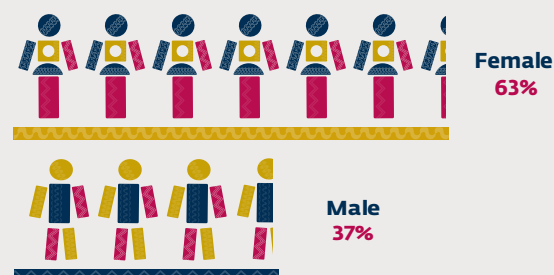
Childcare responsibilities affect both working fathers and mothers:

- 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	Mother	Father
Paid leave before birth of child	6 weeks	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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