

Tackling Childcare

Overview

Access to good quality, affordable childcare can benefit employees, their children, employers, and economies. It can improve the lives of children and the adults they become, expand access to better jobs for women and men. Employers can experience boosts in employee recruitment, retention, and productivity, allowing them to support socio-economic growth with little cost.

Since 2017, IFC has published a series of global and regional reports making the business case for employer-supported childcare and outlining best practices. Building on this research, IFC's Global Tackling Childcare Advisory program works with companies across regions and sectors to aid the implementation of family-friendly workplace policies that go beyond childcare to include flexible work arrangements, paid leave, and breastfeeding support. Through advisory engagements and peer learning, the program has helped companies such as City Bank in Bangladesh assess childcare needs, develop and carry out action plans, share knowledge, and measure and make the business case for investing in childcare.

Highlights of the Childcare Program:

- Conduct research to identify demand and supply barriers and gauge whether employers are ready to comply with local laws.
- Bring together public and private sector partners to discuss the business case for expanding childcare, as well as solutions.
- Work with the World Bank, governments, and related entities to inform childcare policies at the national and local levels.

IFC is taking the lead in this relatively new area for multilateral development banks; the program aims to test solutions, demonstrate effectiveness and contribute to creating and strengthening nascent care markets.



The program advances employer-supported childcare around the world, focusing on the 26 economies¹ where, according to IFC's research, employers are mandated to provide it.

¹ Afghanistan; Bangladesh; Brazil; Cambodia; Chile; Ecuador; Egypt, Arab Rep.; Guatemala; India; Iran, Islamic Rep.; Iraq; Japan; Jordan; Kuwait; Libya; The Netherlands; Nepal; Panama; Paraguay; Saudi Arabia; Sri Lanka; Syrian Arab Republic; Taiwan (China); Turkey; Ukraine; Vietnam.

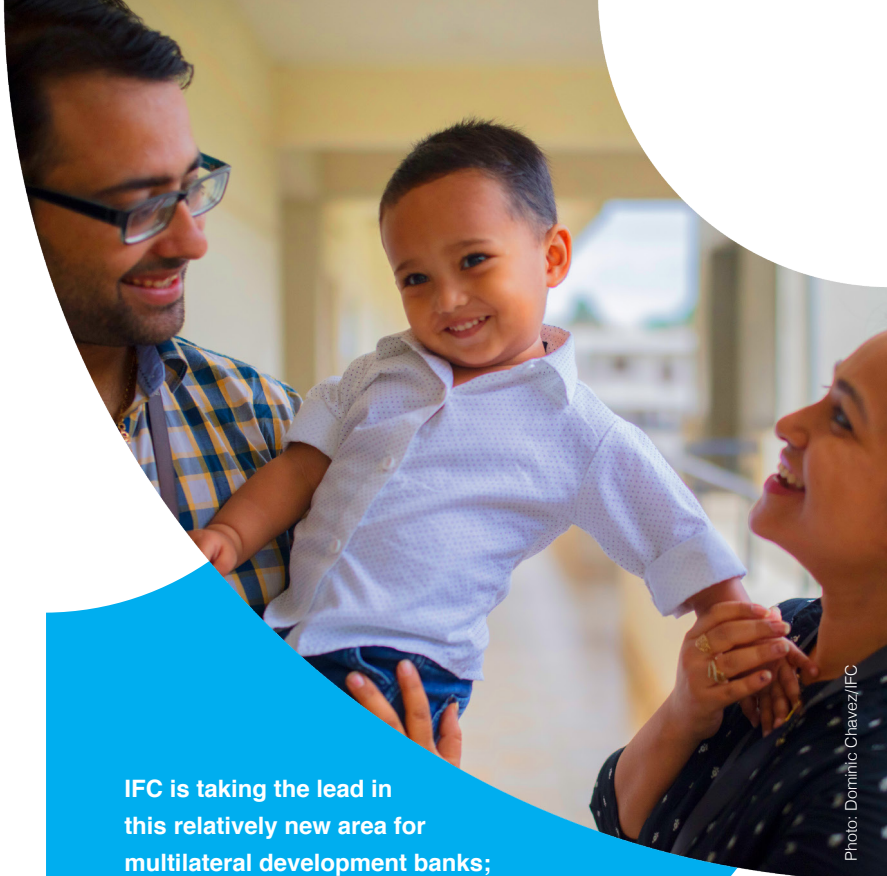


Photo: Dominic Chavez/IFC



Photo: Courtesy of Kidogo



Company Case Study

Artistic Milliners (AM), Denim and Garment Manufacturing, Pakistan

The company employs almost 19,000 people in 17 factories and mills in Karachi's Korangi and other industrial areas, with a total annual turnover of \$273 million.

How the company supports childcare and a family-friendly environment:

- During the COVID-19 outbreak, the company opened its childcare center to the children of frontline workers, including doctors and nurses
- Paid maternity leave and family health insurance
- Life skills training, including on health and hygiene, parenting, and childcare
- Free transport services for female employees
- Nursing breaks for female employees to breastfeed at home or at the daycare center
- Dormitories provided for families who come from out of town to work on the mills

Employee Profile:

- 24% of AM's employees are women and 47% of them have children between 0 to 6 years old
- 50% of senior managers are women

IFC's Role:

- IFC helped AM measure the business case for advancing women in leadership through a [case study](#).
- IFC's research and guidance on childcare motivated AM to open its on-site childcare facility for blue-collar employees.
- AM is part of the IFC-Pakistan Business Council (PBC) [peer-learning collaboration](#) on family-friendly workplaces and has made commitments to support its employees through family-friendly workplace policies, with guidance from IFC and PBC.

Since AM established its daycare in 2019, it has experienced:



67% increase in the number of female employees in the company's plant AM15 (Jan-Nov 2019)



Increased female employee recruitment, retention, and engagement on the floor



96% maternity return rate

Our Network of Partners

• IFC has replicated its research in [Fiji](#), [Myanmar](#), and [Sri Lanka](#). In Fiji, IFC found that employers are losing 12.7 days per employee every year due to gaps in childcare. Fiji has since set up an Early Childhood Development Task Force and carved out budget for childcare.

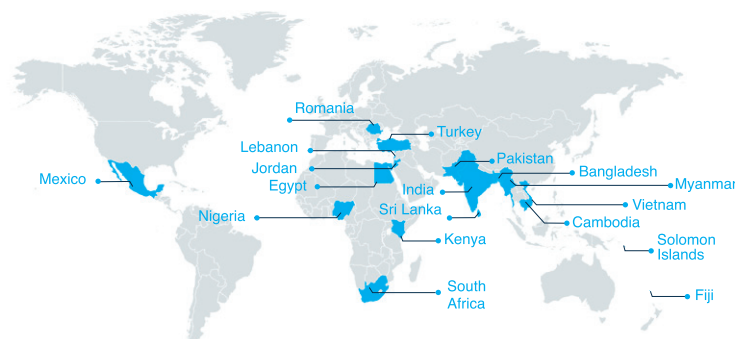
• In India, where there is a legal requirement for employer-supported childcare, IFC surveyed nearly 300 firms and [published a report](#) with recommendations. The efforts prompted the government to make policy changes and advise states to issue creche guidelines. IFC conducted a similar study in [Bangladesh](#) with more than 300 employers.

• IFC and the Pakistan Business Council lead a [peer-learning collaboration](#) with 14 participating companies that have committed to implementing family-friendly policies, such as childcare and paid leave.

• IFC leads the [Global Tackling Childcare Working Group](#) of more than 30 organizations. The group developed a first-of-its-kind [Global Guide for Employer-Supported Childcare](#), covering topics such as scoping employee needs, ensuring quality and measuring results.

• IFC's guidance note, [Childcare in the COVID-19 Era: A Guide for Employers](#), outlines ways in which employers can support the care and family needs of their employees during the rapidly changing global pandemic.

This program is supported by the Government of Canada.



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