Tackling Childcare in Bangladesh

The Business Benefits and Challenges of Employer-Supported Childcare

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Amari Dhaka
Bangladesh
TACKLING CHILDCARE: 
THE BUSINESS BENEFITS AND CHALLENGES OF 
EMPLOYER-SUPPORTED CHILDCARE IN 
BANGLADESH
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www.ifc.org/TacklingChildcareBD
Background

- In Bangladesh, the male labor force participation rate (LFPR) was 80% while the female LFPR was 36% in 2017 (ILO, 2018).

- Women spend almost 8X more time than men spend on childcare in Bangladesh (World Bank, 2019). A key barrier to women’s access to more and better jobs is the lack of access to quality, affordable childcare, as highlighted in the WBG Gender Strategy.

- Employer-supported childcare can supplement public provision and benefit women, children, businesses, and the economy.

- IFC’s Tackling Childcare Bangladesh research, covering 306 companies, 75+ employees, and 40 stakeholders, sheds light on the benefits and challenges of expanding employer-supported childcare, in line with the legal mandate in Bangladesh. The research includes recommendations for private, public, and development sectors.

- “Employer-supported childcare” is defined in this research as good-quality, affordable early childhood care and education services provided or supported by employers for their employees’ children who are in the preschool age group (0 to 6 years).

- Next steps include a Childcare Policy Good Practices Workshop for government representatives (November 7, 2019). Support to Bangladesh-based firms to implement childcare with the help of IFC’s upcoming guide for employer-supported childcare.

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research
National unemployment rate of women of working age is almost 2X that of men in the same age group (ILO, 2018).

Male labor force participation rate was 80% compared to 36% for women in 2017 (ILO, 2018).

Employer-supported childcare can help address the gender employment gap by reducing the likelihood of mothers dropping out of the workforce and increasing their likelihood of earning a formal wage (Women, Business and the Law, 2016).

It can improve child development outcomes, leading to better health and productivity in adulthood as well (World Bank, 2019).

It can help employers achieve better business outcomes, including lower absenteeism and turnover and higher productivity.
### Legislative Context

Recognizing the positive impacts of childcare on women’s employment, children’s outcomes, and business and economic growth, many countries in South Asia including Bangladesh, Afghanistan, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka have policies in place requiring employers to provide or support childcare.

**The Bangladesh Labour Act of 2006**, sec. 94, states:

“In every establishment, where 40 (forty) or more female workers are ordinarily employed, one or more suitable rooms shall be provided and maintained for the use of their children who are under the age of 6 (six) years. These rooms will provide adequate accommodation, must have adequate lighting, ventilated and maintained in a clean and sanitary condition, and will be under the charge of women trained or experienced in childcare”.

### Other Provisions in the Law

| Working Hours of Female Workers | A female worker must sign a consent form in order to work from 10:00 PM to 06:00 AM which will remain valid for 12 months unless she plans a withdrawal or change. |
| Maternity Leave | Every woman employed in an establishment shall be entitled to, and her employer shall be liable for, the payment of maternity benefit in respect of the period of 8 weeks preceding the expected day of her delivery and 8 weeks immediately following the day of her delivery. Provided that a woman shall not be entitled to such maternity benefits unless she has worked under the employer, for a period of not less than 6 months immediately following the day of her delivery. |
| Pregnancy Welfare Benefits | A pregnant worker should not be engaged in work declared hazardous by the government or any work hazardous for her health. Additionally, after the delivery, the organization must provide an opportunity for lactation and ensure a congenial atmosphere for mothers and children. |
Methodology - Surveys

- Given the childcare requirement in the Labour Law, 306 companies with more than 40 female employees were surveyed to understand their challenges, opportunities, and business case for providing childcare in line with the legal mandate.

- Companies answered 25 general questions and 10-12 tailored questions, depending on whether they are providing, planning to provide, or not planning to provide childcare. In summary:
  - 23% or 68 of 306 employers are providing childcare and answered questions specific to this category
  - 16% or 51 of 306 employers are planning to provide it and answered questions specific to this category
  - 61% or 187 of 306 are not planning to provide it and answered questions specific to this category

![Surveys of Companies](chart)

- Surveys of Companies
  - 179 In-Person Surveys
  - 127 Online Surveys

- Stakeholder Meetings
  - 40 In-Person Supplementary Interviews

![Insights - 306 Companies](chart)

- Surveys of Companies
  - 127 Online Survey
  - 179 In-Person Survey

- WITH CHILD CARE
  - 68 Companies provide childcare

- WITHOUT CHILD CARE
  - 51 Companies are planning to provide childcare
  - 187 Companies are not planning to provide childcare
Highest number of responses came from Manufacturing and IT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing (e.g. RMG, Textile, Automotive, etc.)</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT/ITeS</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banking Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI)</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Industry</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Profit</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Goods</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Industry</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture (e.g Fishing, Timber, Agro-processing)</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality Industry</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Industry (including Software)</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Process Outsourcing (BPO)</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy (Electric Power and Petrochemical Industry)</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research/Development Organization</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemical Industry (including Pharmaceutical)</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction Industry</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government Service</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Equity Investment</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=306
Most companies surveyed are domestic companies with multiple worksites

- Domestic Company with multiple locations: 36.1%
- Domestic Company with a single work site: 25.6%
- Multinational Corporation with multiple work sites in Bangladesh: 7.9%
- Non-Government Organization (NGO): 7.9%
- Multinational Corporation with a single work site in Bangladesh: 7.5%
- Domestic Financial Institution with multiple locations: 6.2%
- Education Institute (University, School, etc.): 2.6%
- Research/Development Organization: 2.6%
- International Financial Institution with presence in Bangladesh: 1.3%
- Government Organization: 1.0%
- Joint Venture Company: 0.7%
- Domestic Financial Institution with single office presence: 0.3%
- Hospital or healthcare facility: 0.3%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=306
Most of the responses came from the HR representatives of 306 companies.

Designation/job roles of the respondents:
- HR: 42%
- Manager/Director: 21%
- Executive/C-suite (CEO, CFO, CTO, COO): 17%
- Sr Manager/Sr Director: 7%
- Individual Contributor/Frontline Employee: 6%
- Supervisor: 5%
- Sr Vice President/Vice President: 1%

Gender of the company representatives who responded to the survey:
- Male: 72%
- Female: 28%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=306
Methodology - Focus Group Discussions

- A total of 9 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted to understand the childcare needs, preferences, and challenges of employees and their experiences with different childcare options. 75+ employees participated in the 9 FGDs.
## Insights from Focus Group Discussions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insights</th>
<th>Blue-Collar Employees</th>
<th>White-Collar Employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demand for Childcare Facilities</td>
<td>Childcare is vital for families who have migrated to Dhaka for work. Childcare facilities are regarded as safer and cheaper alternatives to leaving children in slums/homes of relatives and neighbors.</td>
<td>Working parents demand high quality childcare facilities. The centers must have robust hygiene and safety standards. Childcare centers should be close to/located in workplaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements in Childcare Facilities</td>
<td>Children should receive free-of-cost, nutritious meals and better early childhood education and learning.</td>
<td>Childcare centers should follow sophisticated curriculums for early childhood development and education.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Policy Changes for Childcare</td>
<td>The law should be altered to facilitate childcare solutions for all working mothers and fathers. Childcare solutions should be provided even if a company employs less than 40 female employees.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Insights - All Companies
Sample Size: 306

Source: Honey Bees Preschool, Dhaka
Almost half of the 306 companies surveyed are moderately familiar with the childcare requirement in the Bangladesh Labour Law.

**Level of familiarity with the law**

- 41% Moderately familiar
- 28% Extremely familiar
- 17% I have heard about it but am not familiar
- 14% I am not familiar with it

RECAP – The childcare requirement in the Labour Law is as follows:

*Each establishment, permanently employing 40 or more female workers are required to provide and maintain a suitable room or rooms for the use of children under the age of six years. These rooms will provide adequate accommodation, must have adequate lighting, ventilated and maintained in a clean and sanitary condition, and will be under the charge of women trained or experienced in childcare.*

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=306
Yet, 61% or 187 of 306 companies surveyed are yet to consider a childcare solution.

Status of childcare provision:

- **Planning to Provide Childcare Solution**: 16%
  - 11% Daycare center in early planning stage
  - 5% Daycare center under development

- **Provide Childcare Solution**: 23%
  - 8% Daycare center in place after the childcare requirement of the Act
  - 15% Daycare center in place prior to the childcare requirement of the Act

- **Yet to Consider Childcare Solution**: 61%
  - 9% Do not know about daycare center
  - 52% Yet to consider daycare center

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=306
High Demand: Out of the 306 companies surveyed, more than 50% of the companies said that their employees’ children are mostly in the 6 months to 6 years age range.

Age of employees’ children (estimate):

- 6 months-6 years: 55%
- Above 6 years: 24%
- I don’t know: 19%
- Less than 6 months: 1%

Most employees of the 306 companies surveyed have 1 to 2 children.

*Most childcare centers in Bangladesh admit children ages 6 months to 6 years*
34% of 306 companies surveyed highlighted the need for guidance on childcare standards and quality as the most important resource to plan a childcare center.

**Source:** IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=306

### Most important resources for planning childcare center

- Guidelines on daycare center standards: 17.2%
- Guidance on high-quality care: 16.2%
- Practices for assessing workforce demand: 9.8%
- Guidance on how to finance a daycare center: 9.8%
- Information on liability: 8.9%
- A process for providing payment to the daycare center: 8.0%
- Practices for projecting future daycare center demand: 7.0%
- Information on compliance with the mandate: 6.4%
- Not setting up a daycare center: 6.3%
- A referral system of existing daycare centers: 6.0%
- None of the above: 2.0%
- Information on implication of non-compliance: 2.0%
- Guidance on space management: 0.2%
- Guidance on making daycare centers disability accessible: 0.1%
- Guidance on ways to understand employee needs: 0.1%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=306
Insights - Companies Providing Childcare
Sample Size: 68 out of 306 or 23%

Source: BRAC HQ (Dolina) Daycare Center, Dhaka
Evidence of the Business Case for Employer-Supported Childcare

23% or 68 out of 306 companies surveyed provide childcare solutions and reported positive impacts on 8 indicators:

**Organizational profitability:** Higher profits after establishment childcare facilities

- Yes: 51%
- No: 14%
- No, but I expect it to: 21%
- Don't Know: 15%

**Women's career advancement:** More women being promoted after establishment of childcare facilities

- Yes: 56%
- No: 9%
- No, but I expect it to: 22%
- Don't Know: 12%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68
Evidence of the Business Case for Employer-Supported Childcare

23% or 68 out of 306 companies surveyed provide childcare solutions and reported positive impacts on 8 indicators:

**Talent acquisition:** Access to top talent; attracting and retaining top female talent from an underutilized and diverse talent pool

- Yes: 65%
- No: 8%
- No, but I expect it to: 17%
- Don't Know: 10%

**Position/branding as employer of choice:** The company is becoming a popular employer of choice after establishment of childcare facilities

- Yes: 61%
- No: 9%
- No, but I expect it to: 18%
- Don't Know: 12%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68
Enabling access to childcare has positively impacted the 68 companies in 8 areas

### Employee productivity

- Yes: 74%
- No: 6%
- No, but I expect it to: 11%
- Don't Know: 9%

### Employee retention

- Yes: 72%
- No: 13%
- No, but I expect it to: 8%
- Don't Know: 8%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68
Enabling access to childcare has positively impacted the 68 companies in 8 areas

**Workplace culture:** More satisfied, happy, and engaged working parents

- 75% Yes
- 6% No
- 10% No, but I expect it to
- 9% Don't Know

**Improved morale:** Employees are motivated to work harder and give their best

- 69% Yes
- 6% No
- 11% No, but I expect it to
- 14% Don't Know

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68
Employee recruitment & retention are the top two motivations for companies providing childcare

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary motivations for childcare center</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employee retention</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attracting talent</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee productivity</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance with the Bangladesh Labor Act</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee need</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee absenteeism</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity and inclusion initiative</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compliance to be able to access Client/Buyer</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68
66% of the 68 companies have on-site childcare centers

Childcare center offered via:

- An on-site daycare center operated by organization (66%)
- Partnership with other employers for a shared daycare center (7%)
- A near-site partnership with an established daycare center (7%)
- An on-site daycare center operated by an external daycare center company/NGO (6%)
- I don't know (13%)

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68
60% of 68 provide childcare to both male and female employees
40% of 68 have lactation facilities

Availability of childcare center to the children of male employees

- Yes: 60%
- No: 31%
- I don't know: 9%

Additional facilities and services offered by the childcare center

- A separate room for lactation and breastfeeding facilities: 40%
- Shower facilities for children: 27%
- Early childhood development and learning programs: 20%
- Transportation for parents and children: 6%
- None of the above: 6%
- Others (e.g. Feeding program, Playground, Vaccination program etc.): 1%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68
44% of companies that provide childcare for their employees pay 100% of the cost.

How does your company support employees with childcare center usage fees?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Method</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay 100% of daycare center usage fees for employees</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay a % (e.g. 50%/60%/70% of usage fees)</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not offer financial support</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (e.g. CSR fund allocated for employee-sponsored childcare, space rent etc.)</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't know</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer allowance to help pay for daycare center usage fees</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay a membership fee to a daycare center operator tie-up to reserve spots for employees and organization pays employee…</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay a membership fee to a daycare center operator tie up to reserve spots for employees and employees pay the usage fee</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68
The median cost of providing childcare services to a child per month is 5,000 BDT or ~ 60 USD

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68
Insights - Companies Planning to Provide childcare
Sample Size: 51 out of 306 or 16%

Happy Hearts, Grameenphone Daycare Center, Dhaka
Perceived high costs of building and operating a childcare center are the primary challenges highlighted by employers in this category.

Financial challenges - Companies planning to provide childcare services:

- Cost of building the infrastructure for an on-site daycare center: 37%
- Cost to the organization of paying for daycare center operating expenses: 29%
- Cost to the organization of paying for employee usage fees: 18%
- Cost to the organization for partnering with an existing on-site daycare center: 12%
- ROI: 1%
- Have not encountered anything: 1%
- Unsure of challenges as in planning stage: 1%
- Expansion of the existing day care centre: 1%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=51
The main legal challenge for 31% of 51 companies planning to provide childcare is understanding the guidelines and standards for childcare centers.

Legal/Regulatory challenges - Companies planning to provide childcare services:

- Lack of clarity on (minimum) guidelines/standards of daycare center: 31%
- Lack of clarity on the characteristics of quality childcare: 24%
- Lack of clarity on the organization's liability: 22%
- Lack of clarity on health and safety regulations: 20%
- None: 3%
The majority of companies planning to provide childcare cite difficulties identifying existing providers.

Provisions-Related challenges - Companies planning to setup daycare centers

- Identifying existing daycare centers: 54%
- Lack of space to build an on-site daycare center: 21%
- Finding a childcare provider to manage run the daycare center: 15%
- Challenge to include all qualifying children: 9%
- None: 1%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=51
Understanding employees’ needs is the main organizational obstacle for one quarter of companies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational challenges</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding employee need</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee perceptions of daycare center quality</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee preference for other types of childcare</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees not wanting to commute to the office with child</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complications regarding transportation</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of support from senior leadership</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=51
Insights - Companies Not Planning to Provide Childcare
Sample Size: 187 out of 306 or 61%
Perceived high costs of building and operating a childcare center are the primary challenges highlighted by most employers not planning to provide childcare.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial challenges</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of building the infrastructure for an on-site daycare center</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost to the organization of paying for daycare center operating expenses</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost to the organization of paying for the employee usage fees</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost to the organization for partnering with an existing on-site daycare center</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=187
The most-often cited challenge associated with the childcare law by companies not planning to provide childcare is lack of clarity on childcare center standards & liability.

Legal/Regulatory challenges-Companies not planning to setup childcare center

- Lack of clarity on standards: 28.6%
- Lack of clarity on the organization's liability: 27.4%
- Lack of clarity on quality childcare: 20.9%
- Lack of clarity on health regulations: 14.5%
- Lack of demand: 4.3%
- None: 2.1%
- Lack of positive mentality from top management: 0.9%
- Haven't considered it yet: 0.9%
- Lack of parents' confidence on day care center: 0.4%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=187
Finding existing centers is a major challenge for 53% of the 187 companies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provisions-Related challenges</th>
<th>Companies not planning to set up childcare facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying existing daycare centers</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of space to build an on-site daycare center</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding a childcare provider to manage run the daycare center</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenge to include all qualifying children</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of demand</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature of work at site causes safety concerns for an on-site daycare center</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=187
23% of 187 companies cite understanding employee needs as one of the main organizational challenges

Organizational Challenges - Companies not planning to set up childcare center

- Understanding employee need: 23%
- Employee preference for other types of childcare: 18%
- Employees not wanting to commute to the office with their child: 16%
- Complications regarding transportation: 16%
- Employee perceptions of daycare center quality: 12%
- Lack of support from senior leadership: 12%
- None: 2%

There may be a mismatch between perceived and actual employees’ needs and demand.

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=187
36% of 187 companies say they would set up a childcare center if there was more employee demand.
However, only 29% of 306 companies have received feedback from employees; One-on-one conversation is one of the most popular ways of getting feedback.
Key findings according to sectors:

• RMG/Manufacturing
• Banking and Finance
• IT/ITeS
Almost 50% of the 68 manufacturing companies surveyed have a daycare center

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=68

76% of the manufacturing firms that provide childcare have reported positive impacts on Organizational Profitability

The most commonly-cited resource to plan a daycare center by manufacturing firms (15%) was “Guidance on characteristics of high-quality care.”
65% of 40 BFSI (Banking, Financial Services, Insurance etc.) companies surveyed are yet to consider a childcare solution.

- 36% of the BFSI that provide childcare solutions have reported positive impacts on Organizational Profitability.
- The most commonly-cited resource to plan a daycare center by BFSIs (19%) was “Guidelines on daycare center standards.”

Status of BFSI companies’ daycare provision:

- **Provide Childcare Solution**: 28%
  - Daycare center in place prior to the childcare requirement of the Act: 8%
  - Daycare center in place after the childcare requirement of the Act: 20%
- **Planning to Provide Childcare Solution**: 8%
  - Daycare center in early planning stage: 3%
- **Yet to Consider Childcare Solution**: 65%
  - Daycare center under development: 5%
  - Do not know about daycare center: 5%
  - Yet to consider daycare center: 60%

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=40
More than 80% of 60 IT firms surveyed have yet to provide a childcare solution

- 50% of the IT firms that provide childcare have reported positive impacts on Organizational Profitability
- The most commonly-cited resource to plan a daycare center by IT firms (15%) was “Best practices for assessing workforce demand for a daycare center”

Source: IFC & LightCastle Primary Research, N=60
Key Takeaways & Recommendations

Recommendations for the Private Sector:

❖ **Assess Needs**: Gather data on employees’ demand for childcare through anonymous surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups. Review business goals and resources.

❖ **Develop a Stronger Understanding of Potential Childcare Solutions**
  ❖ Learn about the benefits, strategies, and costs of employer-supported quality childcare from existing resources such as IFC’s [Tackling Childcare Research](#) and the upcoming Guide for Employer-Supported Childcare (November 2019).
  ❖ Consider different solutions, whether it is on-site, near-site, or community-based care, or another option.

❖ **Consider Partnering with Other Stakeholders**
  ❖ Care providers, government, international organizations, and local/global experts can provide guidance and services.
  ❖ A consortium with other employers can help pool resources and maximize impact through shared solutions.
  ❖ Industry associations can deliver workshops to their members on the topic, connecting providers and companies.
  ❖ Advocacy efforts with the government can lead to better policy and support for trainings, funding, guidelines, etc.

❖ **Start Small**: Consider starting with one business unit or location, pilot customized programs, match operating hours with work hours, and offer benefits to all parents. Integrate the childcare strategy into broader corporate objectives.

❖ **Measure & Communicate the Business Case**: Establish metrics to assess the impact of family-friendly solutions.

❖ **Raise Awareness**: Publicly endorse the importance of childcare and share the business case and practices to inspire others.
Key Takeaways & Recommendations

Recommendations for the Public and Development Sectors:

❖ **Raise Awareness** among employers and parents about the childcare law and how it can benefit to go beyond compliance.

❖ **Establish Standards**: Work with experts to develop guidelines and provide implementation support to employers.

❖ **Invest in Quality Early Childhood Care and Education (as part of a long-term human capital development strategy):**
  ❖ **Caregivers**: Provide national-level training and certification to caregivers and providers to increase quality of care.
  ❖ **Learning**: Ensure play-based learning curricula, appropriate teacher-pupil ratios, and nurturing environments.

❖ **Monitor Quality**: Establish mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the quality of public, private, employer-supported, and community-based care solutions. Licensing, registration, accreditation, and regular inspections can help.

❖ **Consider Adjusting the Law**: Evidence shows that childcare requirements based on the number of female employees might deter employers from hiring women or transfer the cost of care to women through lower wages. A gender neutral approach could lead to better results. Mandating on-site solutions might crowd out community-based solutions.

❖ **Explore Financing Options**:
  ❖ Establish a national or provincial scheme to help companies meet their goals ([Singapore's ECDAC and PPP](https://www.ecdac.gov.sg/) See WBL policy note)
  ❖ Provide tax and non-tax incentives, such as credits and subsidies to parents and employers
  ❖ Facilitate impact and commercial investments in this space for e.g. through [social and development impact bonds](https://www.ifc.org/)(SIBs/DIBs) and [regulatory changes to facilitate investments in childcare](https://www.ifc.org/) (also see: Peritus Childcare Sales, Australia)
  ❖ Partner, cost-share, and/or match funds invested by companies in childcare ([Germany, Jordan, Turkey](https://www.ifc.org/))
Key Takeaways & Recommendations

Suggested areas of consideration applicable to both public and private sectors that can be jointly undertaken:

❖ **Enhance Parent-Child Connection:** Assurance of the child’s well-being enhances parents’ peace of mind and productivity and consequently the company’s productivity and profitability. Childcare solutions are beneficial if designed to maintain the parent-child connection by, for example, being easily accessible to parents.

❖ **Prioritize the Child’s Development:** In addition to meeting basic custodial needs, quality childcare provides opportunities for children to develop physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Training of providers, a well-designed, play-based curriculum, and a safe, hygienic, and age-appropriate environment are key components of a quality childcare center.

❖ **Customize Solutions:** Parents’ childcare preferences and needs vary across income levels, location, values, and working conditions. Thus, childcare solutions must be customized to cater to the varying needs of working parents, without compromising on childcare quality and child outcomes. Low cost solutions need not be low quality solutions.

❖ **Maintain High Quality:** Childcare solutions must be rigorously and regularly monitored to ensure quality and encourage uptake from parents, building their trust and peace of mind.

❖ **Involve Experts:** Health and education specialists as well as experts from organizations such as BRAC-IED and Phulki can play a vital role in maintaining and improving the quality of childcare solutions.

❖ **Screen and Train Caregivers:** An effective screening and training process for caregivers and staff can ensure quality and minimize risks. Educational qualifications, certifications, soft skills, background checks, and previous experience of the caregivers, teachers, and staff must be assessed during the recruitment process.
Project Timeline and Next Steps

- **Project Launch**
  - April 2019

- **Meetings with Partners**
  - April & May 2019

- **Data Collection (survey, interviews, FGDs)**
  - May to July 2019

- **Presentation of Findings to Manufacturing Firms/RMG**
  - August 2019

- **Support Bangladesh firms to explore childcare solutions**
  - November 2019 onwards

- **Launch of IFC’s Global Guide for Employer-Supported Childcare**
  - November 6, 2019

- **Launch of Findings & Private & Public Sector Briefs in Dhaka**
  - November 2019

- **Stakeholder & Industry Consultations & Results Presentation**
  - September 2019
Thank You!

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Annex A:

Examples of Childcare Solutions in Bangladesh

Source: BRAC HQ (Dolna) Daycare Center, Dhaka
BRAC-IED- Play Lab Model

BRAC Institute of Education Development (BIED):
Sets up and manages Play Labs based on play-based learning approach. More than 300 community-based centers established
Identifies location, sets up site to meet standards (ventilation etc.)
Works with families to decorate center using recycled material

Sessions:
Age 1-3  – 2 hours – Teacher + 2 volunteers
Age 3-5 – 2.5 hours – Teacher + 1 volunteer
Ages 4-5 – 2.5 hours – Teacher +

Provides training to caregivers:
Caregivers receive training in play-based methodology over 6 days; refresher training every month.

Fees:
There was no charge initially (est. 2015); Introduced fees in 2017.
Wee Learn

- Follows a Canadian curriculum focused on age-appropriate early childhood education (ECE) and learning through play.
- Accommodates children in the 6 months to 6 years age range, right after maternity leave ends.
- Operates from 8 am to 7 pm, covering work hours.
- Operates 6 centers in Dhaka, catering to the army and the air force as well as 21 private banks in Motijheel and 9 banks in Gulshan.
- Run by Jamila Haque, who is trained in Canada and started establishing daycares in Dhaka 10 years ago; Jamila started the Grameenphone daycare which accommodates around 70 children.
- All caregivers are trained in Canadian ECE practices by Jamila, including infant CPR.
- Caregivers send profiles to parents everyday, which outline what their children did that day.
- CCTV cameras for security and monitoring.
- Breastfeeding corner for mothers.
- Currently, 20 kids at Wee Learn Gulshan facility.
- Wee Learn charges 10,000 BDT per child per month. City Bank has reserved spots at Wee Learn Gulshan for its employees’ children and subsidizes 65% of the cost to help parents pay for childcare.
Phulki

NGO providing Childcare:
Set up childcare centers in factories and communities
Provide Technical Assistance to set up childcare centers in factories (450+ set up)
Manage the Community Centers (24 centers)

Provide Training for Caregivers:
8 day training for caregivers, includes ECD, songs/ rhymes’ storytelling, handmade/ local materials for teaching, daily routine, monitoring, parents meeting requirements, safety, hygiene, common diseases, ‘boys & girls rearing is equal’
Supervisor training offered

Current Development Partners: Aga Khan Foundation, Canada, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, UNICEF, European Union, UNICEF & Bangladesh Shishu Academy, Aldi, Alliance, Shaplaneer-Japan, Adidas