

Promoting the equal sharing of family responsibilities between parents

In order to achieve both women's and men's full potential in all realms, policies need to change traditional social attitudes and behaviours by recognizing men's right to parenthood and actively encouraging a shift towards a model in which men act as active co-parents rather than helpers of their women partners. This is crucial for the development of a more equitable division of labour in the home, which is the premise for gender equality at work. The provision of time off to attend antenatal health visits with the mother, the individual right to extended leave immediately around childbirth exclusively for the father, with income-related benefits, are important behaviour-changing measures to target actively men's participation in childcare. Fathers who take leave are more likely to be involved with their young children, with positive effects for the development of the children. More equitable parental leave policies also increase the likelihood that women return to employment after leave and spend more time in paid work. Finally, high men's take-up of leave could also improve employers' expectations in relation to women's career interruption and thus improve the treatment of women as a group. In enshrining a statutory right to childcare leave for fathers in national legislation, governments, workers, employers and societies as a whole publicly affirm that they value care work of both women and men, which is a crucial step in advancing gender equality at work and in the home. A combination of measures results in higher men's take-up rates: compulsory leave periods; flexible and well-compensated leave; "father quotas" (i.e., individual non-transferable rights for the specific use of leave periods by fathers); and well-designed tax incentives.

Creating a supportive workplace culture

The right to work-life balance is a key ingredient of job quality. To this effect, maternity and paternity, and more broadly care responsibilities, should become *a normal fact of business life*. A supportive workplace culture is crucial for gender-transformative practices. The workplace needs to recognize the role of men as fathers as well as women's breadwinner function, but also that all workers and employers are or can potentially become a caregiver over the life cycle, especially with

aging societies. Extending work-life balance schemes to all workers, irrespective of their sex and family status, for instance by allowing shorter working weeks or days, worker-friendly remote work or telework, or providing emergency leave or job-protected career breaks for care, education, training or other personal purposes, are additional measures to reduce the penalty associated with being a worker with family responsibilities. It is therefore important to improve the quality of part-time work, by providing pro-rata entitlements, as well as to increase the availability of quality jobs on a part-time basis. Preference could also be given to part-time workers for full-time vacancies as a means of facilitating their reintegration into the full-time workforce.

Establishing a preventative safety and health culture in the workplace

Governments, employers and workers should participate actively in securing a safe and healthy working environment for all workers, both women and men, with the highest priority placed on the "principle of prevention". At the same time, such an approach attaches importance to the need for gender-specific interventions, such as health protection at work for pregnant and breastfeeding workers. These protective measures should be limited to what is strictly necessary to safeguard maternity, in line with the principle of equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation. Social dialogue at legislative and policy levels is decisive in setting up a system of defined rights, responsibilities and duties. At the workplace, employers and workers, including those who are pregnant and breastfeeding, should work together at all stages to develop jointly a culture of prevention and non-discrimination, to establish rules and procedures, as well as information and awareness-raising initiatives.

Addressing maternity and unpaid care work in social protection strategies to reduce poverty and inequalities

Addressing reproduction-related risks and vulnerabilities remains a priority for women workers, especially the most vulnerable to social exclusion in low-income countries. Women, across the life cycle,