

What are gender-responsive family policies?

Gender-responsive family policies help women and men balance work responsibilities with family, care and domestic obligations. These policies typically focus on **time, finances and/or the services** parents and caregivers need. They support the **equal redistribution** of unpaid care and domestic work **without** perpetuating harmful gender norms and roles, and contribute to **sustainable growth and gender equality**.

These policies can be designed and implemented by **both** governments and businesses. In this infographic, we focus on national policies enacted by governments. [Learn more](#) about what businesses can do.

What kind of support can governments provide parents and caregivers through gender-responsive family policies?



Time

Give them the time to balance work and life responsibilities and take on unpaid care and domestic work equally.

For example:

- Paid maternity leave
- Paid paternity leave
- Paid parental leave
- Paid carer leave
- Special/childcare leave
- Lactation breaks
- Right to working arrangements that provide flexibility in terms of time and location



Financial Means

Provide the financial means to balance work and life responsibilities.

These could include:

- Child/family allowances and benefits
- Allowances for care services/provisions (including care for older people and those with special needs)
- Subsidies for families to access care services/provisions
- Financial incentives for companies to be family-friendly



Services

Ensure access to services to balance work and life responsibilities, such as:

- Care services and infrastructure
- Awareness and information campaigns on positive parenting practices
- National accreditation for businesses to set up their own care services for employees
- National certification system for family-friendly companies



Protection

Protect parents and caregivers - especially women, who still bear the brunt of unpaid care work - from discrimination or exploitation.

For example:

- Anti-discrimination laws in the labour market on the basis of gender, pregnancy, marital and family status
- Employment protection laws for parents and caregivers
- Safety laws for pregnant and/or lactating workers
- Equity of policies and benefits irrespective of marital status

What are the benefits of gender-responsive family policies?

- Help remove barriers for women and men to have the career, and the number of children, they want.
- Support women to enter, remain and thrive in the labour market.
- Support men to be more engaged fathers and more equal partners.
- Encourage companies to be more inclusive and family-friendly.
- Address harmful gender norms around caregivers and breadwinners and contribute to overall gender equality.

Ultimately leading to a more equal and prosperous society for all