

Men taking on 50 percent of the world's childcare and domestic work requires global goal and immediate action, reveals *State of the World's Fathers* report

75 years is too long to wait for gender equality in paid and unpaid work, reveals new global report on fatherhood

Belgrade, Serbia – Friday June 9 2017 – As much of the world turns to celebrate the role of fathers on June 18, in no country in the world do men's contributions to unpaid care work equal women's. To reach gender equality in less than the currently estimated 75 years – at work as well as at home – the second-ever *State of the World's Fathers* report reveals what has stalled progress and lays out a bold agenda forward.

Globally, on average, the time women spend daily on caring for the home and children is still three times what men spend; this ranges regionally from about 2.7 times in East Asia and the Pacific to 4.5 times in the Middle East and North Africa, and 6.5 times in South Asia. Women consistently do more unpaid work – including caring for others and domestic work – and paid work *combined* than men do.

At the current rate of global progress, it will take an estimated 75 years for women and men to achieve equal pay for equal work. Reaching equal representation in government, business, and other spheres of power could take even longer. *State of the World's Fathers: Time for Action* draws from nearly 100 research studies and reports, with data from nearly every country where it is available. A publication by MenCare: A Global Fatherhood Campaign, it calls for a global goal and national action plans – building on Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – to achieve men and boys doing fully 50 percent of the unpaid care work globally.

Even where men are contributing more than they used to, globally the gaps between women's and men's contributions persist. Across 20 countries, men's contribution to housework and childcare increased only an average of 6 hours per week over 40 years. These gaps, which are largest in low- and lower-middle-income countries, not only hold women back in their paid jobs and professional trajectories, but also limit broader social and economic development, as well as progress toward gender equality.

“Radical, transformational change in the division of unpaid care must be a global goal. Anything less is inequality,” says Gary Barker, President and CEO of Promundo, MenCare's global co-coordinator. “In a global political climate that is experiencing conservative backlash around sexual and reproductive rights and government support services, the time for action is now.”

The report affirms that many men *do* want to be more involved in the lives of their children. Even in countries where men's involvement in care work is limited, such as those in the Middle East and North Africa, half or more of men surveyed said that they spent too little time with their children because of their job. In the United States, 46 percent of fathers said they were not spending enough time with their children, compared with 23 percent of mothers. For those men who are already taking on greater caregiving roles, *State of the World's Fathers* reveals that it is often unexpected life circumstances – situations that present no alternative – that had driven their new household or professional roles.

A major impediment to progress, finds the report, are the *gender norms* that stereotype caregiving as “women's work”. Across 59 countries, 45 percent of men and 35 percent of women, on average, agreed with the statement, “When jobs are scarce, men should have more rights to a job than women.” *Economic and workplace realities*, such as the gender wage gap and norms that discriminate against flexibility or taking leave, further drive an inequitable division of labor at home and at work. Finally, *laws and policies* around equal pay, taxation, and public provision of childcare, parental leave, and social protection often reinforce the unequal distribution of care.

“Women's unpaid care is currently subsidizing labor markets across the world. Now is the time to reduce the debt that men, the private sector and states owe to women. Besides this question of equality, it also makes good sense in terms of long-term resource use. An increased investment in early childhood focused care and development, along with an equal, non-transferable parental leave framework reduces long term social welfare spending,” says Wessel van den Berg from Sonke Gender Justice, co-coordinator of MenCare.

The report highlights specific recommendations for action, including its foremost policy recommendation for *paid leave*, equally shared between mothers and fathers (or between other co-caregiver arrangements). As of 2016, *paternity leave* – usually a short leave period specifically allocated for fathers after the birth of a child – is still offered in only about half of the world's economies (86 countries), while *parental leave* – leave that is typically longer and can be taken by either parent – is offered in far fewer (53 countries). This lack of leave continues despite evidence that effective leave policies can help to transform gender relations at work and at home, as well as support women's economic participation. *State of the World's Fathers* also highlights *access to income support* – including poverty alleviation and affordable, high-quality childcare – and universally available father-centered *parent training* as spaces for progress.

State of the World's Fathers: Time for Action comes two years after the inaugural *State of the World's Fathers 2015*, a landmark analysis of fatherhood launched in June 2015 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, United States and subsequently in 10 cities globally, inspiring advocacy and action with MenCare partners in over 40 countries.

The report's findings will be revealed at a global launch on June 9, as part of the "MenCare Global Meeting 2017" hosted by Promundo, Centar E8, and the MenCare Steering Committee in Belgrade, Serbia, bringing together nearly 100 activists, academics, and practitioners from across 50 countries.

MenCare is coordinated globally by Promundo and Sonke Gender Justice and jointly steered by Save the Children and MenEngage Alliance.

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For more information, interviews, and report assets contact:
Alexa Hassink (US-based) | a.hassink@promundoglobal.org | +1 302 229 8241
Karen Robertson (SA-based) | karen@genderjustice.org.za | +27 21 423 7088

Download the full *State of the World's Fathers* report here on June 9:
www.sowf.men-care.org

Notes to editors:

Distribution of Unpaid Care Work:

In no country in the world do men's contributions to unpaid care work equal women's.

- Globally, on average, the time women spend daily in caring for the home and children is still three times what men spend: 2.7 times in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia; 3 times in Sub-Saharan Africa; 3.3 times in Latin America; 3.6 in East Asia and the Pacific; 4.5 times in the Middle East and North Africa; and 6.5 times in South Asia.
- Employed, married men's contribution to housework and childcare increased, on average, 6 hours per week over almost 40 years (across 20 countries).
- In all regions, women spend more time than men do on paid and unpaid work *combined*. Globally, women spend 45 minutes more than men on paid and unpaid work per day, resulting in almost 6 extra weeks of work per year, and 5.5 extra years of work over 5 decades, according to data from 65 countries.
- At the current rate of progress, the International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that it will be 75 years before women and men achieve equal work for equal pay. Reaching equal representation in government, business, and other spheres of power could take even longer.
- The ratio of women's time spent on unpaid work to men's is much greater in low- and lower-middle-income countries (3.7 times) than it is in high-income countries (2.2 times).

Access to Childcare:

Governments worldwide are doing very little to support childcare as an economic and social priority.

- One hundred out of 139 economies provide some form of public childcare: of the 39 economies where no public childcare provision is made, 27 are low or middle income.
- There is an inextricable connection between childcare and families' economic advancement: the percentage of women (30 percent) who earn a wage in countries where the government provides childcare support is more than double the percentage (13 percent) in countries without such support.

Workplace Realities:

Economic and workplace realities maintain and reinforce gender gaps in paid employment and unpaid care work, often encouraging men to prioritize paid work over unpaid caring roles and women to do the opposite.

- In Australia, a survey found that 49 percent of mothers and 27 percent of fathers reported experiencing discrimination, including negative comments and attitudes from colleagues or managers and discrimination related to pay, conditions, duties, or flexible working.
- A review by the ILO confirms that, on top of a gender pay gap, when they become mothers, women often suffer an additional "motherhood pay gap."

Laws and Policies:

The distribution of care work is shaped by the presence (or absence) of laws and policies that promote equal caregiving, or, alternatively, that reinforce harmful restrictions on the roles of men and women.

- Of 263 early-childhood-development policies across 33 countries, only 40 address unpaid care concerns. Of these, only 37 aimed to redistribute unpaid care work either within the family (from women to men) or from the family to the state. Redistribution of unpaid care work is simply not a legislative priority, even in countries focused on early childhood development.
- Across 149 social protection programs in 59 countries, only two address unpaid care concerns. Particularly in settings with a large informal labor force, social protection programs that address unpaid care have an important role to play in reducing and redistributing it for all.

Parental Leave:

The foremost policy recommendation that this report offers for the realization of gender-equal caregiving is that governments (and failing that, employers, corporations, and others in the private sector) provide paid, non-transferable, job-protected parental leave for mothers and fathers, in accordance with the best standards of such policies.

- Across 53 lower-income countries, women's employment is significantly higher in countries that mandate paternity leave than it is in countries that do not. There is an estimated 6.8 percentage point boost, on average, in the

proportion of paid women workers when a country mandates paternity leave. (This estimate accounts for potentially confounding factors).

- Countries can maintain low unemployment and remain highly economically competitive even when ample leave policies are offered: 12 of the top 15 highly competitive countries (where data are available) guarantee paid leave for fathers, many with at least 26 weeks of paid paternal leave, and nearly half with 70 percent or better wage replacement.

Calls to Action

State of the World's Fathers *calls for the following actions to achieve men's uptake of 50 percent of the childcare and domestic work globally:*

- At the international level, set goals, strategies, indicators, and budget commitments around the achievement of true equality between men and women in unpaid care work.
- Systematically measure men's and women's time use, including time spent on unpaid care work.
- At the national level, create and implement broad action plans to promote men and boys' equal sharing of unpaid care work.
- Build these strategies and action plans into public systems and institutions (such as the health sector) that can enable and promote men and boys' equal participation in caregiving.
- Teach all children to see the value of care work from an early age, and to see that care work is the responsibility of all, regardless of their gender.
- Provide training in which fathers recognize and challenge traditional attitudes, learn about gender-equitable parenting, and build skills involved in unpaid care work.
- Recruit more men into caregiving and other health, education, administration, and literacy (HEAL) professions.
- Train health sector and other social services staff to engage men as equal caregiving partners.
- Use income-support and social-security programs to promote men's greater involvement in unpaid care work.
- Implement policies and practices that support individuals' unpaid care work as well as their paid work.
- Offer equal, paid, non-transferable parental leave for all parents.

About MenCare

MenCare is a global fatherhood campaign active in more than 40 countries on five continents. Its mission is to promote men's involvement as equitable, nonviolent fathers and caregivers in order to achieve family well-being, gender equality, and better health for mothers, fathers, and children. MenCare works at multiple levels to engage individuals, communities, institutions, and policymakers. It believes that true equality will only be reached when men are taking on 50 percent of the child care and domestic work around the world. MenCare is coordinated globally by

Promundo and Sonke Gender Justice and jointly steered by Save the Children and MenEngage Alliance. For more information, see: www.men-care.org

About Promundo

Founded in Brazil in 1997, Promundo works to promote gender equality and create a world free from violence by engaging men and boys in partnership with women and girls. Promundo is a global consortium with members in the United States, Brazil, Portugal, and Democratic Republic of the Congo that collaborate to achieve this mission by conducting cutting-edge research that builds the knowledge base on masculinities and gender equality; developing, evaluating, and scaling up high-impact gender-transformative interventions and programs; and carrying out national and international campaigns and advocacy initiatives to prevent violence and promote gender justice. For more information, see: www.promundoglobal.org

About Sonke Gender Justice

Established in South Africa in 2006, Sonke Gender Justice works to strengthen government, civil society and citizen capacity to promote gender equality, prevent domestic and sexual violence, and reduce the spread and impact of HIV and AIDS. Sonke recognizes that effecting sustained change to gender roles and relations requires addressing the forces that shape individual attitudes and community norms and practices – traditions and cultures, government policies, laws and institutions, civil society organizations, the media and the family – as well as underlying economic, political and social pressures. With offices in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Bushbuckridge and Gugulethu, Sonke works across South Africa, the continent and globally. For more information visit www.genderjustice.org.za