

WIEGO child care initiative literature review ^[1]

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INTRODUCTION

The WIEGO Child Care Initiative (CCI) seeks to shift child care from the periphery of global social policy to the centre so that it is seen as a core set of social services and as a core part of social security. There are two important caveats to this stated aim. The first is that the initiative is focused particularly on Africa, Latin America, and Asia, the three regions in which WIEGO works most intensively, where levels of informal employment are high, and where the provision of state-based services/allowances for working women with children has generally been considered less of a priority by governments than other development goals (Esplen, 2009). The second is that the major concern for WIEGO within the wider debate on child care provision is that such provisions free up time for women to engage in income-earning work. The central concern then is the working woman and, in particular, the poor working woman.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a review of literature on the topic of women, work, and child care provision, with a focus on the following areas: i) to provide a review of the main conceptual issues which have underpinned child care as a policy issue; ii) to collect the available empirical evidence which links women's earnings to child care; iii) to analyse the place of women's employment within dominant discourses around care policy and, conversely, to analyse the place of child care in relation to women's economic empowerment discourses; and finally iv) to highlight positive policy practices in relation to child care provision from around the globe. This paper is intended to be read in conjunction with its companion paper, An Institutional Mapping of Child Care Actors (Budlender, 2014).

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