

# CO-RESPONSIBILITY IN CHILD CARE: THE USE OF PART-TIME PAID PARENTAL LEAVE IN URUGUAY

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UMBRELLA FACILITY  
FOR GENDER EQUALITY



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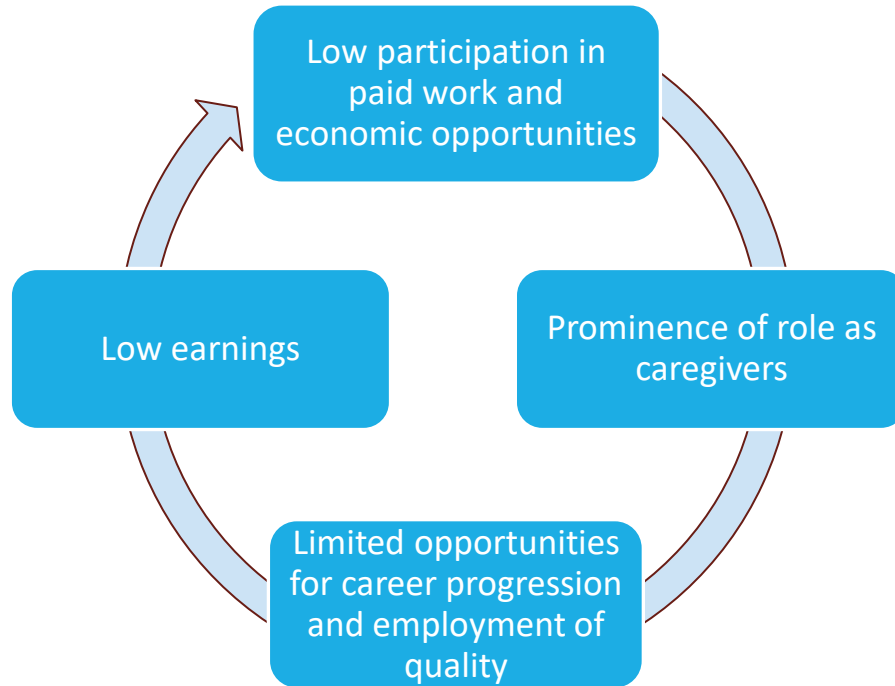


dECON  
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## Objective and status of the work

- The goal of this project is to identify and evaluate mechanisms that encourage fathers to take part-time paid parental leave (not-simultaneously) granted to mothers and fathers in Uruguay to care for the newborn
- The work is in a stage of design of evaluation
- Partnership among UN-Women Uruguay, LACGIL and eMBeD (World Bank), Universidad de la Republica and the National Office for Social Security (BPS)

## Context: The vicious circle of gender inequality:



## Widening gaps after maternity: The case of Uruguay

- High maternity penalty on women's earnings:  
After ten years of having a child, mothers earn **42% less** than women who did not have a child (Querejeta 2020)
- Maternity affects women's engagement in paid and unpaid work:  
Probability of engaging in paid work decreases (3-10 pp)  
Time dedicated to housework increases (around 20 hours per week)

Source: Querejeta (2020)

## Participation of men in unpaid work is substantially lower, particularly when there are children in the household



Men	18	12	21	
Women	24	28	50	42
<b>Gap (M – W)</b>	<b>-6 hours</b>	<b>-16 hours</b>	<b>-29 hours</b>	

Source: Based on Bucheli, Gonzalez and Lara (2018)

# PART-TIME PARENTAL LEAVE FOR THE NEWBORN CARE

Law 19.161 (November 2013)

- Subsidy for parents (both) working in the private sector
- Part-time work schedule with full-time pay
- Paid substitute worker for employer

## Restrictions

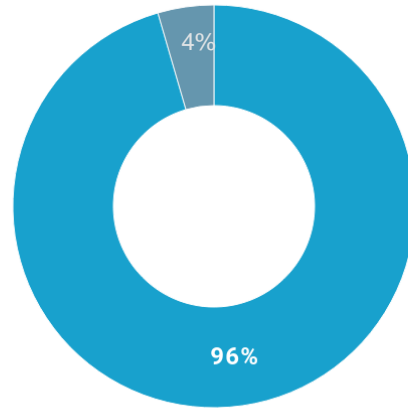
- Cannot be used by both parents at the same time
- To be used between end of maternity leave and before baby turns 6 months



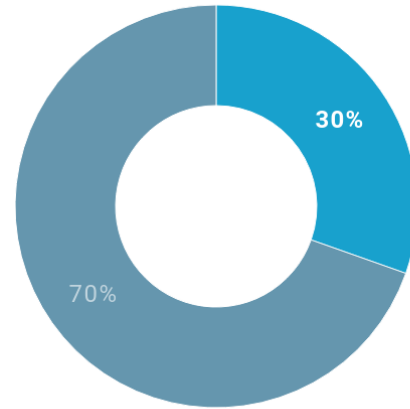
## But....most fathers do not use the benefit

Share of individuals who have used the benefit (%)

■ Did not use it  
■ Used it



Fathers



Mothers

Source: Batthyány, Genta & Perrota (2018).

## Why?

Constraint	Share of people who ...	Men	Women
Lack of information	don't know the benefit	17	5
Lack of information	don't know the duration of the benefit	62	27
Lack of information	don't know about its portability	42	22
Economic costs	consider that the benefit carries an economic cost	58	54
Social norms	believe that it is a mother's responsibility to take care of babies during the first year of life	33	0



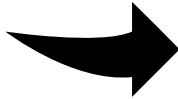
## Hypothesis: Social norms and beliefs on the role of women/men and care may also predetermine other constraints

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# HOW TO PROMOTE CHANGE?



Behaviorally-  
informed messages



Potential  
beneficiaries

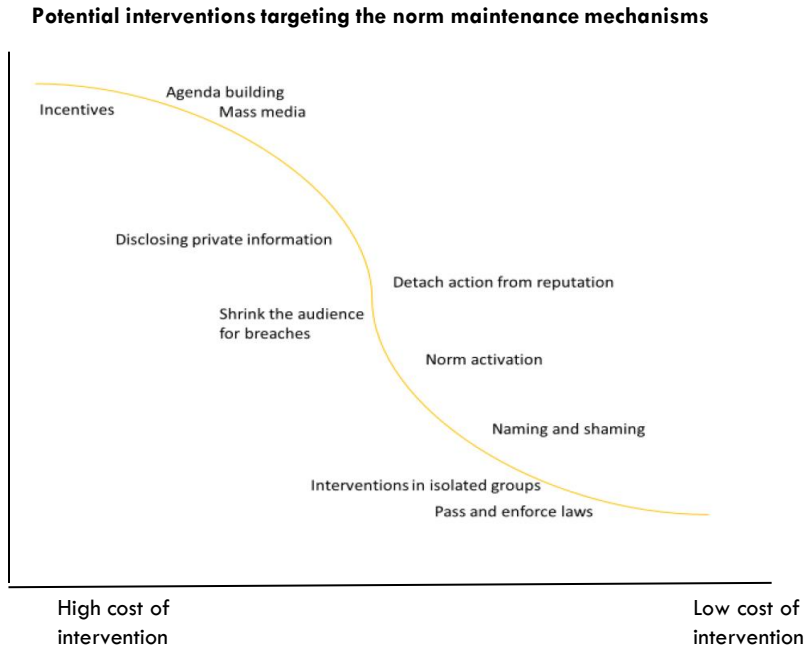
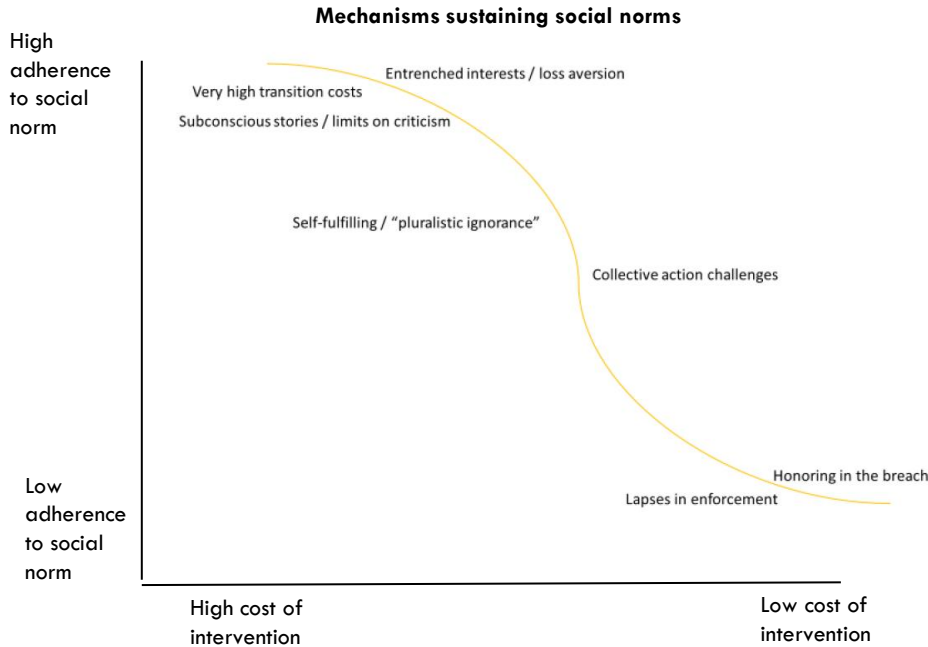
Providing information  
about the policy

Adjusting perceptions  
about the cost

Affecting beliefs  
about the role of  
fathers

# Norm Change

Diagnostics of social norms to help identify: a) norm-following behavior; the likely mechanisms maintaining the social norms at different levels of prevalence; and c) the most promising and cost-effective potential interventions to weaken social norms



# INTERVENTION



Content currently in process of design based on:

- “pluralistic ignorance” norms → majority of group members privately reject a norm, but go along with it because they assume, incorrectly, that most others accept it
- Activating countervailing a norm

# OUTCOMES OF INTEREST

## Short-term

- Knowledge about the existence, duration, and eligibility requirements for the benefit
- Perception of the role of women/men in care
- Intention to use the part-time paid parental leave

## Medium-term

- Use of the part-time paid parental leave by mothers and fathers
- Duration of the part-time leave
- Father/mother's employment
- Hours worked per week by both parents

## Long-term

- Salary of both parents
- Employment of both parents
- Hours worked per week by both parents
- Couple's future fertility
- % of time that father contributes to the care of the children

## OTHER CHALLENGES:

- Potential lack of integration with other policies and benefits, for example accommodations for breastfeeding mothers at work, access to childcare for ages 6 months+

**Stay tuned for results!**

**Thank you!**

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