The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State, and that persons with disabilities and their family members should receive the necessary protection and assistance to enable families to contribute towards the full and equal enjoyment of the rights of persons with disabilities.

In all regions families provide the vast majority of support to people with intellectual disabilities. Uniquely, they do this throughout the entire life of their family member with an intellectual disability.

Inclusion International is the global federation of people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

For more information and sources please see II Briefing Note: Focus on Families of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities.
Challenges

The challenges families experience are not a result of disability but a result of the barriers in communities and lack of supports to individuals and families.

INCREASED STRESS

Experienced mental health problems such as anxiety, depression or emotional breakdown due to isolation.

INSUFFICIENT SUPPORT

More than 75% of families report they can’t find afterschool care, non-institutional community services, trained reliable home care providers, summer care, residential, respite and other services. Lack of support results in lowered expectations.

FINANCIAL IMPACTS

Disability associated costs include communication devices, specialized foods and/or equipment.

LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

In all regions, families reported impact on employment. Someone, usually the mother, reported being unable to work or needing to limit employment to stay home to support the needs of their family member with an intellectual disability.

SUPPORTING FAMILIES THROUGH PUBLIC POLICY

- Short breaks for parents
- Tax relief
- Cash transfers
- Capacity building of parents and their organizations
- Examples of supporting families through public policy
- Supports for working parents