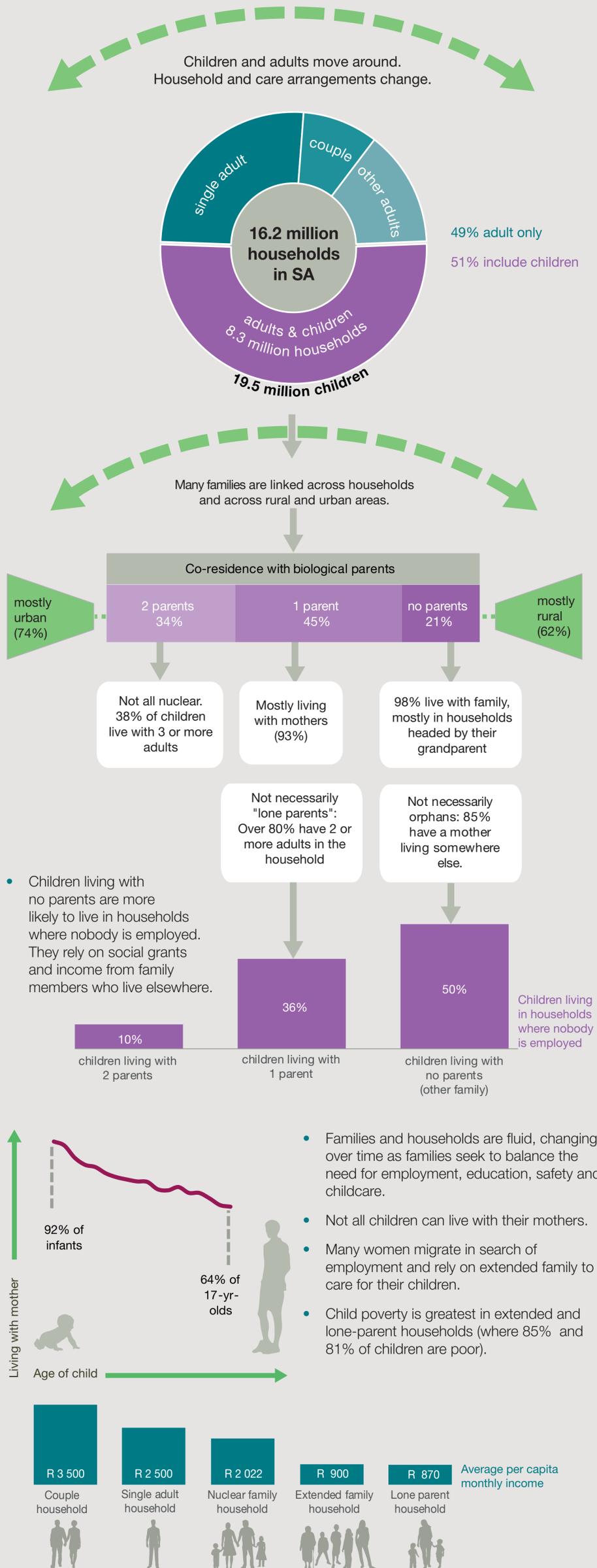


# Children, Families and the State

“The stability and cohesiveness of societies largely rests on the strength of the family.”

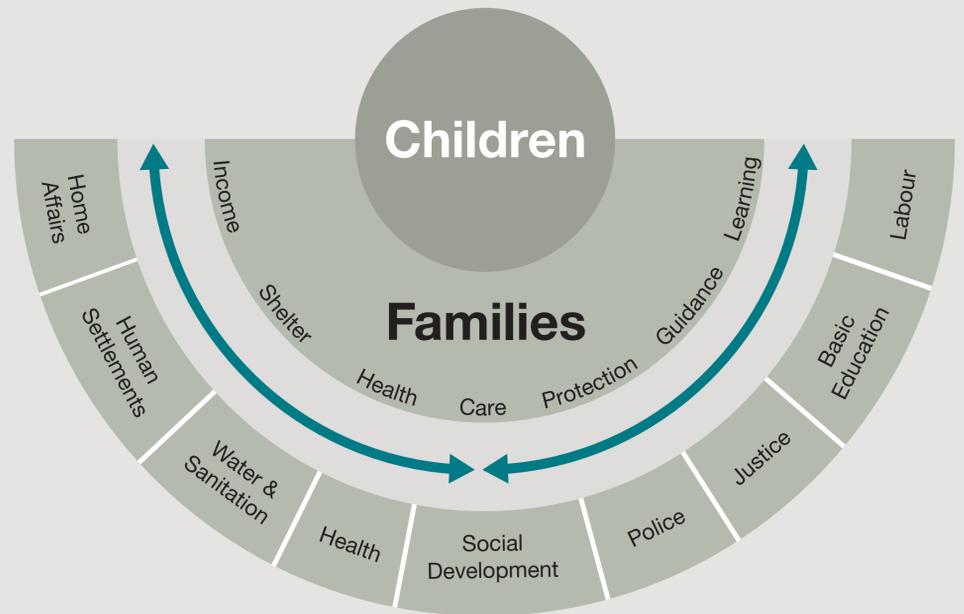
Ban Ki Moon, former United Nations Secretary-General

## Families and households: diverse, mobile and fluid



## Families and the State: partners in development

- The state depends on families to raise and nurture children. Families depend on the state to provide the necessary support and services. Investing in the next generation is essential to building the capacity of the state.
- Parents and caregivers bear the primary responsibility for caring and providing for children, protecting them from harm, and promoting their health, well-being and development.
- The state is the ultimate duty-bearer and must take all necessary – legislative, financial and administrative – measures to enable families to care, protect and provide for their children.



## Responsive services

- Poverty, unemployment, social isolation and interpersonal violence can compromise families' capacity to care for children.
- It is often the most vulnerable who are unable to access the services that they desperately need and to which they are entitled.
- Rights and development instruments outline the state's duty to develop policies, laws and programmes that are **inclusive** of all families and **responsive** to children's and families' complex and changing needs.
- Strong **coordination** and efficient referral systems are needed to strengthen linkages between departments and ensure seamless support at the local level.
- A range of policies provide for a **comprehensive set of services and benefits** designed to support children and families. These services may be:
  - universal** to enable families to provide nurturing care and support children's development (e.g. health and education)
  - targeted** to provide economic or social protection for families in need (e.g. social grants, subsidised housing and services for children with disabilities), or
  - responsive** to protect families and children in immediate need of intervention (e.g. families in need of emergency services and children who have experienced abuse).

