



**Human Rights Council 61st Session
ID with the Special Rapporteur on
the human right to a clean, healthy and
sustainable environment
*Oral Statement***

Make Mothers Matter congratulates the Special Rapporteur on her report¹.

As rightly highlighted, air pollution has a disproportionate life-threatening impact on children, especially during pregnancy and early childhood – with lasting consequences on their health, development, wellbeing, education, and future potential.

What is overlooked in the report however, is the indirect impact of air pollution on mothers and other caregivers. This includes additional unpaid care work, heightened stress and mental health challenges, which also reduce their ability to participate fully in economic and social life.

In 2021 more than 700,000 children under 5 years of age died from air pollution-related causes – nearly three quarters of them due to household air pollution from cooking with polluting fuels, primarily in Africa and South Asia.

This can – and must – be prevented. The cost of inaction is higher than that of implementing solutions.

MMM urges governments to prioritise the elimination of indoor cooking pollution– including through ODA, and to ensure universal access to clean fuels and technologies — such as solar, electricity, biogas, and biomass stoves that comply with WHO guidelines.²

Protecting children’s and women’s rights cannot remain optional.

Thank you.

¹ A/HRC/61/47 – <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/61/47>

² <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/household-air-pollution>