



Make  
Mothers  
Matter

Oral STATEMENT  
35th session of the Human Right Council

Item3

**Clustered ID with the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health by enhancing capacity building in public health**

To complement the Report of the Special Rapporteur on Mental Health, Make Mothers Matter - MMM - wishes to draw attention on the issue of maternal mental health and its impact on Early Childhood Development.

Mental health difficulties, including depression and anxiety, affect 10 to 20% of mothers during pregnancy and the year after childbirth, impacting their ability to provide adequate care, especially nurturing and responsive care, during this critical period of development of their child.

Perinatal mental health problems therefore not only have an adverse impact on the mother, but they also **compromise the healthy emotional, cognitive and even physical development of the child**, with serious long-term negative consequences.

Therefore, MMM calls on all governments to invest in maternal physical and mental health, as well as parenting support and early childhood education and care, starting already during pregnancy.

A cross-sectorial - multi-stakeholder mobilization is required at every level:

- To provide psychological support for women during pregnancy and after childbirth and mainstream mental health in maternity services
- To promote access to safe, timely and respectful care around childbirth
- To provide educational programs for mothers, fathers and other caregivers
- To create mother-friendly spaces and foster peer-to-peer support
- To provide adequate paid maternity leave
- To promote work and family life reconciliation policies [including paternity and parental leaves.]

Targeting the most vulnerable families can bring high economic and social returns in the longer term. In fact, it has the potential to break the cycle of poverty and lead to more peaceful communities and societies.

It is first a matter of woman's rights and child rights. But it is also a key opportunity and strategy for the realisation of the 2030 Development Agenda.

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*Make Mothers Matter (MMM) is an international NGO created in 1947 to raise the awareness of policy makers and public opinion on the contribution of mothers to social, cultural and economic development. MMM has no political or religious affiliations, and thus transparently voices the concerns of mothers at international level with permanent MMM representatives at the United Nations (General Consultative Status), UNESCO and the European Union.*