



Oral Statement
40th session of the Human Rights Council

Item 3
Report of the Independent Expert on the effects of foreign debt and other related international financial obligations of States on the full enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights

We at Make Mothers Matter congratulate the Independent Expert on **the Guiding principles on Human Rights Impact assessments of economic reforms**. MMM particularly welcomes the focus on **Gender, in Principle 8**; *“Economic reforms should prevent any kind of direct and indirect form of discrimination based on gender, [...] and should promote substantive and transformative gender equality.*

As rightly stated, current economic thinking does not take into account the value of domestic and unpaid family care work and its significant contribution to society. Women, especially when they are mothers, still globally carry out $\frac{3}{4}$ of this essential work¹, which also underpins the whole economy.

We believe it is time to make the unpaid work of caring for children, older persons and other dependents, visible and taken into account by policy makers, especially when devising economic policy.

This is exactly what target 4 of SDG 5 is all about: *Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.*

And according to McKinsey, it is also smart economics: addressing the issue of unpaid care work is a key step towards women’s full participation in the economy.

We at MMM also call on States to take a long-term perspective - and assess the impact of economic reforms and policy on families. Parents *must* be able to provide adequate nurturing care and education for their children, crucially during the early formative years. Children have the right to be cared for, nurtured and educated to reach their full (physical, emotional and cognitive) development potential. They are after all, the future work force.

No economic reform or policy should penalize mothers and families. For too long, families have been adjusting to the economy and the labour market. It is time the economy adjusts to families.

¹ Source ILO 2018: https://www.ilo.org/asia/media-centre/news/WCMS_633284/lang--en/index.htm