



**ILC109 – Recurrent Discussion Committee
on Social security
Point 1: Realizing universal social
protection**

We at Make Mothers Matter would like to stress the critical importance, relevance, and legitimacy of **realizing universal social protection** for unpaid caregivers, especially mothers.

The Covid-19 crisis has exposed how the inequitable distribution of care responsibilities is a source of economic injustice for women, and the challenges that most mothers face in trying to juggle care responsibilities with paid work.

As part of the decent work agenda, it is high time governments and employers address this issue and seriously **invest** in supporting women, parents and other caregivers doing this **essential** yet unpaid, mostly invisible work of caring.

First, **unpaid care work must be recognized as work, essential work which in the long-term benefits communities and society as a whole. It is therefore also a collective responsibility.**

- This means that every unpaid caregiver should have access to social protection just like any other worker. In particular, every mother works and should have access to social security, healthcare, pension and full maternity protection.
- **Furthermore, we need to redefine “work” as a holistic concept, where both paid and unpaid work are combined. The world of work must adapt to this reality, and private companies must commit to supporting workers with care responsibilities.**

Second, **social protection must be considered as an investment**, not as an expense that should be minimized.

Supporting caregivers, parents especially, through targeted public services AND adequate social protection is investing in people and families. Ultimately it is also about investing in children - and we know how critical nurturing care is during early childhood. It is investment with high returns, especially for vulnerable families.

To conclude, the pandemic provides a unique opportunity for systemic changes, and this begins by changing narratives:

1. Unpaid family care work IS work, and a collective responsibility, hence the need for universal social protection.
2. Social protection must be considered as a long-term investment.

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Make Mothers Matter believes in the power of mothers to make the world a better place, advocating for their recognition and support as changemakers. Created in 1947, MMM is an international NGO with no political or religious affiliations, transparently voicing the concerns of mothers at the highest level: the European Union, UNESCO and the United Nations (general consultative status).