



Make
Mothers
Matter

Oral Statement
Human Rights Council 48th Session
Item 3
Plan and vision for the mandate 2020-2023
Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human
rights to safe drinking water and sanitation

Make Mothers Matter commends the Special Rapporteur's vision for his mandate. We welcome in particular his view on the key role that women must play in the realisation of the right to water and sanitation, in particular at decision making level.

The lack of accessible and affordable safe drinking water and sanitation directly affects women's rights to health; it also affects their right to education, paid work and participation in public life – which in turn impacts their families.

The unpaid and arduous work of fetching water, which is mostly done by women and children, all too often make up for the lack of public water infrastructure and services, and thus subsidizes provisioning by the State. It also exacerbates the inequitable distribution of domestic work and care responsibilities, which is a root cause of economic and social injustice for women – in particular mothers. The pandemic has only made it worse.

It is high time governments address this issue and seriously **invest** in public infrastructure and services, with the **explicit double objective of addressing women's time poverty and supporting the essential yet unpaid and mostly invisible work of caring**. And it begins with the provision of safe water and sanitation.

Still, women must not be seen as 'victims' or 'beneficiaries', or even as a 'vulnerable group'. Women and girls represent more than half of the world's population. They know what they need. They **must** be part of the solution and involved at all levels of decision-making – especially on issues that directly affect their daily lives.

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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).