



Oral Statement
Human Rights Council – 52nd Session
HL meeting on the 35th anniversary
of the Declaration on the Right to Development

Make Mothers Matter supports today's report conclusion that only transformative changes can achieve a just and sustainable future where everyone, including women and girls, enjoys the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment¹.

Problems must be tackled from their sources. A major one is the very own nature of our current economic system.

To favour economic growth over environmental degradation and public health concerns is not sustainable nor is it equitable. By disregarding the unpaid work women and girls daily undertake to provide care around them, we also disregard the risks and injustice they face². As such, we neglect some of their most fundamental rights.³

This is especially true for mothers⁴.

Like nature's provision of vital resources, women's disproportionate unpaid labour and contribution to the care economy cannot, and should not, be taken for granted.

Care must be prioritized as a key component of our economic system. Economies depend on it, whether it be caring for children, older persons, or the environment.

Investing in care work is investing in the future.

This is what we are calling for today. For member states to collectively move beyond GDP, and see the transformation into wellbeing economies⁵, as an essential measure for all to enjoy their right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.

¹ 2023 Report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment - <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G22/616/63/PDF/G2261663.pdf?OpenElement>

² E.g., Due to gendered cooking responsibilities, millions of women and girls die prematurely each year because of household air pollution from unclean fuels and inefficient cookstoves. E.g., 2., Pollution and climate change force women and girls to travel farther to acquire safe and sufficient water, exposing them to injuries, stress and increased risks of violence.

³ Including the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment

⁴ 2013 Report of the Special Rapporteur on poverty to the UN GA on unpaid care work and women's human rights - <https://www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-poverty/annual-reports-1999-2014>

⁵ See the work of the wellbeing economy Alliance (WEAll): <https://weall.org>

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