



Human Rights Council – 54th Session General Debate on Item 3

Make Mothers Matter welcomes OHCHR's excellent report on the *Rights of the child and inclusive social protection*¹.

The report recalls that parents hold the primary responsibility for children's upbringing, and that States must provide them with the appropriate support.

We fully endorse the report's recommendations, in particular that:

- Strong parental support is essential for child rights compliant inclusive social protection – especially for mothers. This includes income support, universal access to health, and unemployment benefits, as well as pensions for parents.
- Paid maternity and parental leave are crucial to avoid new mothers having to restart work before they or the child are ready. Support for pregnant women and new mothers is vital, also for healthy early child development, which is foundational.
- Parenting education, to equip them with positive approaches, skills and resources regarding children's development, health, nutrition and well-being, also contributes to the realisation of child rights.
- Comprehensive childcare policies are also key to supporting children's development and rights, while enabling parents to work or study.

Children are the next generation of citizens and workers. Investing in universal social protection, including maternity and parental support, is investing in their future and our common future – with high returns.

¹ See also our joint submission <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/children/cfi/social-protection/subm-child-inclusive-social-protection-csos-child-rights-connect-hope-homes-for-children-make-mothers-matter-save-children-terres-31.pdf>