



High Level Political Forum side-event

Mothers, unpaid care work and global crises: *connecting the dots*

Introduction

As you may know, at MMM, we are committed to mothers, in particular, to raising the important issue of the work they do for their family which is unpaid - we call it unpaid family care work. Women and particularly mothers do it every day and it impacts not just them but their children, their communities and society as a whole - we cannot survive without this invaluable work.

So what's the problem? Well, this issue of unpaid care work is generally overlooked and we believe it HAS to be taken into account when addressing global crises and in policy responses. We need to ensure that this particular lens of 'care' and wellbeing becomes a common thread to address crises. **Because women - mothers - caring for their children and their family are needed as part of the solution.** And also because a more caring society, based on a strong care system and policies to recognise, redistribute and support the work of caring, could help prevent or mitigate the impact of crises by enhancing women's resilience.

Our current GDP-focussed economic system is clearly not working – contributing to crises and exacerbating inequalities, including those linked to care.

As our speaker Olivier De Schutter in a recent Guardian article said:

“GDP has no way of accounting for the estimated 16.4 billion hours spent every day worldwide on unpaid care work, largely carried out by women, that underpins the global economy: caring for children, people with disabilities and older citizens.”

So what are we to do? Again, I quote the Special Rapporteur:

“We urgently need to look beyond profit, beyond the short-term and beyond the interests of the few”. He adds:

“Unpaid domestic and care work should be remunerated through paid parental and carers' leave, included in pension calculations, and supported through access to safe water, sanitation, affordable childcare facilities and other essential services.”

Today offers us an opportunity to look at the overall scenario facing us and explore how we go about transforming our systems to first serve the wellbeing of people and the planet and put care at the centre. A collective responsibility, one that must be shouldered by all parties: governments, policy makers, the private sector/businesses and of course all of us.

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