



Human Rights Council – 60th Session
Agenda Item 3: ID with the Independent Expert on
the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons
Intersection between older persons' right to social
protection and their right to work

Oral Statement

Make Mothers Matter welcomes the Report of the Independent Expert, which rightly highlights gender inequalities in older persons' rights to social protection and work.

However, we regret the lack of emphasis on a key root cause: the unequal distribution of unpaid domestic and care work.

This gender care gap underpins the gender pay gap and leads to interrupted careers, forced part-time or informal work – all conditions that result in lower income, weaker access to social protection, and reduced pensions for women.

Women - especially mothers - are overrepresented among those with “frequently interrupted working lives”. This must be acknowledged if we are to address the specific discriminations and hurdles faced by mothers – namely the “motherhood penalty” and its impact on women’s economic security in old age.

The increased risk of poverty faced by older women is directly linked to a lifetime of disproportionate share of unpaid care work - including caregiving that often continues into old age, as they support older relatives or grandchildren.

We therefore urge Member States to:

1. recognise, measure and address the motherhood penalty;
2. build care systems and policies that value and support unpaid care work, and that redistribute it fairly - between men and women, and across society.

Thank you

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Since 1947, MMM has been at the forefront of advocating for mothers' rights and recognition worldwide, raising awareness amongst policy makers and the general public on the contributions of mothers towards social, cultural and economic development. MMM has no political or religious affiliations. Working with local partners, MMM advocates on influential global platforms including the European Union, the United Nations (General Consultative Status), and UNESCO, ensuring that the lived realities of mothers are voiced and acknowledged.