



Human Rights Council 61st Session
Panel discussion
on financing sustainable development in
line with economic, social and cultural
rights obligations
Oral Statement

Make Mothers Matter welcomes this important discussion.

In a context of shrinking fiscal space, budgets must prioritise long-term and high return investments. Supporting mothers and other caregivers is one such investment – with multiplier effects.

1. Supporting mothers by recognising and more fairly redistributing unpaid care work addresses a root cause of gender inequality, whose costs are estimated in the trillions of dollars annually. It unlocks women's full economic and social participation and advances their rights.
2. Parents – particularly mothers – are the primary architects of early childhood development. [Children's lifelong health, learning, and productivity are built during these early years]. To provide the nurturing care children need to thrive, parents must be empowered with adequate income security, supportive policies, and parenting resources.

The cost of inaction is high. For example, the London School of Economics estimates that maternal mental health challenges cost the UK approximately £8.1 billion annually – nearly three-quarters being linked to adverse outcomes for children. Crucially, this is five times more than the investment needed to improve services.

In conclusion, investing in mothers is investing in both children – our shared future – and gender equality – a cornerstone of sustainable development and lasting peace. Mothers and caregivers must be a central priority in budgetary decisions and public policy.

Thank you.