

50th Regular Session of the Human Rights Council, 13 June – 8 July 2022
Oral statement for the panel discussion on menstrual hygiene management, human rights and gender equality, Tuesday 21 June 2022

Speaker: Therese Mahon, WaterAid on behalf of the Global Menstrual Collective

The Global Menstrual Collective represents 35 academic institutions, international non-governmental organisations, UN agencies, and coalitions that have joined together to advocate for improved investment in menstrual health and hygiene. We warmly welcome Human Rights Council resolution 47/4 on menstrual hygiene management, human rights and gender equality; and this panel discussion.

Menstrual stigma and unmet menstrual needs are rooted in gender inequality and undermine the realisation of human rights for millions of women, girls and other people who menstruate, including their rights to education, to water and sanitation, to health, to work, to freedom of religion or belief, to take part in cultural and public life.

All people who menstruate should have access to; menstruation information; effective, affordable materials and water and sanitation services, health services for menstrual disorders; and experience a supportive environment, free from stigma and discrimination.

We call on Member States and all stakeholders to:

- 1) Commit to achieving menstrual health and hygiene for all by significantly increasing financing and resources to scale up action. Investment should prioritise those who are most marginalised and experience multiple dimensions of discrimination who are least likely to have their menstrual needs met.
- 2) Make a stronger, actionable commitment towards tackling discriminatory gender norms, practices and stigma around menstruation; and ensuring that needs voiced by women, girls and other people who menstruate, are heard and drive solutions.
- 3) Set targets for menstrual health and hygiene and track progress by incorporating relevant indicators into national monitoring systems.

The Global Menstrual Collective stands ready to support Member States, through collective global action. Gender equality will not be achieved unless menstrual health and hygiene is urgently addressed by all relevant sectors through appropriate policies, programming and financing.

Thank you.