



HAUT-COMMISSARIAT AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME • BUREAU DU HAUT COMMISSAIRE AUX DROITS DE L'HOMME

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Reference: WHRGS/MG/Res47/25

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights presents its compliments to all Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations at Geneva and has the honour to refer to Resolution 47/25 entitled “Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and human rights” adopted by the Human Rights Council on 14 July 2021. The resolution requests the High Commissioner for Human Rights to prepare a follow-up report on “good practices and challenges in the application of a human rights-based approach to the elimination of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity, including through the utilization of the technical guidance¹ by States and other relevant actors,” to be presented to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-fourth session.

In this context, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights would like to request and would welcome information on:

1. What steps has your Government or organization taken to utilize a human rights-based approach in policies and programmes to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and morbidity²? How has the technical guidance assisted your Government or organization in designing, implementing, revising and/or evaluating such policies and programmes?
2. Has the technical guidance assisted your Government or organization in building enhanced understanding of the requirements of a human rights-based approach³? If so, please expand upon the impact that such enhanced understanding has for the design and implementation of policies and programmes in this area.

¹ The technical guidance on the implementation of a human rights-based approach (HRBA) to the application of policies and programmes for the reduction of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity provides detailed guidance on the steps required to develop, implement and evaluate policies and programmes on maternal health. It follows the policy cycle of planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring, review and oversight, and remedies. Through the identification of rights holders and their entitlements and corresponding duty bearers and their obligations, a HRBA aims to identify potential human rights concerns, establish who is responsible for taking corrective action and determine how action is most appropriately taken. See: OHCHR Technical Guidance (A/HRC/21/22).

² The World Health Organization defines maternal mortality as: “the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy ... from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management, but not from accidental or incidental causes”. In turn, maternal morbidity is defined as “any health condition attributed to and/or aggravated by pregnancy and childbirth that has a negative impact on the woman’s wellbeing”. See: OHCHR Information Sheet of Maternal Mortality and Morbidity, 2020.

³ A HRBA applies the key principles of non-discrimination and equality, participation and empowerment, sustainability and international assistance, transparency and accountability throughout the programme cycle. See: A/HRC/39/26

3. What challenges does your Government or organization face in implementing a human rights-based approach in policies and programmes to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and morbidity? Please elaborate on the nature of these challenges and steps taken to address them.
4. Does your Government or organization regularly collect and analyse disaggregated data and information on maternal mortalities and morbidities, including in the context of COVID-19 pandemic? Please elaborate on good practices and challenges in this regard.
5. Please elaborate on the main causes that may have led to poor maternal health outcomes in the context of COVID-19 pandemic in your country and/or context? Please also describe the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic response on the availability and accessibility and quality sexual and reproductive health, including maternal health services for women and girls.
6. Please provide information on whether there is a particular group of women in your country and/or context who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and response measures when accessing sexual and reproductive health, including maternal health services. (For instance, adolescents, women living with HIV, indigenous women, racial and ethnic minority women, women from rural areas, persons with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities etc.)
7. What measures have your Government or organization undertaken in order to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on maternal health? Please elaborate on any lessons learned, good practices as well as challenges faced.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights would be grateful if submissions could be limited to five pages and sent to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (United Nations Office at Geneva, CH 1211 Geneva 10; Email: registry@ohchr.org, cc: masiha.ghafory@un.org) by **20 March 2023**.

Unless otherwise requested, all submission will be made available on OHCHR website. Any enquiries may be made to Masiha Ghafory at masiha.ghafory@un.org, telephone: +41 229289612.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Permanent Missions to the United Nations Office at Geneva the assurances of its highest consideration.

01 February 2023