

Oral Statement by the Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural rights to the Interactive Dialogue with the UN Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health

20. June 2022

Thank you, Mr. President,

We thank the Special Rapporteur for her report, and for underlining that insufficient allocation or misallocation of public resources can undermine the enjoyment of the right to health, especially of the most marginalised, such as survivors of violence.

In our report '[From gender-responsive to gender-transformative public services](#)', we concluded that public healthcare services must consider sex and gender-specific needs to guarantee access to public services and deliver services appropriate to all women. In the context of gender-based violence, governments must invest in strong, high-quality, *public* healthcare systems and provide sufficient resources to allow victims, as well as perpetrators, to receive a comprehensive set of healthcare and social services, including mental health assistance, to end cycles of violence.

Lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic have increased violence against women and girls. Movement restrictions forced them to spend more time with their aggressors without adequate access to domestic violence support services. These concerning trends make investing in gender-transformative public services an urgent imperative.

We also welcome the focus on violence in healthcare settings. In recent monitoring reports we found high levels of violence against patients in both private and public health care facilities in communities living in informal settlements. This is particularly the case in maternal and reproductive healthcare services, with major repercussions on women's health.

We would thus like to encourage the Special Rapporteur to further explore the gender dimension of violence, including focusing on commercial private healthcare settings.

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