

## The Global Menstrual Health and Hygiene Collective statement on the occasion of the 64<sup>th</sup> session of Commission on the Status of Women



**We, as members of the Global Menstrual Health and Hygiene Collective, are committed to contributing towards gender equality, empowerment of women and realising the vision of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Millions of women, girls and transgender people who menstruate are negatively affected by inequitable social norms, discriminatory practices and inadequate menstrual health services, which impact their sexual reproductive health and rights and psycho-social well-being. Menstruation is a normal biological process experienced by half the world's population for a significant part of their lives. However, widespread stigma and taboos associated with menstruation, rooted in gender inequality, mean that it remains a source of fear, embarrassment and shame. Gender equality will not be achieved unless menstrual health is addressed by all relevant sectors through appropriate policies, programming and funding.**

We call on Member States, the United Nations, private sector and civil society organisations to address the barriers experienced by people who menstruate that prevent them from realising their human rights. Comprehensive menstrual health is fundamental to the Beijing Platform for Action's objectives on providing reproductive health information and services, removing obstacles for women and girls in

decision making, tackling discrimination women face in the workplace and their communities, providing girls with equal education opportunities and tackling early marriage and unintended pregnancy.

The 2019 Review of the Beijing Declaration highlights the importance of steps to address menstrual stigma and the provision of adequate sanitation in schools for menstrual hygiene. However, as the 2019 Review states, 'financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls has been manifestly insufficient'. Despite increased global attention to menstrual health, investment has not been commensurate with its relevance to achieving the 2030 Agenda. Increased investment in menstrual health is investment in women and girls' health, and will contribute to achieving several Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 3 on health; Goal 4 on education; Goal 5 on gender equality, Goal 6 on water and sanitation, Goal 10 on reduced inequalities and Goal 17 on partnerships.

The Global Menstrual Health and Hygiene Collective - with a diverse membership consisting of NGOs, UN agencies, academic institutions, private sector organisations and networks - was established to drive and guide improved investment in menstrual health through evidence-based advocacy.

