



Who is MMM?

The MMM is an international NGO in General Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and Department for Public Information. The MMM European Delegation brings the MMM's global vision to its working relationship with the European Commission and Parliament. For 60 years the MMM has federated associations from widely different backgrounds working for and with mothers to ensure at least the basics of human security and improved quality of life. The input of mother and father into bringing up children is – or should be – symbiotic, equal, different but complementary. However, research has shown that it is mothers who have the most profound – and lasting – influence from a child's earliest moments. For this reason the MMM seeks to address many social issues through the natural authority of mothers.

To reinforce its open, inclusive character, the MMM defines itself as an independent, apolitical and non-denominational movement. The MMM is managed by mothers who volunteer to support the work of representation and the activities of its member associations throughout the world. The MMM is run by mothers, for mothers and their children and family.

The wide range of issues covered by the MMM reflects not only a mother's essential multi-tasking skills, but also the diversity of its member associations. The different levels of activities, practical, institutional and international networking, enhance each other.

Brief History of MMM

The MMM began due to the work of the Feminine Civic and Social Union (UFCS) which was active in the 1930s in France in raising awareness about the problems faced by many mothers as they became increasingly active outside the home. The UFCS demanded that mothers be given a truly free choice between going out to work and staying at home - it is thanks to those pioneers that family allowances were granted in France.

During the Second World War women had met the challenge of fulfilling the many responsibilities needed by countries whose men were away at war. Women, particularly mothers, had, while their husbands were mobilised, kept alive not only their family, but also their national economy and the very fabric of society. But these women had had no say in the decisions that had so devastated their lives. Their experience led women to realise that mothers are responsible for transmitting to their children from their earliest years the values of responsibility, respect and peace – they wished to contribute actively to a peaceful future and to the economic and social developments of the time.

In this spirit the UFCS organised in 1947 an international congress at the new UNESCO building in Paris where delegates from 26 nations of the world debated the theme: "Mothers Work for Human Progress". While denouncing the horrors of war, the participants asserted their determination to repair the ruins, to recreate conditions for a lasting peace and to build for their children a better world. At the close of the congress it was unanimously decided by the participants to found the MMM and to adopt the text of the Mothers' Charter as its underlying principles.

In the aftermath of the war, there were still divisions between the peoples of Europe, but the MMM understood from the start the importance of an inclusive approach to building a lasting peace. As the MMM has developed links with many countries, its vision is shared by associations worldwide.

In 1949 the MMM was granted Special Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Council at the United Nations –In 2004 the MMM was granted General Consultative Status - one of only 135 NGOs with this status out of over 3,000 non-governmental organisations active at the UN. Since 2001 the MMM has been developing a working relationship with the European Union’s authorities.

The different entities of the structure of the MMM are all inter-linked in a multiple way system of communication to ensure shared information, vision, experience and expertise. All MMM members refer ultimately to the Paris office which ensures the unity of the MMM in all its members’ mission and activities.

MMM activities

1. Practical or grass roots activities.

The international aspect of MMM’s activities makes it necessary to find common ground: that is the powerful influence of mothers in their families and in their communities as agents of peace and security.

Here are a few examples

- Enfance sans drogue - France
 - ✓ Training mothers to speak effectively with their children about drug-abuse and rising awareness amongst young people in schools
- Accion Familiar – Spain
 - ✓ Family counselling and support, drug prevention, mother’s workshops entramadres, immigrants counselling,
 - ✓ University chair for the family
- ONG Repères (= “Reference Points”) Ivory Coast,
 - ✓ Raising awareness among parents and training them about health and education issues
 - ✓ Informing parents about their role in preparing children to live in their community
 - ✓ Training and information through: ‘Life schools’, training seminars and workshops, youth camps, conferences, forums, dinner-debates, roundtables, open days, meeting places
 - ✓ Counselling: through support groups, creative activities groups,
 - ✓ Health groups
- Ligue Marocaine pour la Protection de l’Enfance. Morocco :



- ✓ Defending the rights of the child, promoting child health and education, supply training and information in the field of mother and child ... orphanages, facilitating adoption, crèches, schools, day care centres, health centres, literacy classes, development of a National Centre for the Mother and Child...etc
- The Rural Reconstruction Foundation – Bangladesh
 - ✓ Agricultural practices, woodland management, fish farming, rural economics, disaster management and reconstruction. Literacy classes, women’s development, health and hygiene, citizenship.
- Fundalam – Argentina_: maternal health, supporting young mothers and rising awareness to the importance of the mother child bond. Prevention of early pregnancies.

2. Institutional activities (based on our grass roots activities)

With National governments: 3 examples

- MMM France maintains regular contacts with government officials, deputies and ministries concerning women’s issues – rises awareness and makes proposals – currently concerning parental leave and mothers’ pensions.
- MMM Lebanon : participating in an NGO network asking government to re enforce women’s rights and more specifically the right for Lebanese women to transmit their nationality to their children.
- Donneurope Federcasalinge – Italy - contributed to a law protecting women’s rights in context of domestic accidents; rises awareness on issue of mother’s pensions

With the European Union

MMM Europe has its own status as a Regional MMM Association and represents the European members of the MMM to the European institutions. A team of volunteers with specific responsibilities composes it. When required by specific projects MMMEurope hires a project manager paid by the project commissioner.

MMM Europe:

- brings to the EU the practical expertise of MMM grass roots members
- follows reports (initiative and legislative) presented and discussed at the European Parliament and attends specific Parliamentary Commissions
- contacts MEP to discuss specific matters related to the MMM’s mission
- writes position papers
- attends and participates in conferences, meetings and colloquia
- takes part in European projects
- communicates with its members through a web site

The global grassroots expertise of the MMM brings to the EU, through MMM Europe, a global perspective on European family matters.

With the United Nations

As an NGO with General Consultative Status to the UN, the MMM seeks to:

- participate to all the High Level meetings - (New York)
- produce oral and written statements
- attend information meetings, forums, commissions organised by the UN
- be an active agent in panel discussions
- participate actively in Working Groups on issues linked with the MMM mission.
- address petitions to the Secretary General office

The representation and work at the UN and the EU involve much interaction with other international and European organisations. Though each organisation legitimately has its own specific mission, team work, joint ventures, petitions and statements are now the rule for a greater impact and true representative purposes. The MMM working with a large diversity of member associations throughout the world is likewise challenged with the diversity of the organisations it collaborates with. Finding common ground and consensus is essential. Being at the crossroads between women's and family issues and contributing to groups dealing with both these issues gives the MMM broadened perspectives which are most useful for an inclusive approach to family and mothers' concerns.

UN and EU Representatives send the MMM regular reports which the office then summarises and disseminates among its members. Members are invited to attend UN and EU meetings on topics where they have specific expertise and they are also regularly asked to send contributions on issues proposed by the UN and EU agendas which will then be relayed by the MMM representatives in debates/ working groups or even as a possible addition to publications such as what is projected presently by the branch of family affairs at DESA (ECOSOC Department of Economic and Social Affairs) on "*Family policy and men in families*" and by the Family Platform at the EU on "The State of mothers in Europe"

3. Organisation, participation and contribution to international conferences, seminars and colloquia

An important means of rising awareness on mothers' issues, of transmitting the MMM message, of networking with other NGOs, re enforcing the MMM network of members and partner organisations. Examples:

- 2003: Conference in Beirut: *The Role of Mothers in Peace Building and Security*.
- 2005: Seminar in Madrid: conciliating family and professional life
- 2007: Congress at UNESCO- Paris : *Mothers Work for Peace*
- 2008: Conference at the academy of Defence – Oxford UK : "*A Secure Society for the 21st Century – Why Mothers Matter*"
- 2008: Session at the United Nations DPI (Department of Public Information) conference in UNESCO – Paris for the 60th Anniversary of the declaration of Human Rights : *Mothers, a cohesive force : Mobilising mothers for the implementation of Human dignity and Rights for everyone and fighting discrimination*"
- 2010-2011: Participation of MMMEurope in the European Commission 7th Framework Project "Family Platform" www.familyplatform.eu