



Thank you Mister Chair, distinguished delegates, members of civil society,

The Fertility Education and Medical Management (FEMM) Foundation provides knowledge-based health programs for women inspired by women's right to be informed participants in their own healthcare and to make voluntary decisions based on options, information, and understanding. The Foundation is dedicated to health education, medical research, and to improving women's health care.

There are 8 billion people on our planet and half of these are under 30 years old. With this in mind, it is essential to prioritize the fertility awareness education of adolescent girls and young women. Research shows that women and girls who are keeping track of their ovulation cycles are able to detect health problems early.

The Committee on Adolescent Health Care of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Committee on Adolescence of the American Academy of Pediatrics issued an opinion recognizing the role of menstruation as a vital sign for girls to detect underlying medical problems. It also states that the practice of charting cycles is a useful skill for girls to acquire. Talking to girls about their periods and teaching them to pay attention to the onset of their ovulation through biomarkers, such as cervical mucus patterns, empowers them for life to recognize the normal and abnormal signs of their bodies. teenFEMM is one program that does just this. After a teenFEMM class, one 11-year old girl said, "I feel confident because now I really understand how my body works."

FEMM also provides courses for adult women. They use this knowledge to track their cycles for their health, as well as to successfully achieve or avoid pregnancy. When they need it, FEMM also connects women with medical management which has helped them address debilitating postpartum depression, painful cycles due to ovarian cysts or endometriosis, address migraines, and even identify underlying health issues such as insulin resistance.

Women have faced cycle-related problems for centuries. These problems have been minimized or have only received band-aid solutions, like hormonal contraceptives. FEMM's medically-researched programs go to the root of this issue and we are seeing women thrive! We want to get this knowledge in more hands, and therefore have developed a free app, which is an easy way for women and girls to begin to learn about and chart their cycles.



We call on governments to allocate funding to fertility awareness education. This knowledge empowers women to talk to their doctors about their health and be participants in their own preventative care. We call on ministries of health around the world to work with us to train doctors and to work with hospitals to integrate this essential knowledge into their standards of care. Policy proposals to clearly prioritize fertility awareness in general education and medical training is a concrete step to help women and girls achieve the highest level of health possible, while having a visible impact on the attainment of the SDGs by 2030.

Thank you.