Enabling factors to promote and support breastfeeding

Maaike Arts, MSc.
Nutrition Specialist, UNICEF New York
Content overview

• Enabling factors for breastfeeding
• The Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative and updated (2018) guidance for its implementation
• Global Breastfeeding Collective: advocacy for increased financing and policies for breastfeeding
Breastfeeding is not a one-woman job.
## Effect of interventions on breastfeeding practices

### Systematic review and meta-analysis (195 studies):¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention setting(s)</th>
<th>Early initiation of breastfeeding</th>
<th>Exclusive breastfeeding</th>
<th>Continued breastfeeding</th>
<th>Any breastfeeding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home &amp; family + community</td>
<td>↑ 85%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health systems + community</td>
<td></td>
<td>↑ 152%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any combination of settings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>↑ 97%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>↑ 40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most effective interventions: counselling by peers or health personnel, baby friendly hospital support, community mobilization

---

Effect of the enabling environment

Breastmilk substitutes: Study in The Philippines\(^1\):

- Children more likely to be given infant formula if:
  - Mother recalled advertising messages
  - Doctor, mother or relative recommended formula
- Children given infant formula 6.4 times more likely to stop breastfeeding <12 months of age

Maternity leave: Literature review (n=21)\(^2\):

- Maternity leave >3 months: 3x more likely to maintain breastfeeding
- Maternity leave >6 months: 50% more likely to maintain breastfeeding
- Socio-economic group also matters

---


Impact of the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative

Systematic review (58 studies):¹

- Adherence to the Ten Steps improves breastfeeding rates (early initiation, exclusive, duration of any breastfeeding)
- Dose-response relationship between # steps and improved breastfeeding outcomes
- Avoiding early supplementation crucial
- Community support important to maintain breastfeeding

BFHI – Ten Steps Updated (2018) 1

**Critical management procedures**

1. Facility policies:
   a) Code of marketing
   b) Breastfeeding policy
   c) Internal monitoring
2. Staff competency

**Key clinical practices**

3. Antenatal information
4. Immediate postnatal care
5. Support with breastfeeding
6. Supplementation
7. Rooming-in
8. Responsive feeding
9. Feeding bottles, teats and pacifiers
10. Care at discharge

BFHI – Key points in updated implementation guidance

1. BFHI should be responsibility of every facility providing maternity and newborn care (private & public, large & small)
2. National standards of care based on updated Ten Steps
3. Integration with other MCH, health care improvement, HSS and quality assurance initiatives
4. Ensure that health care providers have the competencies to implement the BFHI (pre-service training; in-service training)
5. Develop incentives (public recognition and other)
6. Regular internal monitoring is a crucial element
7. External assessments to be streamlined (manageable within existing resources)
Support for breastfeeding – from the first hour of life
Global Breastfeeding Collective

Mission

• Enable more mothers to breastfeed by securing new financial resources for national breastfeeding programs and strengthening political commitment

• Encourage adoption of supportive laws, policies and tools at the global, regional and country levels within the broader development, humanitarian and human rights agenda
Global Breastfeeding Collective Members
Global Breastfeeding Collective’s 7 Policy Actions

1. Increase funding
2. Fully implement the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes
3. Enact paid family leave and workplace breastfeeding policies
4. Implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding in maternity facilities
5. Improve access to skilled breastfeeding counselling
6. Strengthen links between health facilities and communities, and encourage community networks
7. Strengthen monitoring systems that track progress
## Current status of the Actions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Current Percentage</th>
<th>2030 Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Donors contribute at least $5 per newborn to support</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fully implements the Code of Marketing of Breast-milk</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Provides recommended maternity leave</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Over half of births are in Baby-friendly facilities</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Most primary healthcare facilities provide IYCF</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Most districts have community IYCF Programmes</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7a. Breastfeeding programme assessed in the last 5 years</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7b. Breastfeeding data collected in the last 5 years</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Global Breastfeeding Collective Scorecard - example

Select an indicator
Status of Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding

Traffic Light Map

Performance in region
Select a color to filter a category in the map

https://www.unicef.org/breastfeeding/
In summary

• To improve breastfeeding practices, support for mothers needs to improve in scale and quality

• Combining interventions across delivery settings has the best effect

• The updated guidance for the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative focuses on achieving universal coverage and sustainability

• More investments and supportive policies for breastfeeding are urgently needed.

• The Global Breastfeeding Collective advocates for smart investments in breastfeeding programmes, and galvanizes support to get results to increase rates of breastfeeding.
THANK YOU!