



International News

October 2012
Elizabeth Duff
International News Editor

World Breast-feeding Week 1–7 August 2012: Understanding the past—planning the future: Celebrating 10 years of WHO/UNICEF's Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding

On 30 July 2012, the World Health Organization (WHO) joined the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action and many other partners in celebrating the 20th annual World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) from 1 to 7 August 2012.

A statement by the WHO Assistant Director-General for Family, Women's and Children's Health, Dr Flavia Bustreo, noted that this year's theme highlights global efforts to protect, promote and support breast feeding through implementation of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding, adopted by the World Health Assembly and the UNICEF Executive Board in 2002.

At the 65th World Health Assembly in May this year, WHO's Member States further reinforced the Global Strategy by endorsing a comprehensive implementation plan for maternal, infant and young child nutrition. The plan sets six targets, one of which is for at least 50% of babies under six months-of-age to be exclusively breast fed by 2025. Currently, the global rate of exclusive breast feeding is 37%. Some 26 countries have already met the target, demonstrating that with focused efforts, it is possible to achieve – and even exceed – the global goal.

Emphasis is placed on early and exclusive breast feeding for its substantial benefits in reducing child mortality and morbidity. Sub-optimal breast feeding is responsible for 45% of neonatal infectious deaths, 30% of diarrhoeal deaths and 18% of acute respiratory deaths in children under five.

Increasing the rates of optimal breast-feeding practices is also a key aim of

the UN Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health. This strategy, which aims to save 16 million women and children by 2015, has been widely endorsed by governments and partners and over 40 billion dollars in commitments have been made towards its implementation. It is accompanied by a Framework for Information and Accountability that includes exclusive breast feeding as one of 11 core indicators that will be reviewed annually.

To monitor the implementation of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding in countries, WHO developed a tool for assessing national practices, policies and programmes. Based on this tool, the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) of Asia developed the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative to monitor and report on infant and young child feeding practices, policies and programmes worldwide.

Dr Bustreo concluded, 'WHO remains committed to promoting breast feeding as the ideal source of nourishment for infants and young children. This World Breastfeeding Week, we urge governments and partners to join us in renewing their efforts, so that children all around the world get the best start in life'.

Objectives of WBW 2012

1. To recall what has happened in the past 20 years on infant and young child feeding (IYCF).
2. To celebrate successes and achievements nationally, regionally and globally and showcase national work at global level.
3. To assess the status of implementation of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (GS).
4. To call for action to bridge the remaining gaps in policy and programmes on breast feeding and IYCF.
5. To draw public attention on the state of policy and programmes on breast feeding and IYCF.

Monitoring the status of implementation of the global strategy

In 2004–2005 the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), one of WABA's core partners, launched the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi), to track, assess and monitor the implementation of the Global Strategy.

According to UNICEF's State of the World's Children Report 2011, 136.7 million babies are born worldwide and only around a third of them are breast fed exclusively in the first six months. According to the WBTi assessment of 40 countries, most of those countries do not have an effective IYCF policy with an adequate budget for implementation. To be able to increase breast-feeding rates, it is important to assess policies and programmes and take action accordingly.

More details of the Week are at <http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org/>.

WHO global strategy for feeding at www.who.int/nutrition/topics/global_strategy/en/index.html.

WHO London summit pledges to integrate family planning into basic health-care services

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced new measures at its London summit in July to ensure that low- and middle-income women have better access to quality birth control. In particular, strategies were outlined to strengthen and improve family planning and reproductive health services in developing countries. WHO Director General Dr Margaret Chan, who chaired a panel at the Summit on increasing access and expanding choice, clarified the WHO stance on family planning.

'Access to modern contraception is a fundamental right of every woman... Hand-in-hand with this right is a need to honour the dignity of women by giving them a range of family planning options and the freedom to make their own personal choice.'

WHO continued the announcement by pledging to integrate family planning into basic health-care services in developing countries as they are elsewhere.

The goal of the summit was to focus policy, financing, commodity, and service delivery commitments, whilst supporting the rights of women and girls in the world's poorest countries. The specific goal for 2020 is to have information, services and supplies available, whilst removing coercion and discrimination.

The recommended policy actions include the following:

- Expanding the range of family planning choices offered, so every woman can select a method that meets her needs. WHO is stepping up the pre-qualification of affordable and safe products and enhancing research into the safety and effectiveness of existing contraceptives and development of new products. Many large-scale procurers regard WHO pre-qualification as an important guarantee that they are purchasing good quality products.
- Increasing the number of skilled health workers trained and allowed to provide family planning services. Some 57 countries are currently experiencing a 'health workforce crisis'. WHO advocates for the redistribution of tasks among existing health workers who have the right training, to help countries expand access to services.
- Making family planning an essential component of health-care services provided during pregnancy, immediately after the birth or after abortion, and during the year following childbirth or abortion.
- Making long-acting and permanent methods of family planning, such as intrauterine devices, contraceptive implants, vasectomy, and female sterilisation, available and acceptable.
- Eliminating social and non-medical restrictions on the provision of contraceptives to adolescents to help reduce early pregnancy and the associated health risks.

In total, the WHO said they estimated that more than 220 million women and girls in developing countries do not want to get pregnant, but are not able to gain access to contraception. Some countries lack information, services and product to cater for their needs. In countries with high maternal mortality rates, there is obviously a greater need for good family planning. The WHO went on to say that they estimate that a third of women in some nations cannot get contraception when they need it.

The new WHO policy focuses on an approach to improve family planning and reinforce sexual and reproductive health services in developing countries. The advice has been put together by a multidisciplinary panel of experts gathered together by the WHO specifically to address contraception in developing countries.

An announcement made at the London Summit on Family Planning, by the co-hosts – the UK Government's Department for International Development and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation – stated that voluntary family planning services will reach an additional 120 million women and girls in the world's poorest countries by 2020 thanks to the new set of commitments from donor and developing countries, international agencies, civil society, foundations and the private sector.

By 2020, the collective efforts announced today will result in 200,000 fewer women dying in pregnancy and childbirth, more than 110 million fewer unintended pregnancies, over 50 million fewer abortions, and nearly three million fewer babies dying in their first year of life.

Details at <http://www.londonfamilyplanningsummit.co.uk/>

Every woman's right: how family planning saves children's lives

Save the Children launched a new report in June 2012, entitled 'Every Woman's Right', reinforcing the fact that improving access to contraception would give more couples the power to decide whether or when to have a child. This power, said Save the Children, is vital to improving children's chances of survival: 'Around the world, more than 200 million women who do not wish to become pregnant are currently unable to access or use contraception.'

'Every Woman's Right: How family planning saves children's lives' sets out why providing contraception is vital to sustaining and accelerating progress in reducing the deaths of babies, children and mothers:

- Ensuring women are able to allow a healthy space between births means babies and young children are more likely to survive.
- Delaying the first pregnancy until a girl is physically ready can save the lives of both adolescent girls and their newborn babies.

Download the full report at <http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/Every-Woman-Right-low-res-2.pdf>.

ICM Asia Pacific Regional Conference 2012: 'For the health of women and children—let's take action!'

More than 482 participants from 37 countries gathered in Hanoi, Vietnam, on July 24–25 for the first international midwifery conference held in Vietnam.

Ms Phan Thi Hanh, President of the conference host, the Vietnamese Association of Midwives (VAM) said the theme of the conference 'For the health of women and children—let's take action' urged midwives to consider how their profession will meet the many challenges and change in the 21st century.

In her welcome, Phan Thi Hanh said:

'On behalf of the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) and the Vietnamese Association of Midwives, I extend my warmest greetings to participants'.

'I am proud to welcome you, the international midwives, nurse-midwives, medical practitioners, obstetricians, gynaecologists and health-care professionals from the Asia Pacific Region, Vietnam and international sites to the Asia Pacific Regional Conference 2012 in Hanoi, Vietnam'.

'The conference is organised in collaboration with ICM, the Ministry of Health, WHO and UNFPA Vietnam. It will provide the participants with opportunities to meet colleagues, share experiences, discover friendship and highlight our profession'.

In the first day's plenary session, Dr Ornella Lincetto, of the World Health Organisation, spoke on: 'Maternal and Newborn Health: the World and the Region', while Ms Frances Day-Stirk, ICM President, addressed the delegates with a presentation on 'Collaboration, Challenge and Courage'.

Over the 2 days, other distinguished speakers from Afghanistan, Australia, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Pakistan, Taiwan and USA joined many reporting on aspects of midwifery practice, policy and education in Vietnam to provide a varied and informative programme.

<http://www.internationalmidwives.org>.

'Every child deserves a 5th birthday': a child survival call to action

On 14 June 2012, the Governments of the United States, India, and Ethiopia, in close collaboration with UNICEF, convened the Child Survival Call to Action, a high-level forum in Washington DC, USA, to identify investments to end preventable child deaths.

In advance of this forum on 13 June, Women Deliver co-hosted a roundtable on

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/10515899>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/10515899>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)