Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

To,

Shri Narendra Modi

The Honorable Prime Minister of India

South Block, Raisina Hill,

New Delhi.

**Allocate dedicated budget for breastfeeding interventions and save infant lives**

It’s the 25th year of celebrating the World Breastfeeding Week worldwide. The theme for this year’s World Breastfeeding Week is "**Sustaining Breastfeeding - Building alliances without conflicts of interest”;** which asserts the importance of working together for the common good of sustaining breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding can drastically **reduce DIARRHEA** by **50%** and **RESPIRATORY INFECTIONS** by **1/3rd,** contributing hugely to child health & survival, potentially saving a large proportion of children under five years. For the mother among other many benefits it can reduce 7% of total deaths occurring due to **BREAST CANCER** annually.

Further, breastfeeding can significantly contribute to maternal health and can **prevent type 2 Diabetes (1 in 3 new cases)** and **Obesity by 26%**.It also **increases IQ of all children rich or poor by 3 points**. (Lancet, 2016)

Thus, Breastfeeding can play a major role in achieving SDGs for maternal & health, nutrition, poverty, education, economic growth and reducing inequalities by 2030.

**We the undersigned citizens of India demand to allocate dedicated budget lines for the following interventions for protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding:**

**1**. Intensify the nationwide breastfeeding promotion programme by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare "MAA-Mother's Absolute Affection" by appointing dedicated lactation counselors in all health facilities, both public and private, who would educate and provide skilled practical help to mothers.

**2**. Appoint a block level team of at least 4 women counselors cum mentors in the community, who will in-turn train and support village level family counselors.

**3**. Universalize unconditional Maternity Entitlements to all women.

**4.** Enforce the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles, and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act 1992, and Amendment Act 2003 (IMS Act) effectively.

**Signed By:**