



**Regional Workshop on
Promoting Child Survival, Nutrition and Health by
Achieving optimal IYCF practices**

11th April 2007

**Hotel Katriya, 8 Raj Bhavan Road, Somaji Guda,
Hyderabad 500 082**



**Being organized by Food and Nutrition Board, Ministry of Women and
Child Development, Government of India
*In collaboration with BPNI and UNICEF***

Background

To achieve optimal health, development and survival of infants and young children, and to fulfill their rights to survive and attain highest attainable standards of health, all infants should be exclusively breastfed for the first six months followed by introduction of appropriate complementary feeding along with continued breastfeeding for two years or beyond. National Guidelines on Infant and Young Child Feeding in principle recommend this practice and has been adopted by the nation as a follow up of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding. The Strategy was adopted at the World Health Assembly (WHA) in May 2002 and UNICEF Executive Board in September 2002, thus a unique global consensus.

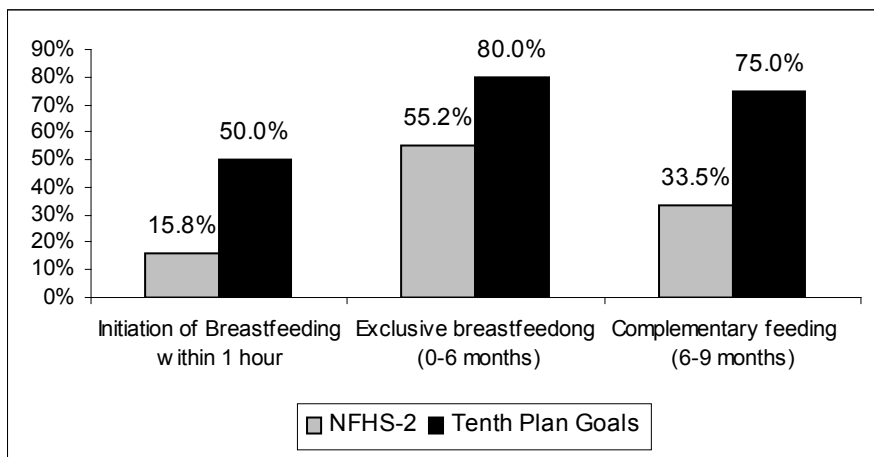
The Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding recognises that "Malnutrition has been responsible, directly or indirectly, for 60% of the 10.9 million deaths annually among children under five. Well over two-thirds of these deaths, which are often associated with inappropriate feeding practices, occur during the first year....."

Tenth Five Year Plan Goals on Infant and Young Child Feeding

India aims to reduce Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) from 63 to 30 per thousand live births by 2010. Two thirds of all under five deaths occur during infancy and child undernutrition is the sublime cause of greater chunk of these deaths. Emphasis on prevention and reduction of malnutrition is important when it strikes the most, in infancy from about 11 % at 0-6 months to reaching its peak of about 50% by 23 months is most crucial and interventions should be focused during gestation and infancy to achieve reasonable reduction in infant and child mortality. The MTA of 11th plan clearly notes that without solving the problem of infant nutrition it would impossible to achieve or targets of infant mortality as well as Millennium Development Goals.

State specific Goals for achieving early initiation of breastfeeding within one hour, exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and complementary feeding after six months are still relevant with a view to bringing down the prevalence of

under-weight and infant mortality. This is mammoth task if we compare NFHS 2 data with the current goals



Note: NFHS 2 data for exclusive breastfeeding is for the 0-3 months period

Fig. 1 Infant Feeding Practices: Comparison between NFHS 2 and the Tenth Plan goals for India

The National Guidelines on Infant and Young child feeding has listed several actions to achieve optimal infant feeding practices

It aims to set in motion national level action to improve infant and young child feeding practices worldwide, having their impact on child health, development and survival.

1. To advocate the cause of infant and young child nutrition and its improvement through optimal feeding practices nationwide
2. To disseminate widely the correct norms of breastfeeding and complementary feeding from policy making level to the public at large in different parts of the country in regional languages
3. To help plan efforts for raising awareness and increasing commitment of the concerned sectors of the Government, national organizations and professional groups for achieving optimal feeding practices for infants and young children.
4. To achieve the national goals for infant and young child feeding practices set by the Planning Commission for the Tenth Five Year Plan so as to achieve reduction in malnutrition levels in children.

What kind of action is required at different levels?

First of all it is required that we reach ALL children, starting from the unreached with counselling on IYCF. According to the Lancet 2003, if we are able to increase exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding to 90% we would cut down deaths by nearly 20% new data just arrived clearly shows that the research is the first study to assess the effect on newborn survival rates of when mothers start to breastfeed. It was carried out by the Kintampo Health

Research Centre in Ghana and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and was funded by DFID. The analysis was based on 10,947 breastfeeding babies born between July 2003 and June 2004 in Ghana who survived to the second day. Babies that were fed only breastmilk were four times less likely to die than those who were also fed other milk or solids, confirming the health benefits of exclusive breastfeeding in the first month. Solid scientific evidence of this nature makes it imperative to ensure that all babies are breastfed within one hour.

With this background and view that large scale action is required at several levels, the regional workshop is proposed and brings together participants from all states of the region with clear objectives.

Objectives of the workshop

1. To sensitize various stakeholders of states of India on the importance of achieving optimal IYCF.
2. Sharing state level models of capacity building on IYCF (MP, Uttranchal, and Haryana).
3. To discuss and plan how to achieve high rates of optimal IYCF practices in the hospital/health facility and at family level

Action framework

a. Action at National level

- ⇒ Establishment of a National resource center for Infant and Young Child Feeding
 - Enhancing silks training capacity,
 - Plan and scale up of tested interventions
 - IEC development
 - Research in different areas related to breastfeeding
- ⇒ Coordination of action, regular review of action
- ⇒ National breastfeeding partnership
- ⇒ Highlight counselling on IYCF in the job framework of ICDS workers

b. State level/Distt level Block level

- ⇒ Resource centers
- ⇒ State capacity to train all community workers as a special input
- ⇒ Training of frontline workers in skills to counsel on IYCF
- ⇒ IEC communication guides for workers