

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REGIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON INFANT FEEDING AND HIV

In order to move forward, the participants at the colloquium recommended:

Overall Emphasis

The approach to implementation of the Framework should be broad based on infant and young child feeding, emphasizing 6 months of exclusive breastfeeding for the whole population, and recognising the special circumstance of HIV, including issues such as special counselling and appropriate support to mothers who are HIV positive. Consistency of messages should be considered important.

1. Convene stakeholders meeting at national or local level, with the objective to bring all stakeholders on the same level of understanding on the issues. Avoid involvement of parties with conflict of interest and/or those who stand to benefit financially from the outcome of the policy.
2. Policy and programme development should be done in phases allowing the state/provincial processes to take place.
3. Women must be supported in informed choices through:
 - Provision of counselling by skilled training of health services and community workers, including development and use of evidence-based algorithms at all levels.
 - Ensuring an enabling environment to allow all women to breastfeed.
4. Continue and revitalise BFHI but also expand support for exclusive breastfeeding for first six months e.g., through mother/baby-friendly health systems, mother support networks, keeping consistent messages and action into all of health systems' training and services, families/community.
5. Continue to implement or strengthen the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and subsequent and relevant World Health Assembly resolutions at national level.
6. Monitoring, evaluation and key research should be included in planning and budgeting of national programmes on HIV/IF – with attention to independence of research.

UN should develop evidence-based guidelines on duration of exclusive breastfeeding and methods of transition to other feeding options for HIV+ women.