

2017

Annual Result-based Report to SIDA



Protecting,
Promoting
and Supporting
Breastfeeding
through
Human Rights
and
Gender
Equality



IBFAN-GIFA

IBFAN Asia (BPNI)

WABA

A Global Coordinated and
Expanded Programme
to achieve
MDGs 4 and 5 and
related post-2015
agenda

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Abbreviations

BFHI	Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative
BMS	Breastmilk substitutes
BPNI	Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India
CESCR	Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CoI	Conflict of Interest
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSM	Civil Society Mechanism
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CSW	Committee on the Status of Women
EB	Executive Board
EAA	Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance
FENSA	WHO's Framework of Engagement with Non-State Actors
FFA	Framework for Action
FIAN	FIAN International
GIFA	Geneva Infant Feeding Association
GNRtFN	Global Network on the Right to Food and Nutrition
GSYCF	Global Strategy on Infant and Young Child Feeding
IBFAN	International Baby Food Action Network
HR	Human Rights
HRC	Human Rights Council
HRTB	Human Rights Treaty Bodies
ICDC	International Code Documentation Centre
ICM	International Confederation of Midwives
ICN2	Second International Conference on Nutrition
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IF	Infant Feeding
ILCA	International Lactation Consultants Association
IYCF	Infant and Young Child Feeding

LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MP	Maternity Protection
MIYCN	Maternal, Infant, and Young Child Nutrition
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PHM	People's' Health Movement
PMTCT	Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission
PPP	Public Private Partnerships
PPTCT	Prevention of Parent-to-Child Transmission
RCOs	Regional Coordinating Office (of IBFAN)
RFP	Regional Focal Point (of WABA)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEA	South East Asia
TA	Treaty Alliance
TNCs	Transnational Corporations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNICEF	UNICEF Global Breastfeeding Collective
WABA	World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action
WBCi	World Breastfeeding Costing Initiative
WBTi	World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative
WHA	World Health Assembly
WHO	World Health Organisation

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Introduction

This is the annual results-based report for the Sida supported project titled, “Protecting, Promoting and Supporting Breastfeeding through Human Rights and Gender Equality: A Global Coordinated and Expanded Programme to Achieve MDGs 4 and 5 and related post-2015 agenda” being implemented by the WABA-IBFAN Consortium, and covering the period January to December 2017.

Improving nutrition for mothers and children during the 1,000 days window helps ensure children get the best start to life and the opportunity to reach their full potential. Investing in better nutrition during the first 1,000 days also saves lives. Women who are well-nourished before and during pregnancy are less likely to die during childbirth. And by ensuring that mothers can breastfeed, and babies get only breastmilk for the first six months of life, we can help save the lives of almost 1 million children.

The most efficient internationally recognized strategy to realize this objective constitutes in the 3-pillar approach defined in the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding: protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding in the context of women’s empowerment, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and gender equality. This strategy also impacts positively on the achievement of many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—on poverty reduction, nutrition and food security, survival, health and well-being, environment and climate change, as well as women’s employment and gender equality. The SDGs provide a framework to connect breastfeeding to the larger development agenda, as does the UN Decade for Action on Nutrition. The fact that in 2016 the UN has recognised breastfeeding as a Human Right lends support to the work of the breastfeeding movement.

Overall objective

The overall objective of the consortium project is to accelerate the momentum for action in Infant and Young Child Feeding, and thus contribute to positioning the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding as key interventions on the international development agenda to achieve children and women’s rights to survival, health, adequate food and nutrition. The achievement of the overall objective will result in a series of indicators, increased rates of IYCF, increased national IYCF budgetary allocations, increased implementation and enforcement of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes through national legislations, maternity protection and other key interventions, the number and diversity of breastfeeding advocates/groups.

Project organisation and implementation

Seven areas of work

Organisation and implementation is conducted using a series of coordinated log frames covering seven areas.

1. Tracking Progress in Policy and Programmes and Strengthening Accountability.
2. Building IYCF Capacity at all Levels.
3. Addressing Especially Challenging Environments/Situations: including Gender Inequalities.
4. Strengthening Policy and Legislative Frameworks
5. Social Mobilisation and Information Communications
6. Strengthening the Consortia and rejuvenating the Breastfeeding Movement.
7. Project cycle management and governance

Main results

The main results are presented for each of the above-mentioned seven areas of work. The outcomes and potential impact are also described with some examples being given.

1. Tracking progress in policy and programmes and strengthening accountability

This includes increasing the number of countries involved in the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) and costing initiatives. WBTi, so far has been introduced in a total of 122 countries for tracking their progress in terms of IYCF policies and programs. WBTi was introduced in 7 more countries in Europe and Australia in 2017. Call to Action advocacy event was organised in 11 countries from LAC and Europe. A total of 91 countries had undertaken WBTi assessment at the end of 2017. Several countries have made significant improvements in national policy and practice on IYCF through the WBTi process, for example Peru has ratified C183 (ILO Convention 183 on Maternity Protection) and which has led to an increase in the length of maternity leave and Bolivia has developed a robust guideline for infant feeding during emergencies.

Addressing human rights perspectives through the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) and Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) facilitated the tracking of progress at national level on measures for breastfeeding protection, promotion and support in all countries and release of specific recommendations on breastfeeding and/or the Code to 12 countries, while continuous advocacy on breastfeeding and human rights has led to the inclusion of breastfeeding and the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes in the latest General Comment by the CESCR Committee on States obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the context of business activities (No. 24). Additionally, because of constant advocacy, the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to health affirmed clearly the link between breastfeeding and human rights in a report after his visit to Croatia. The Consortium partners are also members of the Right to Food and Nutrition (RtFN) to raise and include breastfeeding and IYCF issues in these platforms. Networking with “traditional” and new allies, on platforms such as Child

Rights Connect, and the Treaty Alliance ensured collaborative synergy with these partners—focusing on human rights protection, and anchoring breastfeeding into their nutrition and human rights agendas. Breastfeeding advocates from 6 European countries received training on Human Rights, in occasion of the third round of the European WBTi training. The presence and representation of the Consortium partners at Treaty Alliance level was guaranteed through several actions: a written submission on the elements for the draft legally binding instrument on transnational corporations (TNCs) and other business enterprises (OBEs) with respect to human rights was sent to the relevant Intergovernmental Working Group (IGWG) secretariat and shared within the network; oral statements were developed, presented and/or co-sponsored during the 3rd Session of the above-mentioned intergovernmental working group (October 2017); a presentation on the role of TNCs and the human rights linked with Infant and Young Child Feeding was given at a side event during the IGWG session. Anchoring breastfeeding as a Human Rights issue helps ensure the accountability of governments to honour their state obligations in support of the issue.

Advocacy at the 2nd International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2) and at the 2017 IUNS International Congress of Nutrition ensured that breastfeeding is included in the Rome Declaration, Framework for Action and subsequent action plans. The Declaration commits countries to eradicate hunger and prevent all forms of malnutrition worldwide through the protection, promotion and support for breastfeeding. WABA presented a poster at the 2017 IUNS showing how a low-cost intervention such as peer counselling can improve breastfeeding rates amongst low-income populations in Bangladesh. Governments in low to middle income countries can benefit from adopting cost-effective interventions such as peer counselling to improve breastfeeding rates.

2. Building IYCF capacity

The Breastfeeding: Advocacy and Practice (BAP) course remains a key component to train doctors and health professionals as resource specialists for infant feeding programmes in scientific, public health and clinical aspects of the subject. In March 2017, WABA organized the 7th BAP course, bringing together participants from 14 countries, with teams from Burundi, Kenya, Laos, Nigeria, Papua New Guinea and Sri Lanka. WABA sponsored four Young Midwife Leaders (YMLs) who lent refreshing perspectives to this course. The BAP course has significant impact in changing hospital policies and practices or engaging with communities, such as in 2013 when Vietnamese BAP participants founded Betibuti.com, a virtual community support group in Ho Chi Minh City, with over 135 000 followers on Facebook. The BAP alumni are actively sharing their knowledge and skills on lactation support in their respective work context. This will increase the number of skilled lactation support and mothers who receive adequate support in their breastfeeding journey will continue to breastfeed.

In the current context of breastfeeding, different actors are carrying out efforts at all levels to provide a continuum of care for mothers. These efforts are often disconnected and WABA aims to synergize all efforts to ensure maximum success in a mother's breastfeeding journey. The warm chain of support is defined as the skilled care provided to mothers to build their confidence and guidance to breastfeed with protection from harmful practices. The Warm Chain places the mother-baby dyad at the core and follows the first 1,000 days timeline. The phase 1 of the campaign has been conducted via an online survey to identify as many individuals who are part of the continuum of care. Once identified, WABA will share information materials with these individuals who will serve as catalysts to ensure that effective support is available, coordinated, integrated, and scaled up in

health services and the community to achieve sustained high breastfeeding rates around the world.

3. Addressing especially Challenging Environments/ Situations, including gender inequalities

IBFAN Asia Working Group on Infant Feeding and HIV, which has 15 members from 9 Asian countries (from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, South Korea and Vietnam). Group members share information, publications etc. on the subject regularly. In 2016-17, the WHO guidelines (2016) on HIV and infant feeding was updated.

Consortium partners were consulted on the revised WHO guidance on infant feeding and HIV. Work in this area resulted in the wide dissemination of several key documents: Updated WHO guidelines (2016) on HIV and infant feeding; several journal publications on HIV and Infant feeding. Dissemination of the most recent evidenced-based information enables advocates to advise their governments and institutions at national level. WABA extracted information from the comprehensive guidelines and a leaflet was written for women living with HIV who want to explore the possibility of breastfeeding their babies. The messages in the information leaflet are user-friendly and enables mothers and fathers to make an informed decision about how to feed their baby after discussions with a health worker. Parents who are empowered with accurate knowledge weighing both the benefits and risks involved will be able to make better informed decisions.

A research paper on Carbon Footprint due to Milk Formula was developed by IBFAN and submitted to a reputed journal. Work on country report cards on Carbon Footprints due to Breastmilk Substitutes was undertaken. The findings from the above-mentioned research paper were also used in the WABA joint statement on World Environment Day 2017. The statement was developed with Pesticide Action Network Asia and the Pacific, an environmental organisation. This statement was a show of WABA's commitment to continue fostering collaboration with non-breastfeeding organisations such as environmental organisations to garner more support for breastfeeding as part of the global sustainable development agenda.

One main objective of WABA's Empowering Parents Campaign is to promote family friendly values and equitable social norms and practices. WABA is an endorser of the Men Care Parental Leave Platform as including more men will balance and encourage more support for breastfeeding. Collaborating with Gender based groups such as Men Care also helps to mainstream gender in IYCF issues. Men Care is a global fatherhood campaign active in more than 45 countries across five continents and breastfeeding issues can be highlighted prominently in those countries when collaborating in the campaign.

Inputs to the new updated Operational Guidance (OpG) on Infant Feeding in Emergencies (released in October 2017) were provided and considered by partner organizations of the IFE Core Group. The 2017 update of the IFE OpG has been promoted through websites, social media and it has been included to the relevant statements presented at the 34th Human Rights Council. Additionally, inputs were sent in occasion of the 62nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, leading to a joint written submission from several civil society groups, highlighting the Consortium partners' shared concerns on rural women's right to food and nutrition.

4. Strengthening Policy and Legislative Frameworks

WABA is a member of the Global Breastfeeding Collective (GBC) – a partnership of 20 international agencies with the goal of increasing investment in breastfeeding worldwide. Through the GBC, UNICEF/WHO and partners aim to: raise the global rate of exclusive breastfeeding to at least 50 per cent by 2025. In 2017, during the launch of the GBC, the Indonesian government is fully committed to breastfeeding and engages a range of stakeholders including mother and father support groups, living up to our theme of Sustaining Breastfeeding Together. The support of the Global Breastfeeding Collective to the national processes in ASEAN countries such as Indonesia can help ensure that the high-level commitment already in place continues in the ASEAN region.

Visions for a sustainable world can only be fulfilled by addressing gender inequality as a root cause. Currently, there is no country in the world where men and boys share the unpaid domestic and care work equally with women and girls. In the world of work, whether formal or informal, WABA is moving towards gender-equitable social protection. This includes changes in parental leave legislation, attitudes and parent-friendly workplaces. WABA's Empowering Parents Campaign strives to increase the supply of gender equitable social protection by working through the tried and tested tripartite structure comprising of governments, employers and trade unions. WABA has worked with various trade unions and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) such as Men Care, Alive & Thrive and also took part in the Every Woman Every Child (EWEC) social media relay for United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) 2017, tweeting and posting messages in relation to their themes – Accountability, It's Our Business, Empower and Partnership as part of this campaign.

IBFAN undertook the Code monitoring activity at country level in 11 Asian countries – Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, South Korea, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. IBFAN Asia RCO coordinated IBFAN Asia WG on Codex Alimentarius, with members from 8 Asian countries. Information about Codex activities and relevant documents on the ongoing work were shared with the group members. Members were also supported to strengthen an effective codex mechanism at the country level. Effective advocacy in the Coordination Committee of the Global Breastfeeding Advocacy Initiative/Global Breastfeeding Collective resulted in inclusion of "National assessment of breastfeeding policies and programmes using WBTi as an indicator for the Global breastfeeding scorecards of GBC. IBFAN Asia represented IBFAN in the Coordination Committee of the Global Network for the Right to Food and Nutrition (GNRtFN) and contributed in strengthening the Conflicts of Interest policy of the network.

IBFAN GIFA promoted the 2017 global monitoring report 'Breaking the Rules, Stretching the Rules' in all relevant fora, through the social media, website and members list. The BTR report was promoted to relevant actors at major conferences in Europe, such as the French National Breastfeeding Day in Lille and the 3rd European WBTi training in Lithuania. At more local level, the BTR report 2017 was promoted among the public at awareness-raising events in Geneva (e.g. Festival Alternatiba and WBW celebrations in September) and in occasion of direct contacts with the health professionals (e.g. midwives of the University Hospital of Geneva and participants in a training on breastfeeding aimed at pharmacists).

IBFAN took an active role in two main WHO meetings of 2017: The World Health Assembly in May and the Special Session of the Executive Board in November. In both occasions, relevant statements on the agenda items were prepared and presented, showing commitment and proactive

participation on the part of the Consortium partners. Topics addressed include child and maternal health and nutrition, non-communicable diseases, conflicts of interest and emergencies, among others.

5. Social mobilisation, information sharing and communication

World Breastfeeding Week 2017 paved the way for working together across the four Thematic Areas to achieve the Global Goals for sustainable development by 2030. All WABA Core Partners played a critical role in reviewing, adapting and amplifying WABA messages around the world. WBW 2017 maximised on the opportunity to collaborate and involve youth in producing materials, as WABA worked with Girls Globe – a global team of advocates driven by the connected voices of girls and women worldwide. WBW materials were then translated into almost 15 languages by Translators Without Borders. For WBW 2017, 122 organisations participated, 120 reports were submitted, 627 pledges were made, and the reported outreach was to more than 34000 participants. WBW messages were also reiterated by and impacted a variety of different sectors, from UN agencies in Geneva to global media to refugee camps in South Sudan. WABA revisited the communication strategy, including the development of a more interactive website, which will be completed in 2018. All CIPs used a range of communication tools and online platforms to disseminate messages and engage with the networks and beyond.

6. Strengthening the consortium and rejuvenating the breastfeeding movement

Three Youth Leaders (1 gynaecologist from India, 2 ICM youth leaders from Africa) who attended the GBPF in 2016 were part of the BAP 2017 course. These individuals are currently promoting breastfeeding widely in their area of work. The two ICM youth leaders from Africa represented WABA Youth during the ICM congress in 2017. The doctor from India has obtained her IBCLC and is currently training and spreading awareness on breastfeeding to doctors, medical students, nurses and nursing students in rural parts of India. The involvement of more young health professionals in the continuum of care for breastfeeding in the rural context will ensure higher success rates of breastfeeding among the rural communities.

WABA has also started work with a stakeholder model consisting of the Penang Medical College, research centres, medical professionals, government officials, civil society organisations, trade unions in the “Making Penang Breastfeeding Friendly” (MPBF) which is an initiative that reflects the concept of warm chain. The State of Penang is part of the Sustainable Penang Initiative (SPI) and is committed to improving conditions for vulnerable populations such as women and children. SPI already includes breastfeeding as an indicator and thus shows a commitment to improving breastfeeding rates. Creating and scaling up the warm chain of support will be a top priority for state of Penang and the whole of Malaysia, as it also helps achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Success stories and examples of breastfeeding-friendly states can be showcased and adapted to other states, countries and regions. This will also anchor breastfeeding as an important issue in the political agenda of a state and country.

IBFAN East Asia & Southeast Asia organized a joint sub-regional meeting in March 2017 in Hongkong with the theme “Our Actions for Sustainable Future!” The purpose of the meeting was to develop a sustainable plan of action for future leadership.

7. Project cycle management and governance

Funding has been secured until September 2018 through an extension of the primary agreement between Sida, and WABA as focal point (FP), and sub agreements between WABA and the IBFAN partners. Work plans and budgets were developed, reviewed and updated biannually to support effective implementation. Annual reports for 2016 were submitted in collaboration between the focal point (FP) and the partners. Good governance mechanisms through meetings and/or correspondences between boards and partner offices were ensured—although much time was devoted to the situation in Africa where financial issues were identified and required attention. Most of the work plan 2017 activities were implemented on schedule. However due to arrival of funds late in the calendar year and a heavy administrative load, a few activities will continue and be finalised in 2018.

Challenges and responses

External

The Consortium Implementing Partners (CIPs) are grateful to Sida for continued support of this project. The partners are of the view that changes in the external environment increase the challenge of securing financial support for specific advocacy work around the protection, promotion and support for breastfeeding. A significant reason for this is the adoption of multi-stakeholder platforms in policy setting and delivery design at national and supra national level. Multi-stakeholder platforms are susceptible to influence from commercial and donor priorities and possible Conflicts of Interest. Existing policy limits the Consortium Implementing Partners from sources of support where such a conflict exists.

Concerns about the increased threats of Conflicts of Interest arising in public health policy setting continued in 2017. For example, IBFAN expressed specific concerns about the undue influence of venture philanthropy foundations with large investments, the private sector and private sector influenced NGOs. The IBFAN partners within this Consortium continued to be critical of the stakeholder model as this could potentially lead to Conflicts of Interest. An important part of this work was over the adoption of the Framework of Engagements with Non-State Actors (FENSA) by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The May 2016 session of the World Health Assembly adopted this new Framework despite concerns being expressed. The Framework was adopted to regulate WHO engagement with non-State actors (NGOs, private sector entities, philanthropic foundations, and academic institutions). It is said to protect its work from potential risks such as conflict of interest, reputational risks, and undue influence, but there are some outstanding issues such as the adopted definitions of conflicts of interest which put the private sector entities on an equal footing with other Non-State Actors, not recognising their fundamentally different nature and roles. Continuing safeguards contained in policies regulating WHO's relations with NGOs and the private sector are needed.

An example of how this plays out is the Asian region, which continued to see promotional activities of baby food companies in the form of interference in country level policy making processes directly or indirectly through their front organisations and sometimes misusing WBW, UN days and frameworks such as the 1000 days to promote their brand value. WABA is aware of this so-called

“hijacking” of WBW and has developed a copyright declaration and expanded its vigilance. The baby food market is projected to increase at a rapid rate in coming years, replacing breastfeeding. This is in keeping with a predominant push to promote market-led solutions to address malnutrition.

However, the renewed interest by UNICEF and WHO through the Global Breastfeeding Collective, and by WHO through the NetCode will give more opportunities to advance the work of the consortium partners and to expand this to include new programme partners, bearing in mind COI. The increasing number of recommendations in relation to breastfeeding issued by the CRC and CESCRC Committees as well as the recognition of breastfeeding as a matter of human rights by several UN experts shows that these various high-level bodies have been sensitised on the importance of optimal IYCF practices.

Internal

The consortium implementing partners (CIPs) are aware of and appreciate the diversity of approaches, as this enriches the ways of working and the results produced. As the current funding levels seldom permit the CIPs to meet face-to-face, most of the communication is by email, Skype and GoToMeeting conference call. Furthermore, all opportunities are taken to coincide with other meetings e.g. the Global Breastfeeding Partners Meetings (GBPMs), World Health Assembly. 2017 has also been a heavy year in terms of the administrative management and for some CIPs detracted attention from the on-going work on some core issues. A few internal challenges include:

- Retirement of experienced staff, with the need to subsequently recruit and train new staff.
- Funding levels that do not allow multiplication of programmatic efforts.
- Much time taken in administration of consortium and donor requirements.

Mitigation strategies

- Recruit new skilled and efficient staff that can quickly take on important responsibilities, such as former interns and consultants.
- Lack of adequate funding has been mitigated by diversifying the funding base and efforts to help raise funds at national level through e.g. The World Bank, linking up with the UNICEF/WHO Collective, and other new partners as well as by benefitting from services of interns and volunteers.
- Develop more effective networking structures and coordinating mechanisms at all levels and engage greater alignment with other initiatives.

Deviations from workplan and explanations

Consortium Implementing Partners

WABA was generally able to achieve the expected outputs for 2017. The new communication strategy was revisited, and the development of the new interactive website has started and will be completed in 2018. There was emphasis on expanding the alliance to with include new partners and the active engagement of young people in their varied roles as medical professionals, advocates, communications professionals and activists. BPNI/IBFAN Asia managed to accomplish a substantial part of the planned work, though accomplishment of some activities started late due to late arrival of funds. As the project timeline was extended till June 2018, a joint workplan of 2017-18 was developed. Activities that could not be implemented are included in the workplan for the year 2018. These activities are WBW activities reported from 12 out of 24 countries of the region and a Sensitisation meeting on Conflicts of Interest in India. IBFAN-GIFA succeeded in achieving all outputs set forth in the updated 2017-2018 coordinated workplan, despite the late disbursement of funds and the major cut faced by the consortium. The current report provides only an overview of activities carried out in 2017.

Focal Point

The cessation of Sida support for IBFAN Africa, with immediate effect as of 1 Jan 2016 presented the FP with the several specific and unexpected challenges which have been extensively described in previous annual reports. The finalisation of the IBFAN Africa matter continued in 2017 and an audit will be conducted in 2018. The outstanding amount of unjustified expenses by IBFAN Africa were returned in May 2018. Communications with the remaining CIPs were enhanced through online meetings and email communication.