

Breastfeeding and COVID 19 - UNICEF India initiatives

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for every child



Breastfeeding status

57%

Breastfed within 1 hour of birth

58%

Exclusively breastfed

Source: CNNS 2016-18

What was required?

- Equipping health facility and community health workers with correct information
- Allay the fears and address misconceptions among caregivers
- Support mothers suspected/confirmed to have COVID to safely breastfeed
- Rethink communication and counselling in the context of COVID
- Protect breastfeeding from commercial influence



The approach

- Scientific evidence evolving – start with current knowledge
- Partners coordinate for complementarity and reach - common packages for training and communication
- Integrate sensitization into risk communication orientation and other training
- Integrate delivery of messages through various contact points and channels
- Harness the potential and creativity of frontline functionaries
- Mobilize community influencers for support



Key initiatives

- Partners' coordination
- Development of tool kits
- Joint guidance for functionaries, food businesses and NGOs
- Sensitization of officials to frontline functionaries on COVID 19 and infant feeding
- Messaging through home visits and Village Health and Nutrition Day, WhatsApp, telephone, videos, GRAMSAT, facebook, tweeter etc.
- Counselling and support to mothers
- Sensitization on IMS Act and advocacy to support breastfeeding from commercial influence



Gains

- Standard tool kits available
- Frontline functionaries better equipped – key messages
- Continuity of communication and counselling in the process of being restored



COVID 19 has refocused
attention and emphasis on
protecting, promoting and
support breastfeeding

Multiple channels and contacts
are being used for
communication and counselling
important to **assess coverage
and quality**

Thank you.