

Concept note for Warm Chain of Support for Breastfeeding Seed Grant Project



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Breastfeeding Action

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Introduction

In the context of breastfeeding, 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 practices¹. To complete the warm chain, and sustain breastfeeding, consistent complementary care should be extended beyond the maternity ward, from antenatal clinics to primary care and community services, for sick and well children, throughout the breastfeeding period. The warm chain places the mother-baby dyad at the core and follows the first 1000 days timeline. It strives to link different actors by coordinating efforts at all levels to provide a continuum of care, from conception to the postpartum period and up to two years of age.

Many links in the warm chain for breastfeeding support are already part of existing initiatives, such as mother-friendly care, the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI), essential newborn care, and primary care; but they may not be joined together and co-ordinated, and there are often gaps between them. It is joining them together and filling the gaps that can create an effective warm chain. For each mother-baby dyad a clear pathway along an appropriate chain is needed, so that she and her child may pass from link to link, with consistent messages throughout, and proper referral to the next section for ongoing support or more skilled help. All mothers are then empowered with a more satisfying and effective breastfeeding experience.

WABA and partners are exploring and developing a conceptual framework that can help to ensure that effective support is coordinated, integrated, and scaled up in health services and the community to achieve sustained high breastfeeding rates around the world. As part of this initiative, WABA is providing seed grants to catalyse activities that will protect, promote and support the links of the warm chain.

Objectives

1. Identify gaps and map actors along the warm chain to **protect** from link failure.
2. **Promote** effective and innovative ways of expanding breastfeeding initiatives at local, national and global levels through the warm chain.
3. Enable consistent messages throughout, and referral to the next sector/link for on-going **support** or more skilled help to mothers.

¹ A warm chain for breastfeeding. *The Lancet*, 344(8932), 1239-1241.

Outputs

1. Good coordination criteria for the effective operation of the warm chain will be developed.
2. Indicators to assess and measure the progress of the warm chain will be established.
3. Good, replicable efforts will be showcased to enable others to establish their own warm chain locally.
4. Research into how existing components currently operate as a warm chain will have been conducted.
5. Awareness on a mother's right to breastfeed and to continue breastfeeding in different spaces and situation will be promoted.
6. A warm chain approach in public health will be advocated to decision makers.

Activities

A seed grant project will be developed to achieve the above outputs. The amount for a seed grant will range between USD1000–USD 3000 per project. In the first year (2018), 5 seed grants will be available.

Criteria for selection

Proposals will be assessed using the following criteria:

1. The seed grant should be used to either start a project or to strengthen an existing effort to create an enabling environment for mother to continue breastfeed.
2. Ability to conduct a needs assessment and develop a plan of action together with the relevant stakeholders along the warm chain, ranging from healthcare setting to community setting.
3. Must implement the plan of action with the aim of developing a best practice model.
4. Ability to conduct the seed grant project between June – August 2018. Project must be completed by end of August and the final report and documentation must be submitted before end of September 2018.
5. Provide a detailed plan on the activities and expected results (justification/challenges, objectives, specific outcomes, strategy, materials to produce, translations, distribution of materials, stakeholders, indicators, follow up, funding strategy, budget, time frame).
6. Organisations/groups from low to middle income countries (Africa, Asia and Latin America Caribbean) will be prioritised.
7. Adaptability of the initiative to other countries and organisations is important.
8. Innovative initiatives are encouraged.
9. Willingness to include an evaluation component of the project by an external research team identified by WABA.

Questions for the selection process (All answers MUST be submitted using the [online application form](#). Applications will not be processed if not submitted online).

Organisational/Project Details

1. Explain briefly the focus of your organisation and how your work relates to breastfeeding (max 250 words).
2. Describe your project (max 1500 words in total):
 - a. Background (context and innovation)
 - b. Justification (why your project is important)
 - c. Stakeholders/partners (who will be involved)
 - d. Objectives (overall and specific)
 - e. Outputs(including indicators)
 - f. Activities (e.g. seminars, workshop, training, advocacy, information materials etc)
 - g. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting (how will you know if your project is on track and impactful)
 - h. Plan of action with timeline (upload a Gantt chart or table)
 - i. Budget and financing (in USD, upload a table, include other sources of funding if any)
 - j. Sustainability (what will be the next steps)
3. Provide a short summary of max 250 words.

Timeframe

Early April 2018	– Development of concept note
April - May 2018	– Announcement and selection
June -August 2018	– Implementation of seed grant projects
By end Sept 2018	– Reporting and Evaluation

Application process

1. Read and refer to the Warm Chain of support for breastfeeding seed grants concept note.
2. Fill in the [online application form](#). See above for the sample questions of the application form.
3. Submit the completed online form before Friday 11 May 2018.
4. Announcement for the selected projects will be made on end May 2018.

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