

Media statement on World Breastfeeding Week by the EcoWaste Coalition in the Philippines

Dear Editor,

Breastfeeding, MDGs and Zero Waste

It's World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) on August 1 to 7 and this year's theme is "Breastfeeding: A Winning Goal – For Life!"

Ensuring breastfeeding is protected, promoted and supported is indeed a splendid goal with lifelong benefits for our children, mothers and the society. Making it thrive is the simplest and cheapest way for our nation to earn authentic "ganda" points in terms of achieving the various Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Exclusive breastfeeding for six months and continued breastfeeding for two years and beyond provide babies and kids with amazing, unequalled nutrients without putting a dent on household budgets, and thus contributing to the attainment of MDGs of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger and reducing child mortality.

Breastfeeding likewise helps in improving maternal health, another MDG, as it contributes to the decreased blood loss after birth, lower breast, endometrial and ovarian cancer risks, and reduced chances of developing osteoporosis, while it assists in the spacing of births.

As noted by Dr. Felicity Savage, Chairperson of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA), "breastfeeding has been shown repeatedly to be the single most effective way to prevent infant death; it plays a major role in children's health and development, and significantly benefits the health of mothers."

Breastfeeding is a perfect example of Zero Waste, generating no trash and pollution and contributing to the MDG on environmental sustainability.

Unlike the production of so-called artificial formula milk, breastfeeding entails no forest clearing, no mining, no tree cutting, no fossil fuel burning, no wasting. It's the most basic remedy to the energy, climate and garbage maladies afflicting our society.

On the occasion of the WBW, we join WABA and laud our devoted breastfeeding champions, including our health authorities, our pediatricians, our barangay health workers, our grassroots campaigners and more, and urge everyone to protect, promote and support breastfeeding, which is indisputably key to realizing the MDGs and the Zero Waste future that we seek.

Thank you very much and warmest regards.

Sincerely,

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