



To create an enabling environment where men participate with women to support breastfeeding and care for infants and young children.

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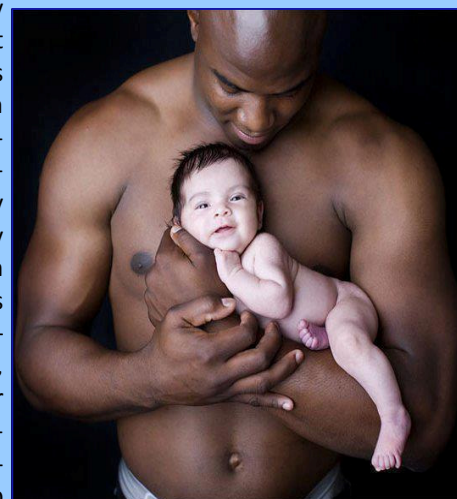
June 17: Happy Father's Day 2012

Father's Day is a special day to recognise and celebrate the roles fathers play in our life. Whether it is your Dad, step-dad, foster dad or just a special father figure who has helped you along the way, Father's Day is a chance to say 'Thank You'. Father's Day has been celebrated for over 100 years. It's an event celebrated in many countries around the world, although at different times of the year. WABA Men's Initiative Groups like North America and the United Kingdom celebrate Father's Day on the third Sunday in June each year and in Scandinavia it is on second Sunday of November. WABA MI e-newsletter prepared some tips to help you celebrate Father's Day in a special way this year. Father's Day is by nature a family event. Use the opportunity to get everyone in the family together for a fun day. Think about including all the dads in your family, not just your own father. Include husbands, would-be future dads, your uncles, and brothers. And don't forget step-fathers—they're important too. You don't necessarily have to remain at home; you could go to the beach, a local park or one of Dad's favourite spots! Acknowledge the importance of fatherhood. Being a father is a tough job. Dads are responsible for at least half of the financial and emotional well-being of the family. Giving dad a heartfelt speech, a toast, or card of genuine, loving words at the dinner table, or when all the family members are around (siblings especially), will make this a poignant occasion. The most important aspect of the day is that you are present and attentive. It does not take material presents to make a dad happy—it takes showing your love, and reassuring your dad that you're proud of him for what he's done for you. For many fathers, the most rewarding part of being a father is feeling that your children love you, and the knowledge that each child is on a path to a successful future, no matter what age, coping well with the problems that life inevitably throws at us all. *MI e-newsletter*

MI Calls For Breastfeeding Action

By James Achanyi-Fontem, Coordinator, MWG

WABA Men's Initiative recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding for at least two years of a child's life as the natural and healthy start to life. Studies have repeatedly shown that any amount of breastfeeding results in greater protection from illness and reduces incidence of obesity as well as many other benefits for baby and mother. In certain African communities due to the lack of supportive services, whether structural or cultural, more intervening efforts and education are needed to help close the gaps of awareness regarding the breastfeeding.



On the other hand, it has been noted that half the number of women with children younger than one year work outside their homes. To ensure that these mothers can work to support their families and also breastfeed, workplaces must be baby-friendly. Employers should provide paid time for working mothers to breastfeed or express milk in a private and clean space. MI e-newsletter is calling on policymakers, public health officials at all levels of government, and the broader public to support efforts to increase the incidence of breastfeeding among women.

Benefits of Breastfeeding for Baby & Mother

- Lower incidence of certain viruses.
- Lower incidence of respiratory illness
- Reduction in ear infections, meningitis
- National Institute of Environmental and Health Sciences found that breastfed children have a 20 percent lower risk of dying between the ages of 28 days and 1 year
- The immune factors in breast milk guard against invading germs and result in a natural build-up in babies of protections against many forms of illnesses.
- Breastfeeding may protect babies from developing allergies
- Research has demonstrated a connection between breastfeeding and cognitive development (greater intelligence)
- Recent studies show a strong link between breastfeeding and a lower incidence of obesity as a teen or adult.
- The longer women breastfeed, the greater the mother's protection against breast and ovarian cancers.

Note: There are clinical evidences regarding all the above facts which can easily be checked by searching the internet and WABA's websites.

How did Father's Day start?

The history of Father's Day dates back to the early 1900's, and was partly inspired by the unofficial Mothers Day services which began in 1908. These Mother's Day services prompted many people to arrange similar services to recognise fathers. While many services were arranged in the next couple of years, the most widely noted was organised in Washington, by Mrs Sonora Dodd. Mrs Dodd wanted to pay tribute to her late father, William Smart, who became a single parent when her mother died in childbirth. William Smart raised 6 children on his own, which was an unusual feat at that time. Originally Mrs Dodd wanted to hold the memorial service on the anniversary of her father's death, 5th June 1910; however this did not leave organisers enough time to prepare a service. Instead the service was arranged to be held on the 19th June, and this has become known as the first Fathers Day. While services continued every year, it was not until 1924 that President Coolidge recommended Father's Day as a national holiday. It took 48 years from that recommendation before Father's Day was officially recognised by President Nixon in 1972.



Mrs. Sonora Dodd

When is Father's Day celebrated?

Most countries follow the United States tradition and celebrate Father's Day on the 3rd Sunday in June; however New Zealand and Australia celebrate on the 1st Sunday in September. But there is no clear reason as to why these countries celebrate Father's Day at a different period. Scandinavia celebrates it on second Sunday of November.

Other cultures around the world coincide Father's Day with other celebrations in their community. In Germany it is celebrated on Ascension Day (40 days after Easter), in the Roman Catholic tradition it is St. Josephs Day (March 19), and in Thailand it is the Kings birthday (December 5).

How is Father's Day celebrated?

Father's Day around the world is a chance for children to pay tribute to their Dads. While for most countries there are no set traditions, it often involves a nice meal, presents, and a chance for Dad to put their feet up.

In Germany, Dads take part in a Father's Day hike. Groups of men hike into the forest dragging a wagon full of wine or beer, and local foods. On reaching their destination they have a Father's Day feast.

Ideas for Celebrating Fathers Day

Father's Day is all about making Dad feel special, and letting him know how much you appreciate the role he plays in your life. Think of Dad's favourite things, and organise a special gift or outing around that theme. For Music Lover Dad, download all of Dad's favourite songs onto CD, and create a great album cover telling him he's the best Dad in the world. Every time he listens to the CD, he'll think of you. Above all else, remember to tell Dad how much you love him. Make him a cup of tea, and let him watch his favourite show in peace. He really will appreciate it.

MI e-newsletter

World Health Assembly Resolution tackles conflicts of interest

WABA and International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) have welcomed a new resolution passed at the 65th World Health Assembly which calls on governments to strengthen controls on the marketing of breastmilk substitutes and to establish 'adequate mechanisms' to deal with conflicts of interest. The Resolution is especially important in relation to the new partnerships and "multi-stakeholder" arrangements that are springing up to tackle poor nutrition - many of which are pushing fortified processed baby foods and fuelling the multi-billion 'business of malnutrition.'

Proposed by Canada, UK, Swaziland and Mexico, the Resolution ushered in WHO's Comprehensive Implementation Plan on Maternal, infant and young child nutrition, which emphasises the importance of breastfeeding and sound infant and young child nutrition in child survival. An initial strong Resolution proposed by Swaziland and Uganda to protect infant health, prompted several days of 'behind the scenes' wrangling, where Canada and the US called for the deletion of everything except a single line adopting the Implementation Plan. One particular sticking point was Paragraph 3.3. which requests the Director General of WHO "to develop risk assessment, disclosure and management tools to safeguard against possible conflicts of interest in policy development and implementation of nutrition programmes consistent with WHO's overall policy and practice." The US wanted this tied down to the 'country level.' However, after Norway stepped in, with support from Swaziland and other countries, saying that Conflicts of Interest need to be addressed at all levels, the reference to 'country level' was removed.

During the Assembly debates several Member States expressed concerns about the plan's over-emphasis on fortified processed foods and supplements, which may not be necessary and can also undermine support for and attention to breastfeeding and nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate and sustainable local foods. Indeed, instead of improving child health, many feared that the market-led approaches to "prevent" malnutrition championed by public-private-partnerships, could actually worsen the situation and increase further the double burden of malnutrition - both under and over nutrition. In response to the particular concerns of Finland regarding the overemphasis on fortified supplements and other issues, the tables contained in the Action Plan were removed.

The Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), which works with over 600 companies, including Danone (the world's second largest baby food company and violator of the World Health Assembly baby food marketing requirements), PepsiCo, Mars and Kraft, is one such body that has been lobbying to use health and nutrition claims to promote baby foods. Another initiative called, Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN) was wholeheartedly supported in the speech by the International Special Dietary Industries (ISDI). SUN has been encouraging developing countries to partner with companies to address malnutrition. However, it has yet to formulate its own conflict of interest safeguards.

In calling for Conflict of Interest safeguards at all levels and mandating WHO "to provide clarification and guidance on the inappropriate promotion of foods for infants and young children" the Resolution could do much to clean up these initiatives and ensure that they work truly in the interests of child health.

Welcoming the Resolution, Dr Francesco Branca, Director of WHO Nutrition, stressed the importance of having an agreement on a common vision on targets which can be measured, and where an accountability framework can be developed.

Baby Milk Action UK

Asha Kanwar Takes Office Of President of the Commonwealth of Learning(C.O.L)

Professor **Asha Kanwar**, one of the world's leading advocates for learning for development has taken up her duties as the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). She has been very supportive to community initiatives for the promotion and protection of mother and child care rights through the healthy communities initiatives of the organisation that she now champions. She succeeds Sir John Daniel, whose term as COL's President ended on 31 May.

Dr. Kanwar has over 30 years of experience in teaching, research and administration. In addition to the several books, research papers and articles to her credit, she has made significant contributions to gender studies, especially the impact of distance education on the lives of Asian women. These studies have established that better educational opportunities and access to new technologies have made substantial differences to the attitudes, values and concerns of Asian women.

She is also a recipient of several awards and fellowships, including the International Council for Distance Education (ICDE) Prize of Excellence.

In making the announcement, the Honourable Burchell Whiteman, O.J., Chair of COL's Board of Governors and former Jamaican Minister of Education and Culture, noted that *"I am delighted by the Board's appointment of Professor Kanwar as President of our organisation. With her profound knowledge and rich experience of open and distance learning and her vision for the Commonwealth of Learning in the medium term I expect that she will take COL to a new level through a process of significant and sustainable evolutionary change. Her personal attributes and her international profile should prove to be valuable assets."* Professor Kanwar joined COL in 2003 as Education Specialist, Higher Education, and became Vice President in 2006. Her current role includes specific responsibility for stakeholder engagement and programme direction. Earlier, she was Director of the School of Humanities at the Indira Gandhi National Open University (India) and was Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University from 1999 to 2000. Prior to joining COL, she worked in Africa as a consultant in open and distance learning at UNESCO's Regional Office for Education in Africa (BRED) in Dakar, Senegal. *"I am very pleased that Asha will succeed me,"* said Sir John Daniel. *"We are delighted that COL will have a woman as president for the first time."*

C.O.L

The Commonwealth of Learning, which is based in Vancouver, Canada and New Delhi, India, was created by Commonwealth Heads of Government at their meeting in Vancouver in 1987 to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. The Commonwealth comprises of 54 countries – most of which are developing nations – and one-quarter of the world's population. *"Being relevant to such a diverse constituency and delivering on results is both a challenge and an opportunity that I look forward to,"* said Professor Asha Kanwar.

Former Presidents include Tan Sri Dato' Emeritus Professor Gajraj Dhanarajan (1995 – 2004) and Professor James Maraj (1989 – 1995).



C.O.L's Three-year Plan, 2012-2015

COL's Three-Year Plan for 2012-2015, Learning for Development, after extensive consultations will be presented at the 18th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (CEEM) in Mauritius in August, 2012. Commonwealth ministerial meetings are one of the principal forums for Commonwealth inter-governmental consultation and decision-making. To this end, Commonwealth Education Ministers meet every three years to discuss issues of mutual concern and interest, to formulate policy on key developmental issues and to build consensus at a high political level within the Commonwealth. Among other organisations, the Commonwealth of Learning reports to Ministers of Education at CEEMs and seeks their endorsement for COL's next Three-Year Plan.

The conference will take place in Mauritius, from 28 - 31 August 2012. It would be hosted by the Government of Mauritius in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat and other agencies such as the Commonwealth of Learning on the theme: "Education in the Commonwealth: bridging the gap as we accelerate towards achieving internationally agreed goals" The agenda will include:

- Ministerial meetings (Ministers and Senior Officials)
- Parallel Forums: ◦ Stakeholders' Forum
- Post-Secondary and Higher Education Leaders' Forum
- Youth Forum
- Teachers' Forum
- Exhibition/showcase

For more, click on www.col.org/Draft3yp

One Stop C.O.L's Gender micro-site

COL's Gender micro-site has been designed to provide a one-stop, comprehensive platform to access print and electronic resources on gender and open, distance and technology-mediated learning (ODL) with a special emphasis on information and communication technology (ICT). The main purpose of developing this gender micro-site is to provide knowledge and information on gender and ODL/ICT so as to raise awareness and to provide tools to ODL policymakers and practitioners to help them address gender concerns in their areas of competence. The commonwealth of Learning is promoting healthy community initiative on mother and child health care in some 24 countries around the globe. This initiative aims at using community media to educate mothers and communities on health concerns. www.col.org/genderMS

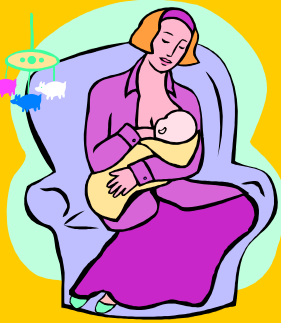
PCF7 TO BE HELD IN NIGERIA

The Seventh Pan-Commonwealth Forum on Open Learning (PCF7) will be held in Abuja, Nigeria in November 2013, and it will be co-hosted by the Federal Ministry of Education and the National Open University of Nigeria. NOUN will be the lead partner institution as preparations get underway from now.

BREASTFEEDING AND ME

By Naweed A. Harooni, WABA

My passionate connection with breastfeeding begins from the vague memories of my first sensory perception of the gentle touch of my mother and realisation that this food and love persona is someone called "Mum", who is always there for a helpless and dependent "me" for all of my physical and emotional needs. A passionate and vital bond was established then, between me and my mother, because of breast feeding! Although I was fed for two years on mother's milk like most of the babies in those days of yesteryears, the invisible bond that was cemented between my mother and me never actually broke....It existed even afterwards until the last day of my mum's life!



I also believe that if my mother had not breastfed me for any reasons and I had to grow on other baby foods and supplements without the warmth and touch of that woman called mother, I would have been a different person. That bond between us, child and mother would have not been so strong. It would have left much less influence on my life in many aspects.

Today, If I am more concerned with women issues, more respectful of the other gender, a committed advocate of human rights, sincere about promoting the breastfeeding cause, I think it certainly has something to do with the exclusive breastfeeding which I got from my mother for more than two years that has shaped me into what I am today!

Now I am a mature, grown up man and I strongly feel that the symbiotic link which evolved between me and my mother during my breastfeeding period was so strong and unbreakable that it still exists. That invisible "umbilical cord" has provided me love, confidence, courage, assurance, support and peace during the troubled phases of my life. It is like a "bridge over troubled waters". There is no comparison, no replacement whatsoever to the intensity of this bond which I still feel tied to, even though my mother is physically not here in this world...I find it amazing!

I still talk to her, like I used to when she was alive, whenever I feel lonely and need someone to listen to me. I still find refuge in the imaginary lap of my mum whenever I am distressed, as if she has taken me into her loving arms just like during my breastfeeding days.

That is the importance of Breastfeeding in our lives, as I see it. When I look at the modern world's perspective where baby foods and formula supplements have raided this exclusive domain of a loving mother's free food and nourishment denying scores of babies of their birth right due the tactful and profit oriented nefarious marketing strategies and fast paced consumerism, I feel sad and concerned about it.

Likewise many other passionate health professionals in early 60's felt concerned about this and they voiced their support for breastfeeding and protested against this unnatural trend of formula supplements. And a movement was born!

I am happy and proud that I am now part of this global movement!!

Editor's note:

Naweed A. Harooni is a poet and writer who recently joined WABA to reinforce the Men's Working Group. Naweed is welcome on board.



Involve Men and Get Rid Of Breastfeeding Impediments

Here are some activities men can be involved in, for supporting breastfeeding, parenting, nurturing, and serving as mentors, tutors, or big brothers to young people in their community.

- Give mothers the support needed to breast-feed.
- Educate fathers and other family members.
- Communities can strengthen programs for mother-to-mother supports and peer counselling.
- Local organizations can promote and support breastfeeding
- National organizations can promote breastfeeding awareness and help to remove barriers.
- Marketing of infant formula should adhere to the International code and WHA resolutions to reduce impacts on breastfeeding.
- Hospitals should be encouraged to establish 'breastfeeding from birth education' and support programs and to reject financial incentives from the formula manufacturers

The father can advocate for breastfeeding. A father who understands the importance of breastfeeding is less likely to feel excluded, and can overcome the thought that breastfeeding takes the attention of the wife and the act of nurturing takes the baby away from him.

The father can participate in the daily needs – bathing the baby, drying it up and changing its diapers, tuck the baby to bed, attend the doctor's visits or be informed or educate self about baby's health.

The father can create activities with the baby – sing to the baby, read to the baby, baby massage, baby wear and dancing with the baby, play with the baby and make them laugh.

The father can try to learn the gestures of the baby – learn the sign language of baby to understand and communicate better.



Men, Fathers, Grandfathers and all out there - Come join us and get your updates on WABA's Men's Initiatives at <http://www.waba.org.my/whatwedo/mensinitiative/publications.htm> and do check out on the Men's Initiatives current global info on fatherhood, and men's support for breastfeeding and more from Cameroon - <http://camlinknews.blogspot.com/2009/07/mens-initiative.html>

Breastfeeding: How Dads Help

Many Dads feel left out when it comes to breastfeeding. They can't feed the baby themselves and they envy the intimacy the mother and baby share when nursing. Though fathers may not realize it, they play a key role in breastfeeding. Their support often makes the difference in whether a woman sticks to nursing and succeeds or gives up before she really learns how to do it well.

"The father's support is critical, especially to a mother who is breastfeeding for the first time," says Amy Spangler, a nurse and lactation consultant. Amy Spangler is publisher of "Breastfeeding: A Parent's Guide." *"The Dad is the person who is with the mother most and knows her the best. If he is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and supportive, it makes all the difference in the world as to whether or not breastfeeding will be successful and enjoyable for the Mom and baby."*

Without their partner's help, many women don't make it through the sometimes-rocky first days and weeks of nursing. When a father makes the effort to encourage and reassure the new mother, she tends to feel more confident in her choice of breastfeeding. Ana, a Minneapolis mother of three says, *"The best thing a husband can do, is to support the partner in her struggle."* Ana added that she has always had a hard time getting started with breastfeeding, but kept it because she knew it was best for her children. *"I think a lot of times fathers don't understand why we fight so hard to breastfeed when it seems so much easier to give the baby a formula bottle. You really have to have a husband who understands why are you doing it and is committed enough to support and cheer you up when you think you want to give up"* The hardest thing for many dads is feeling left out in the first days and weeks of the baby's life, while it is the best time to jump in and learn how to do other things that can help both bonding with their babies. Some fathers sing to their babies or carry them in a snuggly pouch or even learn how to give them a sponge bath. A great way for a father to bond with his newborn is to put the infant - dressed only in a diaper--on his bare chest, so the baby can feel his warm skin and learn how dady smells, while they both snuggle under a blanket. A surprising number of fathers join the ranks of the sleepless by getting out of bed to get the baby and change a diaper before handing the hungry bundle to the mother. *"Asonganyi was great about picking up Atemnkeng in the middle of the night and bringing him to mother for his feeding, changing his diaper, holding and cuddling him,"* says Alemngeh, a dedicated breastfeeding mother of two who lives in Ndongweh, Lebi-alem,Cameroon. Other fathers bring hot towels to relieve engorgement or take over baby care so the first-time mother can have a nice, hot shower to relax before she nurses again. *"I think men feel ver-much left out of this process, so it is important to get them involved in whatever way they can,"* she says.

Breastfeeding: How Dads Help

Amina a graphic seamstress in Mbindia, Lebang, Cameroon says her husband would get up early with Tazanu, now one, and play for awhile to give her some extra sleep time. *"While I was breastfeeding, he would bring me water or juice and a book or magazine,"* she said. *"Sometimes we would just sit and talk. That was the best."*

Providing food and drink are great ways to help new mothers keep their milk supply up. Many new mothers are so busy with their babies that they don't take time to eat properly and they don't realize that they're not drinking enough to allow their bodies to make adequate supply of milk. The same mothers may've been adamant about eating plenty of fruits and vegetables while they were pregnant. But once the baby arrives, they forget that they're still a key part in their infant's development: the sole supplier of their newborn's food and drink. Parents need to remember that infants learn by being touched. Cuddling and holding are keys to their growth. "Breastfeeding is such a small part of parenting. There are so many other needs of the baby beyond eating . It's up to Dads to be creative and tap into those needs." Especially,first-time fathers need to be encouraged to hold and play with their newborns, because they are often hesitant to hold the tiny babies. Every new mother should make sure the baby's father spends plenty of time holding and cuddling the baby. This is especially important when the father has to take turns with his wife's mother, sisters, neighbours and his own mother to get a chance to hold the baby. Once breastfeeding is well-established, Dads can get involved in the feeding process by giving the baby a cup of expressed breast milk if the mother so wishes. It's better to wait several weeks, until the milk supply is well-established and the baby is an accomplished nurser, before having the father try giving a cup of breast milk.

The first-time fathers can be even more helpful if they arm themselves with plenty of information - from books, classes and online resources like breastfeeding.com. Talking to friends who have gone through it can help prepare them for the-challenging experience. Just making the effort to learn about breastfeeding before the baby arrives shows that a father is anxious to be an active part of the baby's life. *"I found that, while my wife certainly had a healthy perspective on how natural and OK breastfeeding in public is, she just felt more comfortable with me as a body shield. It felt more private and it felt safer to her",* another dad observed.

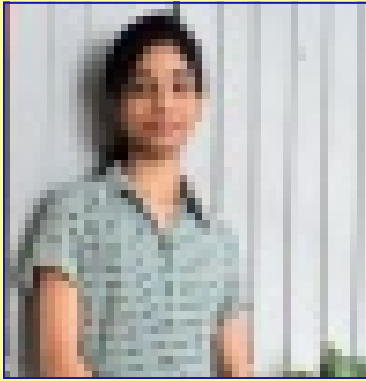
"A new mother is just as scared as the father is of doing the wrong thing. Confidence comes with spending time with that baby ... and with practice," the breastfeeding counsellor advised.

What Is the Father's Role in the Breastfeeding Relationship?

It is a fortunate baby that has a close, loving relationship with both of his parents! Babies need lots of physical contact, and when not breastfeeding, a father's loving arms are a wonderful place for his baby to be. *"Fathers need to spend time with their babies to know them better and get 'tuned in' to their needs. Watch for cues when baby is ready for some fathering interaction. A hungry baby won't be at all interested in playing. But once baby has nursed his fill, dad can take over..."* Even babies that are breastfed frequently can enjoy satisfying relationship with their fathers. Try letting your full breastfed baby lie on father's chest. Rocking baby on the father's shoulder is often a favourite activity. It is rewarding for fathers to show their babies this big wide world we live in!

Gender Equality Takes New Direction In India

When we talk about status of “Gender” in any country/region we need to begin right from the time one is born or you can say the very moment “sex” of a new born is divulged. Indian society like other conservative societies have been very slow in accepting changes. It had only preferred boy child or so called “son” when a baby was expected. Reasons varied from person to person, and culture to culture viz. security



issue of girl child, thought of why spending on her education when she has to get married early, worries of being busy in collection of valuable for her dowry, rites where son is supposed to do role in funeral ceremony of parents, worry of discontinuation of previous generation and many other factors. Whatsoever the reasons were, the gist is that the birth of boy child gave happiness while that of a girl brought sorrow. However, the scenario is changing now; present generation is emerging as a sensitized one. They focus on just a child, be it a girl or boy, most of the parents believe to give a happy and affluent life to the one they are bringing in this world. Yet it's not necessary that everyone has the same mindset of not being biased between the two. With factors linked to “rise in price” parents are unable to bear expenditure of two children. They now go for one either a girl or boy. This has nothing to do with gender equality. There have been instances where well-placed and educated parents have opted for sex determination test despite its legal prohibition, whereas the uneducated do not mind any number of births as each child contributes to the income of family. These children are not sent to school and are engaged in some kind of labour as soon as they cross the age of 10 years. This is again against the law. In terms of changing mindset I can only say with confidence that only 40% of well-off/educated parents welcome a child birth without any disparity of their sex. Now comes, upbringing of the child. A girl child who earlier had to face discrimination with regards to getting equal share of feed and other domestic facilities do not have to undergo such pains now. Parents who are able to afford education for their children want both girl and boy to have a better education. On the other hand, less privileged parents do not seem to rely on education of the child because they do not want children to spend time in studies but they want their children to earn. The Government of India has been working very hard to assist children in all communities to access education with especial focus on the girl child. This might seem contradictory as sex-determination before birth is quite prevalent while there's not much discrimination in educating children. This may be because the present generation is open enough to accept God's will than the older generation that cried over the birth of girl child throughout her life. In the current scenario a change has been learnt regarding spousal age difference. Before, younger girls used to be married to older males (widower) just to avoid the demand of dowry. But due to poor impact of this trend on girls' health and being sensitized on the consequences, such practice seems to be diminishing. However, the dowry system is still extremely prevalent like it had always been. Although the government has approved several Acts to eradicate the high demand of dowry system, little change has happened.

Girls still become victim of crime due to this evil practice. Yet, the highly educated class does not find anything exciting in this system and avoid demanding money from bride's family. It is unfortunate that the percentage of families not requesting a dowry is very small. This makes the status of girls with respect to dowry still challenging and it might require social mobilization, self-sensitization and determination to bring a change.

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Breastfeeding Mothers March

Breastfeeding Mothers are planning a Million Mothers March slaoon July 18 at the State Capitol in Lansing, MI, USA. The purpose of the March is to push a recommendation for Federal laws protecting a mother's right to breastfeed her baby in any place where she and her baby are legally permitted, providing every baby with the most basic of human rights; access to their mother and her milk. There is a need to instill more awareness regarding the disrespect of telling mothers they can't breastfeed in stores, court rooms, fitness facilities, buses, restaurants or any other place a mother is able to. Simone Manigo-Truell dos Santos of Washington D.C. was barred from breastfeeding her child while waiting for a Department of Motor Vehicle hearing. Penny Laurel Schlanser in Tomball, Texas was asked not to breastfeed her child in an all women's fitness facility. Michelle Hickman in Friendswood, Texas who was shopping at a local Target was humiliated for breastfeeding. These are just a few examples of the breach of child right to food. According to the organisers of the protest, on July 18, 2012 at 10am they are Marching to get a law in place to stop the harassment. The only way to make a change is for breastfeeding mothers and their supporters to work together.

Stop Baby Milk Roadshow In UK

Baby Milk Action, UK on breastfeeding promoters to help stop the baby milk companies in the UK reaching a new low in pushing their products. Wyeth is planning to start the SMA Baby Know-How roadshow in the UK this month to promote its formula and sign up mothers to its baby club so it can bombard them with promotional emails and materials. According to the Public Relations firm organising the events: *"The shows are designed to launch SMA's new products"*. This breaks the marketing rules and undermines the rights of all pregnant women and parents to accurate, independent information on infant feeding.

World Breastfeeding Week 2012 and Other Initiatives

The theme of the World Breastfeeding Week 2012 is “Understanding the Past – Planning the Future”

The celebrations this year provides a perfect opportunity to assess, analyse and act, as it aims at celebrating 10 years of WHO/UNICEF’s Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child feeding. It will be also the 20th World Breastfeeding Week. We would like to appeal to members of the Men’s Working Group to showcase their activities in different regions and countries. The activities aim at:

- To recall what has happened in the past 20 years on infant and young child feeding (IYCF).
- To celebrate successes and achievements nationally, regionally and globally and showcase national work at global level
- To assess the status of implementation of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (GSIYCF).
- To call for action to bridge the remaining gaps in policy and programmes on breastfeeding and IYCF.
- To draw public attention on the state of policy and programmes on breastfeeding and IYCF.

What is the Global Strategy?

The World Health Organisation, (WHO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) jointly developed and launched the Global Strategy(GS) for Infant and Young Child Feeding in 2002 reaffirming the four innocent targets set in 1995, and setting additional targets. The GS has identified a clear need for optimal infant feeding practices in reducing malnutrition as well as poverty. It is based on human rights approach and calls for the development of comprehensive national policies on infant and young child feeding. It provides guidance on how to protect, promote and support exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding for two years or beyond together with adequate, appropriate and local complementary foods, starting from the age of six months.

Why Monitoring Status of GS implementation

In 2004 – 2005, the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), which is one of WABA’s core partners launched the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi). <http://www.worldbreastfeedingtrends.org/> to track, assess and monitor the implementation of the Global Strategy. According to UNICEF’s state of the World’s Children report 2011, 136.7 million babies are born worldwide and only 32.6 % of them are breastfed exclusively in the first six months. According to WBTi assessment of 40 countries, <http://www.worldbreastfeedingtrends.org/countrylinks.php>,

Most of the 40 countries do not have an effective IYCF policy with an adequate budget for implementation to be able to increase breastfeeding rates, it is important to assess policies and programmes and take action accordingly.

Men’s Initiative Action Plan

January – June 2012: Mobilisation of people and resources with the conduction of regional and national assessment and creating of a report card for countries

WBTi Cameroon

Following the WBTi assessment conducted by Cameroon Link with the support of IBFAN Africa in 2008, a repeat assessment is required in 2012 to develop a Cameroon Country updated report card. <http://www.worldbreastfeedingtrends.org/cameroon.php>

Celebrating WBW from 1 – 7 August, 2012

Sharing of the findings of country report cards with the government, media, other groups and more widely during the World Breastfeeding Week.

WBC in New Delhi, India: 6 – 9 December, 2012

Participate at the World Breastfeeding Conference 2012 between 6-9 December 2012 in Delhi, India on the theme “Lets Protect Every Feeding Mother” and highlight our respective roles in our regions and countries.

The WBC - 2012 is hosted in New Delhi, India, by BPNI / IBFAN Asia, in partnership with the Ministry of Women & Child Development (MWCD), and Ministry of Health & Family

The importance of breastfeeding in child survival and health has been known for several decades.

Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India

The World Breastfeeding Conference aims to close the gap between the frame work outlined in documents to support, promote and support breastfeeding and its acceptance and integration into practice at national level. It seeks to provide a forum for people from a wide range of sectors – government, civil society organisations, health professionals and social activists – to share and assess experiences, as well as explore creative and effective ways to integrate the theory into practice.

Out of 136 million babies born each day, 92 million are not breastfed exclusively for the first six months as recommended by WHA, WHO and UNICEF.

The Status Of Indian Girls After Marriage

The post marital status of the girls in India is noted to be improving as far as employment is concerned. Now-a-days males want their wives to work for a salary, because working wife adds to the family income. It also helps the women to make good use of the education she acquired. The percentage of conservative people who think that women should be kept behind veil at home is becoming very low. Female household headship in India has improved since women are becoming conscious of how hard it is to be employed to earn a salary and manage it in the interest of protecting the family. This has made women take over leadership without any doubt in most communities. *The female is very visible in big cities*, but in villages the male still has an upper hand in the family. The duty of women remains limited to the kitchen activities and child bearing only. The situation will take long to change because of the lack of basic education and that urbanization is quite rapid in India creating rural exodus. In general, the chance of male dominance in household does not seem to work for long in the villages due to urbanization and the spread of independent media exposing western life styles that are copied. This has resulted to decision-making being shared by women in most communities affected by urbanisation. This has also led to women's opinions being respected in finance, domestic and all other home management decisions. The days are gone when women's access to resources were limited. Currently, women not only have access to the resources but have management capability too. They are no more too dependent on males for their livelihood. Education has brought a drastic change in the status of women in India. Availing higher education has helped them get higher position in services and those with lower education have got confidence to lead their small scale businesses, thereby leading a self-dependent life. Cases of Spousal Violence has also dropped and women are no more ready to accept the mental, physical or any other genre of violence from the males neither at home nor outside. Women have become confident to stand against the harshness of society and the confidence has been developed through education and security of income through jobs. This has led to deciding on the limits of tolerance by women as they share tasks with men. The women feel fortunate to live in the present changed India, where the discrimination faced by the women is a forgotten story narrated by women of previous generations. Vartika's mother observed that the level of discrimination she faced was much less than that experienced by her grandmother and her fore-mother. Apparently, India is ready to accept the positive changes and people are welcoming it open-heartedly.

Dr. Vartika Singh. New Delhi, India

WABA MWG Core Group Members

The Global Initiative for Father Support (GIFS) was launched at the Global Forum II, Arusha Tanzania, 2002 to support Fathers of breastfeeding children. In October 2006, in Penang, Malaysia, the WABA Men's Initiative was born.

WABA MWG Core Group Members

Coordinator: James Achanyi-Fontem, Cameroon
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Ray Maseko, Swaziland
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Arturo Arteaga Villaroel, Mexico
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Editorial Supervision:

Naweed Harooni & Aida Redza(WABA)

The Men's Initiative Newsletter is designed to share news, plans and actions of men/young male's involvement and roles in the breastfeeding movement, mother support, gender justice and other areas of interest. If you are a father supporting breastfeeding, or know of someone working with a father support group, send us a report of your activities.

WABA

The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) is a global network of individuals and organisations concerned with the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding worldwide based on the Innocenti Declarations, the Ten Links for Nurturing the Future and the WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding. Its core partners are International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), La Leche League International (LLLI), International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA), Wellstart International and Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM). WABA is in consultative status with UNICEF and an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).

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The views expressed in the articles, supplements and inserts, do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of WABA or its Core Partners.

COL Educating Cameroon's Mothers Through Community Radio

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) Canada, Media and Training Centre for Health, Cape town, South Africa, supported Cameroon Link to facilitate a five-day Story Design Capacity Building Workshop & Programming Sustainability for scaling up mother and child health care open distance learning (ODL) on Lebialem Community Radio in the south west region of Cameroon.



COL Story Design Workshop Participants In Lebialem

The programmes produced in local and English languages titled "Asongah Leghung Emeh Boh Muoh" (Mother and Child Health Care Radio Program) are broadcast weekly to increase awareness of mothers on how to use low cost methods and access care regularly. The workshop which hosted by Cameroon Link and Lebialem Community Radio was held at the Women Empowerment Centre in Menji, Lebialem from the 26th – 31st March, 2012. It was facilitated by Charles Simbi from Malawi and Busi Ngcebetsha from South Africa. The key objectives of the workshop were:

To develop the messages and programme matrix for "Asongah Leghung Emeh Boh Muoh" (Mother and Child Health Care).

To impart Behaviour Change Communication Program design and production Skills for Health communities learning programs in preparation for program scale-up in Cameroon from July 2012 – 2015.

To explore and develop various ways to mobilise resources for program sustainability. A diversity of participants including, teachers, a magistrate, Health personnel, Members of different Community Associations and radio producers most of whom are members of Lebialem Community Radio Scriptwriters Club participated in the training. The Workshop was opened by the Guest of Honour, the Divisional Officer, a top government regional officer who hailed the Commonwealth of Learning and Cameroon Link for organising the workshop which would build the capacity of Lebialem Community Radio to serve the population better as regards mother and child health. The Executive Director of Cameroon Link and the President of Lebialem Community Radio thanked the Commonwealth of Learning for organising the training which will build the capacity of the community radio station to serve the Lebialem community through the production of quality and quantitative radio programs and disseminate strategic and relevant mother and child health care messages.

The District Health Officer, Dr. Samuel Yunga, made a presentation on the Mother and Child Health Care issues linking the health challenges in Lebialem to the national strategies with their Three Ds strategy: Delay in deciding to go to the hospital, Delay in getting to the health facility and Delay in receiving quality health care. The District Health Officer said Mother and Child Health Care is key to attainment of two of the Millennium Development Goals in Cameroon, and therefore the program on Mother and Child Health Care, Asongah Leghung Emeh Boh Muoh fits in very well into the Ministry of Public Health strategy and the Cameroon Government Health priorities.

Community Learning Program aim:

- To vigorously involve stakeholders in the communication program development process and employ their wealth of knowledge and experience.
- To ensure that the development of the programs engages communities in the selection of the key learning objectives, key behavioural issues to be addressed or promoted so that the messages originate from people themselves rather than from outside experts.
- To develop learning/ communication program that are within proper cultural frameworks
- To initiate a participatory and consultative process in which behaviours, knowledge gaps, attitudes and practices are addressed, analyzed and audiences segmented.
- To establish an open communication process, that builds trust, initiates knowledge and perceptions exchange, achieving mutual understanding, and helping stakeholders including members of the community to assess risks and opportunities together.



Community Radio Listeners Clubs Forum

- To use available resources efficiently: Another advantage of developing participatory media is that local resources can be exploited and used very effectively. Stakeholders can contribute resources, personal time and investment to sustain the programs. For more visit—<http://www.col.org>

Camlink News