

Call to Action on Breastfeeding and Infant & Young Child Feeding

1st September 2015
New Delhi, India



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We, the participants coming from diverse groups including civil society organizations, health professionals, academicians, breastfeeding organizations, peoples organizations and movements, international agencies, and individuals have come together at the launch of the report “**Arrested Development**” on the 4th Assessment of India’s Policies and Programmes on Breastfeeding and Infant and Young Child Feeding.

We take note of the gaps as well as achievements in this report and are concerned and recognize that protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding and optimal infant and young child feeding is a human rights issue and should be entrenched in the public policy and programmes as a necessary condition needing resources.

We call upon Government of India to take the following actions:

- Develop a clear national policy with plan of action and allocated budgets for interventions on breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding (IYCF).
- Revive the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) and set up a national coordination committee and institutionalize it through NHM and child health division.
- Develop an effective mechanism to enforce the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act 1992, and Amendment Act ,2003 (IMS Act) in its letter and spirit.
- Implement uniform maternity protection and policies for all working women both in organized and unorganized sector as a *minimum* maternity entitlement.
- Develop standard training curriculum /module for in-service skill based training on IYCF counselling for health care providers.
- Provide universal access to systems such as day care services (on-site for breastfed children and also as a support for adequate complementary feeding).
- Develop a strategy document on communication to guide the states for IEC for IYCF keeping commercial influence and conflict of interest in mind.
- Develop a clear policy on training of health professionals and workers on infant feeding options in HIV positive situations and how to support women in a given option to achieve good outcomes.
- Develop a national policy and plan to deal with infant and young child feeding during disaster situations.
- Conduct regular or periodical routine national surveys on IYCF practices.

All participants commit themselves to the Call to Action on Breastfeeding and Infant & Young Child Feeding

List of Signatories

1. Dr. Vandana Prasad, Public Health Resource Network (PHRN)
2. Soma Sen, Public Health Resource Network (PHRN)
3. Srishti Mediratta, Public Health Resource Network (PHRN)
4. Sunandan Kumar, Public Health Resource Network (PHRN)
5. Dr. Arun Gupta, International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) Asia, Delhi
6. Devika Singh, Alliance for Right to food
7. Dr. Ganapathy, Public Health Resource Network, Delhi
8. Dr. JP Dadhich, Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI), Delhi
9. Dr. Ravikant Singh, President, Doctors for You
10. Dr. Shoba Suri, Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI)
11. Dr. Parveen Kumar, Lady Hardinge Medical College
12. Shubhika Sachdeva, Alliance for Right to Early Childhood Development
13. Sejal Dand, ANANDI & Right to Food Campaign
14. Md. Allam Ashraf, PHRS
15. Prof. Umesh Kapil, All India Institute of Medical Sciences
16. AR Nanda, Retd. IAS Former Health Secretary to Government of India
17. S B Agnihotri, Individual Researcher
18. Nighai Yaseen, Department of Human Nutrition AIIMS, N Delhi
19. Onkar Sharma, Ministry of labour & Employment, Government of India
20. Dr. Ajay Khara, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India
21. Dr. Anita Gupta, University College of Medical Sciences, GTB Hospital
22. Dr. Chander Kant, Satyawadi Raja Harish Chandra Hospital, Delhi
23. Malabika Ray, Indian Council of Medical Research
24. Dr. Reeta Rasaily, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), N. Delhi
25. Dr. Sangeeta Rani, Guru Gobind Singh Government Hospital
26. Kamala Upadhyaya, Association for Social Justice and Research
27. Dr. Saba Mebrahtu, UNICEF
28. Gayatri Singh, UNICEF, Delhi
29. Dr. Mira Shiva, Initiative for Health, Equity and Society (IHES), Delhi
30. Jessy George, Initiative for Health, Equity and Society (IHES), Delhi
31. Koninika Ray, National Federation of India Women (NFIW)
32. Neha Khara, Sphere India
33. Veena Jayaram, Child Right & You (CRY)
34. Santosh Morey, Child Right & You (CRY), Delhi
35. Savitiri Ray, Forces Network (Forum for Crèche & child care services)
36. Shaoor A Khan, Forum for Citizen & Charter
37. Radha Holla Bhar, Alliance Against Conflict Of Interest
38. Minakshi Saxena, Paras Hospital
39. Dr. Sunita Katayayan, Paediatrician, Jharkhand
40. Dr. Rita Gupta, General Physician Delhi
41. Ajay Kumar, Advocate, Delhi High Court
42. Arshima Champa Dost, India Institute King's College London
43. Bilal Ahmad, Janbhawana Times
44. Kapil Ujjan, Zee News
45. Nusrat Khan, Shiksha Adhikar Abhiyan
46. Ram, Morning India
47. Rakhi Gupta, Trilokpuri Nagrik Prerna Samitee
48. RP Pandey, Group 10 Network
49. S Deb, UNI

Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI)

BP-33, Pitampura, Delhi-110034

Tel: +91-11-27343608, 42683059, Email: bpni@bpni.org