

WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2017

THEME:
MY BABY, MY MILK
CAMPAIGN



An initiative of

**GRASSROOT PEOPLE AND GENDER
DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

2017
WBW

**GRASSROOT PEOPLE AND GENDER
DEVELOPMENT CENTER**

CELEBRATES

2017 WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK

THEME:

MY BABY, MY MILK CAMPAIGN

**SUSTAINING BREASTFEEDING
TOGETHER**

Table of contents

Abbreviations	3
Message from the Executive Director.....	4
Background	5
Introduction	6
Narrative of Activities	7
Call to Action	8
Recommendations	8
Next steps	9
Conclusion.....	9
Appreciation.....	9
Event Photos	10

Abbreviations

EBF	Exclusive breastfeeding
LG	Local Government
LCDA	Local Council Development Area
PHC	Primary Health Centre
WBW	World Breastfeeding Week
WHO	World Health Organization
MNH	Maternal and Newborn Health

Message from the Executive Director



We are glad to successfully launch “**MY BABY, MY MILK CAMPAIGN**” to celebrate the 2017 World Breastfeeding Week within Alimosho LG and Igando-Ikotun LCDA of Lagos State, Nigeria. MBMM campaign was initiated in 2016 and carried out online on social media platforms such as Facebook, Tweeter and Whatapp. It is designed to target grassroots women, private sectors and policy makers to increase awareness on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding as an importance component of infant nutrition, protection and its remarkable health benefits to mothers as well.

Leveraging on the ongoing MamaYe Campaign in Lagos, our trained community activists and Alimosho LG super activists led by the government health education officer supported the 2017 WBW celebration with the theme “Sustaining Breastfeeding Together”. Majority of mothers testify that exclusive breastfeeding is convenient and economical. Babies exclusively breastfed do better in class than those who have mixed feeding.

We reached over 700 women attending immunization at the government primary health care centre with the area. We visited Egan and Ikotun PHCs with the approval and support of the Medical Officer for Health and Rauf Aregbesola and Akonwonjo PHCs with the approval of the health educator. We distributed over 300 booklet of “Baby Diary and Album”, designed to help mothers keep a data of their baby from day one to one year. Also, immunization schedules and maternal and child health messages like breastfeeding and diarrhoea prevention are included in the booklet.

However, we hope to engage private sector and government as the next step to our campaign to increase their commitment in ensuring a better child friendly environment and policy for mothers and their babies.

Signed
Vivian Ifeoma Emesowum (Mrs.)
Executive Director, GRADE

Background

Breast milk provides the essential nutrients for infants less than six months of age and in addition to complementary foods, meets their nutritional needs in early childhood. Even though breastfeeding has been promoted severally, its practice has remained poor in many sub-Saharan African countries including Nigeria. The Lagos State government has decried that 72 percent of Lagos mothers do not practice exclusive breastfeeding for their new babies in the first six months of given birth. The government said only 28 percent of mothers in the state engaged in exclusive breastfeeding, appealing to mothers in the state to take it as a duty by breastfeeding their babies exclusively in the first six months of their delivery. Also, the report survey conducted in Lagos by Save the Children correlated that only 25% of children less than 6 months are exclusively breastfed and only about two-fifth initiated breastfeeding within the first hour of birth.

By promoting healthy lifestyles and nutrition choices, breastfeeding will make a difference in the lives of many mothers and children. After pregnancy, breastfeeding is an important next step toward a healthy infant. Not breastfeeding infants increase their risk of dying, of developing disease and of not reaching their full potential. It also affects women too – for example, by increasing their risk of breast cancer and shortening the interval between pregnancies.

Exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) is a key public health approach and the first six months protects children from major childhood diseases such as diarrhea and pneumonia. Diarrhea is five times more prevalent in bottle-fed than breastfed babies. The cost of treating gastro-enteritis in bottle-fed babies is twelve times that of treating breastfed babies-WHO. A 5% increase in breastfeeding rates could save millions every year. Breastfeeding is inextricably linked to preventing infant mortality and is associated with improved cognitive and behavioural outcomes. Breastfeeding saves lives, improves the health and nutrition of women and babies, saves costs of treating disease, and helps citizens to reach their potential and contribute to the economic prosperity of the nation.

Introduction

WBW2017 celebrates working together for the common good, which produces sustainable results, greater than the sum of our individual efforts. Evidence on the benefits of breastfeeding is already available to us. We know that breastfeeding aids the survival of infants and helps them thrive, has long-term health benefits for women, yields economic benefits and enhances the wellbeing of all. The challenge for champions of breastfeeding is to translate globally agreed policies to positive action in our communities.

The week started on the 1-7 of August with several grassroots focused activities with the objective to increase awareness on the importance of exclusive breastfeeding according to WHO standards which recommends breastfeeding without water and other milk products for 6months and continuous feeding for 2years with complementary feeding.

With the support of our trained MamaYe community activists and the local government health educator, we visited 4 primary health centers on the 1st and 3rd of the week to sensitize mothers attending immunization and distributed over 300 copies of Baby Diary and Album booklet which also contained maternal and child health care information including the importance of breastfeeding.

An interactive session with mothers revealed that part of the reason women do not breastfeed for a year is to avoid sagging breast. Also, they do not wish to practice EBF because it prevents them from going out possibly to search for their daily bread. However, women who practice EBF express the outcome on their babies; they are intelligence in school and hardly fall sick when compared to their other children that are not exclusively breastfed. They also agreed that breastfeeding is convenient and economical practice.



This is my fourth baby, I practice exclusive breastfeeding for all of them, and they are very intelligent in school and always come first in class. It is very convenient; I don't need to carry bags when going out with my baby.

– Mrs. Stella Okafor

Narrative of Activities

28th of July, 2017

A one day strategic planning meeting was held with five members of GRADE/MamaYe community trained activists for maternal and newborn health. The objective of the meeting was to develop a work plan for the World Breastfeeding Week Celebration. Outcome of the meeting was to visit three Primary health Centers and distribute 250 copies of Baby Diary and Album booklet and also, to notify Igando-iktoun local council and secure their buy-in to the celebration.

31st July, 2017

Letter was submitted to the executive chairman and the medical officer for health of Igando-Ikotun LCDA to visit two of her primary health care centers to sensitize women on exclusive breastfeeding as an activity for the world breastfeeding week 2017. An approval was given by the MOH and a call was placed to the apex nurse in charge of the PHCs immediately.

1st -3rd August, 2017

The team visited Egan, Ikotun, Rauf Aregbesola and Akonwonjo PHCs and sensitized over 700 women in attendance for immunization. Mothers were encouraged to breastfeed their babies with their milk instead of other sources of milk and the WHO standard of exclusive breastfeeding which does not require water or any other feeding for the first six months, after which complementary feeding starts and breastfeeding continues for 2years. Majority of the mothers frown at the 2years breastfeeding but yet there were few who practice exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months while other practice it with water. However, there were some who practice EBF as recommended as they shared their experience with other.

We also had social media campaign on tweeter and Facebook going on during the week on activities of the 2017 WBW both at national and international levels.



Exclusively breastfed baby

Call to Action

- ✚ Lagos State Government passed an executive order for civil servants who are first time mothers to be given 6 months maternity leave while 4 months is recommended for second time mothers. As centre of excellence, it will be very appreciated to have it as a government policy not only for its civil servants but for private sectors within its environment.
- ✚ We call on key stakeholders at all levels especially the private sectors to ensure commitment in promoting exclusive breastfeeding for newborn through absolute adherence to this policy and other related right based provisions that supports our collective efforts to improve the health of newborn and reduce child mortality through exclusive breastfeeding.

Recommendations

- ✚ Adopt and implement WHO recommendation for exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of the newborn
- ✚ We advocate for policies that support breastfeeding in work environments and public places
- ✚ We provide support to community groups and actions that promotes exclusive breastfeeding
- ✚ Promote the baby friendly hospital initiative and assist in the implementation of the “Ten steps to successful Breastfeeding”
- ✚ Provide community based strategies to support exclusive breastfeeding including distribution of communication materials and messages even in local contents
- ✚ Government should encourage milk manufacturing organization to participate and promote exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months before complementary feeding.

Next steps

- ✚ To increase the scope of MBMM campaign to other parts of the state
- ✚ To engage private sector to have a safe space for mothers at work place to breastfeed their babies at intervals
- ✚ To engage government to ensure that the executive order is transformed into a state policy for civil servants and all citizens of the state.
- ✚ To support MNH activists to form support groups of mothers to promote EBF within their monthly community outreaches.

Conclusion

The World Health Assembly has set a global target of increasing exclusive breastfeeding rates for children under six months of age to at least 50 per cent by 2025. To achieve this ambitious and very important goal, we need to tackle all the barriers to breastfeeding. Governments should lead the change by making breastfeeding a policy priority in national development plans, increasing resources for programming that supports breastfeeding, and working with communities and families to promote the full benefits of breastfeeding.

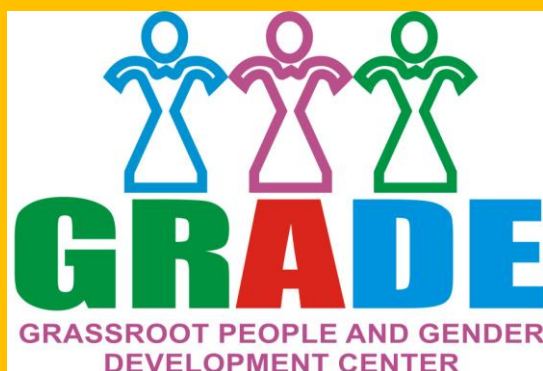
Appreciation

The management of Grassroot People and Gender Development Center appreciate the support of all those who participated actively to the success of My Baby, My Milk Campaign. Most especially, we appreciate our amicable health educator of Alimosho LG, Mrs. Ahmed Ogundipe for being there. Also, we appreciate the Medical Officer for Health of Igando Ikotun for her approval to visit their PHCs within the shortest notification.

We thank our community activists who are passionate in ensuring that mortality and child mortality is reduced in the community and to all MamaYe super activists within Alimosho LG.

Event Photos





A publication of
Grassroot People and Gender
Development Center