WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK REPORT- IMC DAMBOA.

PREAMBLE

Adequate nutrition in infancy and early childhood have been established to be an essential requirement for optimal growth and development and also promote the health and behavior of the child. Breastfeeding has been unparalleled as an ideal food for optimal growth and development of infants and held as an integral part of reproductive process with enormous health benefits to the mother and infant. Based on this understanding came a global strategy to improve breastfeeding and give impetus to the practice of optimal breastfeeding with world breastfeeding week as an offshoot. The world Breastfeeding (BF) week is to commemorate the Innocenti Declaration signed in August 1990 by government, policy makers, WHO, UNICEF, and other organizations to protect, promote and support breastfeeding.

The theme of this year’s world breastfeeding week is “Support breastfeeding for a healthier planet” this brings to the consciousness of everyone that practicing optimal breastfeeding has enormous benefits from a broader perspective “Planet” when the planet is healthy everyone benefits and it becomes a win-win situation for everybody. When optimal breastfeeding is practiced, less energy (Fire wood and others) is used due to the fact mothers do not need extra for the preparation of breastmilk substitute this will prevent deforestation, reduce the carbon emitted which could lead to environmental pollution—which could damage the respiratory tract, depletion of ozone layers which could lead to the emission of harmful rays which could cause skin cancer (Stretching the health care system). Rise in ocean level due to the melting of polar cap, excessive rain which could lead to flooding which could destroy property, render people homeless, destroy crops and food in the store and even cause the loss of life and properties

BACKGROUND

International Medical Corps (IMC) implements nutrition programs in seven (7) OTP sites and IYCF sites in Damboa local government, which was made possible through USAID funding. IMC implement complete Nutrition package (SC, OTP, SFP, Community Mobilization and IYCF). They are broadly divided into two viz a viz preventive and curative.
The Infant and young child feeding (IYCF) focuses on the preventive aspect for pregnant and lactating women through behavioral communication through our network of lead mothers, Community Health Promoters, Community Health Volunteers (CHVs). They step down IYCF and Breastfeeding messages to household level. In all our implementation sites the WBW were duly commemorated and breastfeeding messages were duly stepped down.

**World Breastfeeding Week activity**

This year’s world breastfeeding week is unique as it presents a new challenge the Covid-19 pandemic and concerns were raised concerning breastfeeding if one is confirmed Covid-19 Positive. These concerns were addressed during the WABA week activity that till date, corona virus has not been isolated from breastmilk although research is ongoing. The World Health Organization believes that the benefits of breastfeeding in Covid-19 far exceeds that of not breastfeeding and have recommended that breastfeeding should still be practiced despite the pandemic, while observing certain precautionary measures.

The activity started with sensitization at the office while observing physical distancing. In observance of the covid-19 precautionary measures, lead mothers were sensitized on the theme of the breastfeeding week and importance of breastfeeding to the child, mother, community and environment. Also on how to initiate breastfeeding and how to overcome breastfeeding challenges. They were in turn charged to disseminate the information to people around them and to ensure the message permeates the entire community. Also sensitization was done at the OTPs.

Sensitization and outreach on 6 different topics were carried out at different days of the week during the World Breastfeeding Week at all our implementation sites (Outpatient therapeutic (OTP) sites, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) sites. Under listed were the topics discussed;

1. Overview of breastfeeding in the context of Covid-19,
2. Benefits of breastfeeding to the mothers, father, child, community and environment.
3. Myths and facts about breastfeeding
4. Steps on efficient breastfeeding,
6. 10 steps to successful breastfeeding
At Gumsuri OTP with Lead Mother on WABA Week Sensitization
At Shuwari OTP with Lead Mothers and Community Health Promoters

At GHC OTP with Lead Mothers
Conclusion

The activity of this year’s WABA week was a success and this was made possible through the collaborative effort of all Nutrition Team members.

WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK (WABA) REPORT - IMC Damboa SC

INTRODUCTION: World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) is a global campaign to raise awareness and startle action on themes related to breastfeeding. This is celebrated every 1-7 August in commemoration of the 1990 Innocenti Declaration and been coordinated by World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA). The theme of WBW 2020 is “Support breastfeeding for a healthier planet” and its objectives aims to inform, anchor, engage and galvanize action on breastfeeding and related issues. WBW 2020 campaign focus on the impact of infant feeding on the environment/climate change and the imperative to protect, promote and support breastfeeding for the health of the planet and its people.

International Medical Corps operates a stabilization center (SC) in Damboa as part of CMAM component in management of SAM with medical complications, other activities being carried out in the SC include; Infant young child feeding (IYCF), Health education, hygiene promotion and Psychosocial stimulation.

WBW ACTIVITIES: The formidable SC team responded to this global clarion call from WABA via a warm chain approach of working in synergy with other sectors across board through sensitization, promotion and advocacy to the beneficiaries on admission with emphasis on the link between breastfeeding and the environment. The following topics were discussed throughout the course of the campaign.

1. Overview of breastfeeding and breastfeeding in the context of COVID 19
2. 10 steps of successful breastfeeding
3. Benefits of breastfeeding to the Mother, Father, Child and the Community
4. Myths and Facts about breastfeeding
5. Steps on Efficient breastfeeding

These topics were evenly shared among the staffs working at the SC.

The WBW banners were hung as a visibility and awareness medium in the vicinity of the Stabilization Centre in Damboa. Group counselling and health education sessions were held for all the caregivers presenting at the SC during the World Breastfeeding Week.

Detailed Counselling on adequate breastfeeding were carried out at the IYCF Corner located in the SC, to further teach and counsel every caregiver presenting at the SC.
Group IYCF Counselling and Health Education Session by an SC Nurse
SC staff with caregivers commemorating the WBW with posters about Breastfeeding
SC Doctor and SC Nurse delivering WBW topics to caregivers during the WBW

A Nutrition Assistant carrying out group IYCF Counselling during the WBW in local language ‘Kanuri’
CHALLENGES

✓ Cultural Beliefs about breastfeeding

RECOMMENDATION

✓ Community sensitization should be planned to reach out to more people in the context of COVID 19 via use of megaphones, radios, billboards and television.

CONCLUSION

Breastmilk is a natural, renewable food that is environmentally safe and green because it is produced and delivered to the consumer without pollution, packaging or waste. Hence, should be regarded as a call of duty and massively promoted by every sector which the SC team are not left behind.

WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK REPORT- IMC Maiduguri, Konduga & Jere LGAs.

PREAMBLE

As a strategy to ensure global support, promotion and protection of breastfeeding, the World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) celebration was initiated and adopted by WHO, UNICEF and other global policy makers following the Innocenti Declaration in 1990. Since then, WABA (World Alliance for Breastfeeding action) has been the global network who coordinates the annual WBW. The Declaration states that, “all women should be enabled to practice exclusive breastfeeding and all infants should be fed exclusively on breast milk up to 4-6 months of age as a global goal for optimal maternal and child health and nutrition”. Across the world, an estimated 78 million babies (3 in every 5) are not breastfed within the first hour of delivery; this puts them at a higher risk of death and diseases which make them less likely to pick up breastfeeding later; UNICEF and WHO have said in a new report. Most of these babies are born in low-and-middle-income countries. The global prevalence of early Initiation of Breastfeeding (EIBF) is approximately 50% in many developing countries, and data remains unavailable for some countries

BACKGROUND

International Medical Corps (IMC) continues to provide Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) through OTP, SC, Community Mobilization, SFP (BSFP), and IYCF activities. The OTP and SC are the curative arm of CMAM managing SAM without medical complication and SAM with medical complications respectively. While the IYCF is
the preventive arm that fosters behavioral change through empowering people with knowledge on breastfeeding practice, exclusive breastfeeding, hygiene and good health seeking behavioral practices through care groups as well as one-on-one IYCF counselling where issues are handled based on the concerns of the caregiver.

WBW has been one of those prominent and friendly measures employed for propagating key breastfeeding messages to grassroots on proper breastfeeding practices, difficulties in breastfeeding, and importance of breastfeeding to the child, mother, father, community and nation at large.

**WABA WEEK IN MMC, JERE AND KONDUGA:**

The IMC nutrition team in MMC, JERE and KONDUGA has proficiently answered the global call from WABA to support breastfeeding, which focus on the impact of infant feeding on the environment/climate change and the imperative to protect, promote and support breastfeeding for the health of the planet and its people, through local sensitization, advocacy and outreaches. Due to covid-19 context, the team considered answering this call as being imperative since we are the lead nutrition (IYCF) partner in MMC, JERE and KONDUGA. This successful unprecedented giant stride was realized through support and active participation of all IMC Maiduguri staff with intention to further strengthen inter-sectorial service integration. The exercise was conducted for 7 days (1st - 7th August, 2020).

Sensitization and outreach on 6 different topics were carried out at different days of the week during the World Breastfeeding Week at all our implementation sites (Outpatient therapeutic (OTP) sites, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) sites. Under listed were the topics discussed;

1. Overview of breastfeeding in the context of Covid-19,
2. Benefits of breastfeeding to the mothers, father, child, community and environment.
3. Myths and facts about breastfeeding
4. Steps on efficient breastfeeding,
6. 10 steps to successful breastfeeding
Electronic Messages about Breastfeeding topics listed above were shared on IMC WhatsApp group platforms throughout the WBW. WBW awareness banners were hung around IMC office and in all OTPs

**DAY 1:**

The WBW celebration in MMC was instigated on the 3rd of August at 2 different OTP sites (Mairi Kuwait and Galtimari).

IYCF Care Groups (lead mothers), from these communities with their respective PLW were mobilized and engaged in focal sensitization. The lead mothers were also encouraged to reinforce their activities with a house to house sensitization on key breastfeeding messages especially early initiation of breast milk, overview of breastfeeding in the context of Covid-19, exclusive breastfeeding, appropriate complementary feeding, and hygiene promotion. Each lead mother was assigned to 45 Pregnant & Lactating Women, responsible for educating them on the discussed topics.
GALTIMARI OTP: Health worker and caregivers after sensitization on WABA Week

**DAY:2**

On this day, the breastfeeding sensitization was also conducted in 2 OTPs (Abujan Talakawa and Gambari). Messages consistent with those from Day 1 were communicated to community members. To further aid understanding and make the sessions more interactive, mothers were encouraged to ask questions on any grey areas.
Nutrition staff and caregivers in Abuja Talakawa OTP

**DAY: 3, 4 & 5**

On these days, same messages were communicated to beneficiaries as Day 1 & 2 in Jabbamari, Shuwari, Shokari, Tashan bala communities. 100 lead mothers with their respective PLW participated in the celebration. Key breastfeeding messages were communicated by different nutrition team members in a comprehensible manner. The Nutrition Manager also participated actively in these sessions, where he visited OTPs to encourage mothers and beneficiaries on the need to implement the key messages given to them.
Community Health Promoter using IYCF Flip chart to sensitize caregivers on assigned topics in Tashan Bala OTP.

PLW demonstrating good attachment after one on one counseling by the CHP.
Nutrition Manager with caregivers during a visit to support the WABA week Celebration in Shuwari OTP

CHALLENGES

- Covid-19 pandemic was a serious issue, thus, reaching large numbers of beneficiaries at a time, was not possible.
- Campaigns and community dialogue could not take place due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Demonstrations and interactions were limited also.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- During the pandemic, a plan should be made on how to reach beneficiaries in large numbers by Hiring Dramas in Television and Radio stations and providing the volunteers with equipment with which they can go on one on one visits.