

**One Asia Breastfeeding Partners Forum-8
“Food Security and Climate Change”
14 – 16 September 2011, Hotel Ulaanbaatar, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia**



The Opening/Inauguration

Forum 8 was hosted by the Ministry of Health, Mongolia and sponsored by WHO Mongolia together with IBFAN Asia. The forum was organized by IBFAN Asia.

The theme for the forum was “Food Security and Climate Change”.

The Forum saw the participation of 42 participants from 16 countries and areas - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, People's Republic of China, Hong Kong SAR, India, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. The opening ceremony of the Forum was held on 14 September 2011 with the participation of the Minister of Health of Mongolia, who was the Chief Guest at the event. The Forum also saw the participation of a Member of Parliament, Mongolia Ms. Oyen, Director Maternal & Child Health, National Centre, Mongolia Dr. Enkhtur, and representative from World Health Organization, Mongolia. Also present was the representative of first lady of Mongolia. Dr. Arun Gupta, Regional Coordinator of IBFAN Asia welcomed the participants and thanked the sponsors.

The programme, spread over three days, focused on the theme – Food Security and Climate Change- Concerns and cautions for Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding. Dr. J P Dadhich, National Coordinator of Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India introduced the Forum Agenda to participants and gave an outline of the programme framework. This was followed by report of IBFAN Asia RCO by Dr. Arun Gupta, and then report from the three regions namely IBFAN East Asia by Kim Jaiok, IBFAN Southeast Asia by Ines Fernandez and IBFAN South Asia by Dr. J.P Dadhich.

Day 1 –Session I: Climate Change and Infant and Young Child Feeding. The Chairperson was Dr.Song Vokyung –Korea and Norjinal Moin-Malaysia.

The first presentation by Melissa A Tinling-University of North Carolina, Chappel Hill, USA on Green House Gas Emissions of Infant Formula Productions-A lifecycle approach, gave an overview of with the links between climate change and infant feeding. Her study has found that formula emissions were 7 times higher than that of liquid milk, because of the various steps involved in concentrating and drying the milk, and turning it into powder. Ms. Tinling also explained how she had calculated the carbon footprint of infant formula, and the kind of data that needs to be collected by those who wish to do the same in their countries.

Velvet Escario-Roxas of Philippines expanded on the theme “Zero Waste-How breastfeeding saves the environment”. She explained how breastfeeding is sacred, zero waste, and has zero carbon footprint and zero water footprint. Breastfeeding is ecologically sound, is available at all times at the right temperature, promotes health and nutritional well-being in infants and young children and it contributes to food security for the first two years in significant manner.

Session II was on presentations from participating countries about status of formula feeding, commercial foods, trends, possible GHG emissions. The session was coordinated by Dr.Arun Gupta.

The presentations were from Dr.Homayoun Ludin-Afghanistan, Dr.SK Roy-Bangladesh, Ugyen Zangmo-Bhutan, Zhang Shuye-China, Patricia IP-Hongkong, Shoba Suri-India, Nia Umar-Indonesia, Norjinah Moin-Malaysia, Gohcoo Soyolgerel-Mongolia, Dr.Prakash Shrestha-Nepal, Ines Fernandez-Philippines, Kyunghye Lee-South Korea, Amara Peeris-Sri Lanka, Chwang Leh-Chii-Taiwan, Dr.Yupayong-Thailand, and Quan Le Nga-Vietnam. The presentations showed clearly the lack of data on how much infant formula is consumed in each country and highlighted the need for further investigation.

Session III was a technical session on Issues in Food Security and Undernutrition. The chairpersons were Kim Jaiok and Dr.JP Dadhich.

Dr. Song Vkyung of Korea spoke on Global Trade, food Security, and Impact of Climate Change by Dr.Song Vokyung-Korea. She linked climate change to health, food, human rights and social justice, emphasizing the fact that “Food security is something we all have a stake and a responsibility”. Explaining how a rise in temperature by 1 degree can lead to loss of 10% food grains, and how breastfeeding saves babies, the earth, and money, she called for putting breastfeeding at the heart of climate change agenda.

Dr.Arun Gupta-India, speaking on Responding to child malnutrition with commercial products, presented the conceptual framework of causes of child malnutrition: basic political causes, cultural or economic, lack of human resources, underlying causes including lack of food, maternal and child care, and water/sanitation etc.; immediate causes are inadequate food and infection, which is a vicious cycle. For infants below 6 months the recommended food is ‘breastfeeding only’, and after six months complementary foods are needed in addition. His presentation highlighted how the current response of nations and international organisations such as UNICEF, WHO and international funders to malnutrition i.e. RUTF/RUSF/LNS or Plumpy Nut, is

now being questioned globally by public health groups as it is short-sighted and focuses on treatment rather than on prevention.

Session IV was in two parts. It had a technical session and poster presentations on sharing recipes of local complementary foods from Asian Countries. The session Coordinators were Dr.SK Roy and Ines Fernandez

The technical session started with a presentation on Infant and Young Child Feeding and ECCD by Ines Fernandez-Philippines. She gave a beautiful pictorial presentation on Sustained Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding Using Early Child Care and Development Games and Play, stressing on the need for holistic development, where food can be used to stimulate the minds and bodies of infants and young children.

Kusuma Chuslip-Thailand made a presentation on Innovative Work on Complementary Feeding. She emphasized on the growing food needs for infants and young children and how nutrition interventions can reduce the risk of morbidity and mortality. She stressed the need to include foods from all food groups in the food pyramid as part of complementary feeding/foods.

The posters were put up and presented by Dr.Homayoun Ludin-Afghanistan, Shoba Suri-India, Nia Umar-Indonesia, Norjinah Moin-Malaysia, Gohcoo Soyolgerel-Mongolia, Dr.Prakash Shrestha-Nepal, Ines Fernandez-Philippines, Amara Peeris-Sri Lanka, Chwang Leh-Chii-Taiwan, Dr.Yupayong-Thailand, and Quan Le Nga-Vietnam. Dr.SK Roy-Bangladesh, Ugyen Zangmo-Bhutan, Zhang Shuye-China, Patricia IP-Hongkong, Kyunghye Lee-South Korea made power point presentations for posters.

Day 2: Theme/focus: Infant and Young Child Right's to Food-Assessing where countries stand, with focus on

- Inappropriate promotion of baby foods
- WBTi assessment (3 years experience on benefits, how report was utilized, is it used in policy discussion/decisions)
- COI examples
- Maternity benefits

The chairpersons for session were Radha Holla, Ines Fernandez, and Jaiok Kim.

Dr.JP Dadhich gave an overview of Conflict of Interest impacting infant and young child health and nutrition. He explained what is conflict of interest and why we should be concerned about it, with examples of COI in health & nutrition. He also stressed the need to mobilize action at country level.

This was followed by country presentations in four focus areas. Dr.Homayoun Ludin-Afghanistan, Dr.SK Roy-Bangladesh, Ugyen Zangmo-Bhutan, Shoba Suri-India, Dr.Prakash Shrestha-Nepal, and Amara Peeris-Sri Lanka, represented South Asia, and Dr.JP Dadhich made the presentation on behalf of Mohammed Saeed-Maldives. Nia Umar-Indonesia, Norjinah Moin-Malaysia, Ines Fernandez-Philippines, Dr.Yupayong-Thailand, and Quan Le Nga-Vietnam, represented Southeast Asia, while Zhang Shuye-China, Patricia IP-Hongkong, Gohcoo Soyolgerel-Mongolia, Kyunghye Lee-South Korea, and Chwang Leh-Chii-Taiwan, represented East Asia.

The session highlighted how the current emphasis on trade is allowing, on the one hand, the baby food industry to violate the International Code and national legislation with impunity, and on the other hand, it is promoting the presence of industry in decision making processes both nationally and internationally, leading to conflict of interest in policy. While the WBTi process generates concern and action in the focus areas, this action is not enough, as can be seen from the area of maternity entitlements.

Ulaanbaatar Declaration

The concerns articulated in each session of the three day Conference informed the development of the Ulaanbaatar Declaration on Breastfeeding and Infant and Young Child Feeding.

The evening saw cultural festivities and performances by artists from Mongolia. The dinner for the evening was hosted by Hon'ble Minister of Health of Mongolia.

Day 3: Theme: Future Plans of regions

During the Plenary, Dr.Arun Gupta-India informed on the topics for group work, which included

- Assessment and reporting on WBTi
- The World Breastfeeding Conference 2012
- World Breastfeeding Week 2012

Then according to regions 3 Groups were formed for discussion on future plans of the region. Thirty minutes were allocated for the group discussion. The decisions were presented by Dr. Arun Gupta (South Asia), Inez Fernandes (Southeast Asia) and Kim Jaiok (East Asia).

All the groups worked out a time-line for conducting WBTi reassessments in countries that had already done initial assessments. Ines would encourage countries that had not completed their first assessment to do so within the deadline. The reports and report cards of the assessments would be used mobilizing during the World Breastfeeding Week 2012 celebrations. In addition, the reports would be shared at the World Breastfeeding Conference in December 2012.

This was followed by the Workshop on Funding opportunities. The session was coordinated by Shoba Suri-India, Ugyen Zangmo-Bhutan, Ines Fernandez-Philippines, and Kim Jaiok-Korea. Participants explored various aspects of funding, including fund raising for national work, as well as for the World Breastfeeding Conference 2012.

During the closing session the participants discussed and agreed upon the Ulaanbaatar Declaration on Breastfeeding and Infant and Young Child Feeding. The final draft of the Ulaanbaatar declaration was made available to all the participants.