



**STRONGER WITH
BREASTMILK ONLY**

no water until 6 months
for a healthier baby

Stronger With Breastmilk Only Initiative

Catalogue of Resources

MAY 2021



In November 2019, Alive & Thrive, UNICEF and WHO launched a multi-year advocacy and social and behaviour change initiative to improve exclusive breastfeeding rates in West and Central Africa. The Initiative is named “Stronger With Breastmilk Only” and represented by a visual of a baby and mother, father and grandmother. It aims to ignite breastfeeding and family-friendly policies and social change in countries across West and Central Africa so that they can achieve the World Health Assembly target of at least 50 per cent of infants exclusively breastfed by 2025 and the Sustainable Development Goal at least 70 per cent by 2030.



The Catalogue

A series of resources and tools were developed by Alive & Thrive, UNICEF and WHO to support national governments and their partners in adapting the “Stronger With Breastmilk Only” initiative to their national contexts. This catalogue lists and describes these regional resources and tools.

All resources and tools should be tailored to a country's unique national and subnational context.

Resources and tools are available in [English](#) and in [French](#).

They are also available at: www.breastmilkonly.com.

Users

Government representatives and other professionals tasked with leading or coordinating the design and implementation of the ‘Stronger With Breastmilk Only’ initiative in their countries. Professionals may belong to governments and/or their partners, such as: UN organizations, NGOs, academic institutions, advocacy networks, professional associations, private businesses, civil society groups, media and community-based organizations.

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- ▶ To raise awareness (Infographic, Call to action, Video, Podcast, Powerpoint presentation, Social media) package
- ▶ To advocate (Advocacy guidance documents)
- ▶ To educate (Factsheets, list of references)

Toolkits to guide and support countries

01

'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' Initiative Rationale and Implementation Guidance: Shifting family practices, social norms and policies in favor of exclusive breastfeeding



- ▶ **Gives strategic guidance and tools** to design, implement and monitor a national 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' initiative in a country's unique context.
- ▶ **Suggests regional advocacy and communication products**, including written and audio-visual resources to use when adapting the 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' initiative to a national context.
- ▶ **Is accompanied by a 'how-to' guide** for developing an evidence-driven social and behavioural change strategy: 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' Initiative Design Process.

▶ **Content:**

Core document

- ▶ Annex 1: Integrating 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' within nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive programmes
- ▶ Annex 2: Some SBC theories and conceptual models underpinning the 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' regional initiative
- ▶ Annex 3: 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' messages
- ▶ Annex 4: Advocacy messages: more evidence that supports the claim 'breastmilk only, no water'
- ▶ Annex 5: Results Framework
- ▶ Annex 6: Available resources and reference used for the 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only'

 37 pages (Core document)

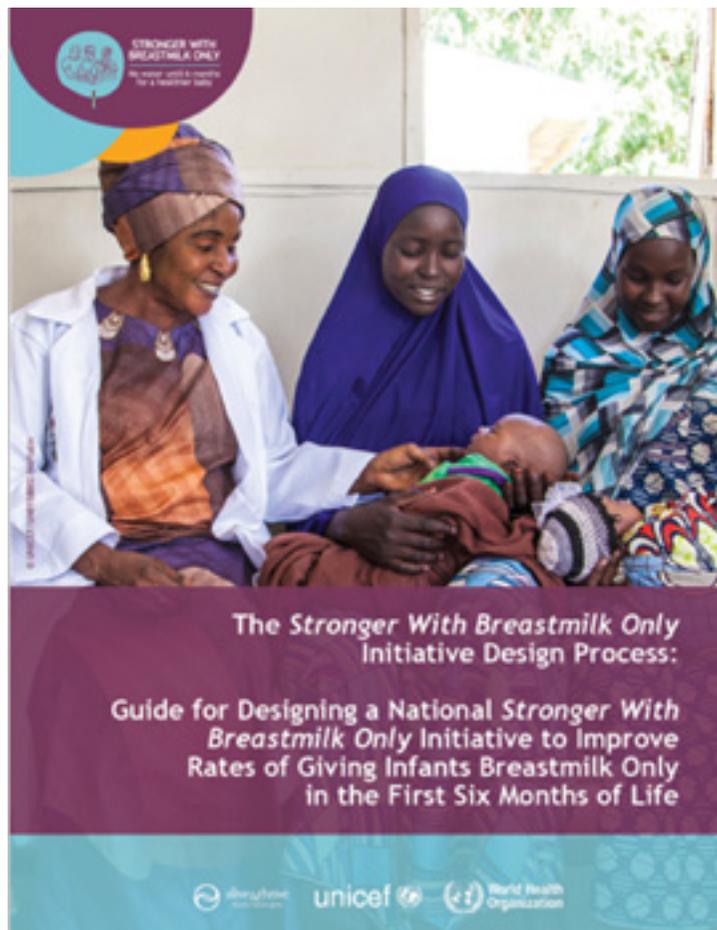
Available format:  Word,  Indesign files

Toolkits to guide and support countries

02

'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' Initiative Design Process:

Guide for Designing a National 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' Initiative to Improve Rates of Giving Infants Breastmilk Only in the First Six Months of Life



- ▶ **Describes a five-step methodology** for designing an evidence-driven national social and behaviour change initiative, including strategic advocacy to tailor the regional 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' Initiative to a country's context.
- ▶ **Gives guidance on how to develop:**
 - ▶ A 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' social and behaviour change strategy targeting families, communities, health care providers and society in general.
 - ▶ A 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' strategic advocacy plan to work with health and nutrition leaders, policy makers and programme managers.
- ▶ **Accompanies 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' Rationale and Implementation Guidance.**

▶ **Content:**

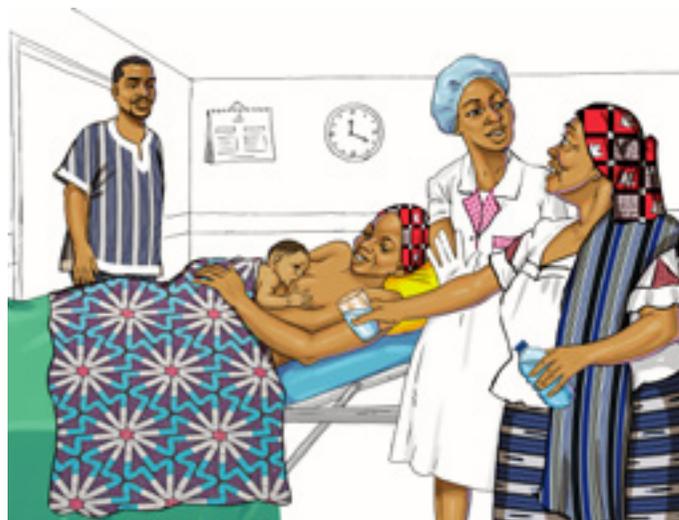
- ▶ Core document
- ▶ Tool 1.1: Situation analysis: topics to explore (Word 4 pages)
- ▶ Tool 1.2: Problem statement (Word 3 pages)
- ▶ Tool 2.1: SBC analysis table – Sample from Burkina Faso (Word 15 pages)
- ▶ Tool 2.2: Sample SBC M&E indicators (Word 2 pages)
- ▶ Tool 2.3: Roadmap & budget template (Excel sheet)
- ▶ Tool 2.4: Nine advocacy questions (Word 5 pages)

 **15 pages (Core document)**

Available format:  Word,  Indesign files

Social and behavioural change communication resources

01 COUNSELLING CARDS



- ▶ **Guide individual and group conversations** to promote giving infants breastmilk only, no water, other liquids or foods at birth and for the first six months of life.
- ▶ **Improve understanding**, address misconceptions and other challenges, and inspire change.

USE:

- ▶ **When?** During routine antenatal care, postnatal care, well baby visits, sick baby visits and health visits with breastfeeding women and during mother-to-mother group or community meetings.
- ▶ **By whom?** Health care workers, community volunteers, community leaders, mobilizers and facilitators working in household, community or health care settings.
- ▶ **With whom?** Pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers of babies younger than six months, fathers, grandmothers, and other caregivers.

▶ Content:

- ▶ Introduction
- ▶ Card 1: Start breastfeeding immediately within an hour of birth, to give baby the healthiest start in life
- ▶ Card 2: Breastmilk contains all the food and water babies need in the first six months of life
- ▶ Card 3: Giving water can make baby sick
- ▶ Card 4: Giving water replaces milk and makes baby miss essential food
- ▶ Card 5: The more the baby suckles, the more breastmilk the mother produces
- ▶ Card 6: Everyone in the family, community and nation will benefit from stronger babies who get breastmilk only, no water. Everyone needs to learn the facts and support each other for exclusive breastfeeding

 15 pages (Core document)

Available format:  PDF Print and Web,  Images,  Indesign

Social and behavioural change communication resources

02 RADIO GUIDE

- ▶ **Describes a 'how-to' menu of radio products** to develop locally-adapted radio programmes that promote giving breastmilk only to babies under six months, dispel misconceptions that drive inadequate feeding practices, such as giving water, herbal concoctions and other liquids and foods, and facilitate community-level dialogue.

USE:

- ▶ **When?** During local radio programmes at times when women and their families are most likely to tune in.
- ▶ **By whom?** Governmental or non-governmental organisations, and radio programme producers.
- ▶ **For whom?** Pregnant women, breastfeeding women, health workers, men, grandmothers and other community members.

▶ Content:

Three radio products are described to engage the audience and trigger discussions and action:

- ▶ 1. Vox Pop
- ▶ 2. Mini dramas, including three drama scripts
- ▶ 3. Field reports

The guide provides basic content along with production tips and discussion questions for each product.

A few useful resources are also listed in the guide to support radio programming for the 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' initiative.

 17 pages (Core document)

Available format:  PDF  Web

03 RADIO JINGLE

- ▶ **A short, catchy song unique** to the "Stronger With Breastmilk Only" initiative, which boasts the slogan of the initiative: "Stronger With Breastmilk Only". No water until six months for a healthier baby".

- ▶ **As a form of sound branding**, the jingle should accompany audio and visual products that are produced and aired as part of the Initiative. It is currently featured in the 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' podcast.

USE:

- ▶ **When?** Media products (radio, TV, other audio-visual events).
- ▶ **By whom?** Governmental or non-governmental organisations, and radio, TV and other audio and visual producers.
- ▶ **For whom?** Stakeholders, including high-level decision-makers and program managers, women and men, young and old, residing in urban and rural areas.



 30 sec

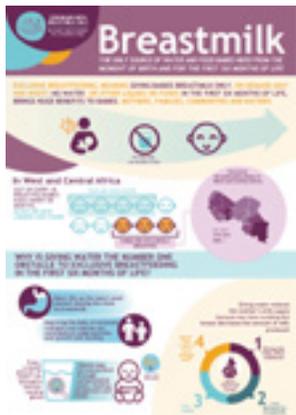
Available format:  MP3

Strategic advocacy

TO RAISE AWARENESS

01 INFOGRAPHIC

Breastmilk, the only source of water and foods babies need from the moment of birth and for the first six months of life



Gives an easy-to-understand overview of:

- ▶ Exclusive breastfeeding in West and Central Africa
- ▶ Giving water as the number one obstacle to exclusive breastfeeding
- ▶ Why give breastmilk only?

Target audience: Government leaders and policy makers, programme managers, businesses, health workers

 2 pages

Available format:  PDF Print and Web

02 CALL TO ACTION

A Call to Protect, Promote and Support Exclusive Breastfeeding in West and Central Africa



▶ **Defines exclusive breastfeeding** and highlights its importance and benefits, the situation in West and Central Africa and objectives of the 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' initiative.

▶ **Calls to action government leaders** and policy makers, programme managers, businesses, health workers, families and communities

Target audience: Government leaders and policy makers, programme managers, businesses, health workers, families and communities

 4 pages

Available format:  PDF Print and Web

03 VIDEO



▶ **Defines exclusive breastfeeding** and highlights its importance and benefits, the situation in West and Central Africa and objectives of the 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' initiative.

Target audience: Government leaders and policy makers, programme managers, businesses, health workers, families and communities

 2 min 38 sec

Available format:  MP4 240 p, 360 p, 540 p, 720 p, 1080 p

Strategic advocacy TO RAISE AWARENESS

04 PODCAST

Highlights the importance of breastfeeding (exclusive), provides recommended breastfeeding practices from UNICEF and World Health Organization, and with quotes from Cote d'Ivoire former Vice-President and official representatives from UNICEF and WHO. The podcast includes as interviews with key regional and national stakeholders as well as mothers.

Target audience: Government leaders and policy makers, Programme managers, Businesses, Health workers, Families and Communities

 14 min 12 sec

Available format:  MP3,  MP4 teaser short, MP4 teaser long

05 POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

► PowerPoint presentation introduces 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' initiative for West and Central Africa. This should be adapted to each country's specific context.

Target Audience: Government leaders and policy makers, programme managers, businesses, health workers

► Content:

- Malnutrition in West and Central Africa
- Importance of breastfeeding
- The costs of not breastfeeding
- Low exclusive breastfeeding rates in West and Central Africa
- Objectives of the 'Stronger With Breastmilk Only' initiative
- Key 'breastmilk only' messages
- Social and behavioural change objectives
- Strategies for change
- Call to action
- Materials to engage multiple audiences at different levels

 17 slides

Available format:  PowerPoint

06 SOCIAL MEDIA PACKAGE

► **Provides partners with key messages** that they can easily disseminate to their social media followers to expand the reach and impact of the initiative.

► **Ensures accurate and consistent messaging**, as all messages within the pack have been reviewed by technical experts.

Social media post content has been paired with visual content to ensure ease of use by partners, and reduce time and resources needed to join in the initiative efforts.

Target Audience: Government leaders and policy makers, programme managers, businesses, health workers, families and communities

► Content:

- Messages and graphics for 18 social media posts through Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The graphic for each post can be downloaded directly from the hyperlink provided, and the text copied and pasted into the post. At the bottom of the table is a link to additional GIF animations for additional posts to use as needed.

 11 pages

Available format:  Word, Digital assets

Strategic advocacy

TO ADVOCATE - Advocacy guidance documents

This package consists of four (4) advocacy guidance aiming to advocate for the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding. Each advocacy guidance is 4-page document and structured into 3 sections: **Introduction, The problem, The solution**. These documents are expected to be tailored to the country's context.

01 ADVOCACY GUIDANCE 1

Increase Funding for Breastfeeding



Introduction: The benefits of investing in exclusive breastfeeding include strengthening human capital to maximize a nation's 'grey matter infrastructure'. The World Bank found that every dollar invested in supporting breastfeeding generates US\$35 in economic returns.

The problem: Despite proven benefits of breastfeeding, resources remain inadequate to improve exclusive breastfeeding rates. The cost of not breastfeeding is the highest in Sub-Saharan Africa, with economic losses representing 2.57 per cent of GNI.

The solution: Increasing rates of exclusive breastfeeding saves lives and has the potential to add an estimated US\$300 billion in additional economic gains. Actions are suggested that a country's policy makers can take to reap the benefits of exclusive breastfeeding nationwide.

02 ADVOCACY GUIDANCE 2

Enforce Regulations to Protect Breastfeeding



Introduction: The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (the Code) and relevant World Health Assembly (WHA) resolutions were adopted to regulate the aggressive marketing of products promoted as replacements to breastmilk, feeding bottles and teats.

The problem: Unethical marketing of BMS, bottles and teats can reduce breastfeeding rates, putting the health of children at risk and resulting in unnecessary costs for families and countries.

The solution: Strong and well-enforced national legislation can reduce the unethical marketing of BMS, including water marketed for infants, and ensure support for breastfeeding. National measures must include effective sanctions as well as establish mechanisms to ensure routine monitoring for violations.

Strategic advocacy

TO ADVOCATE - Advocacy guidance documents

03 ADVOCACY GUIDANCE 3

Improve Access to Skilled Breastfeeding Counselling



Introduction: A mother's access to skilled breastfeeding counselling is critical to initiating and establishing adequate breastfeeding practices that save and improve lives.

The problem: Many health facilities and professionals are not delivering optimal breastfeeding counselling and support so that mothers and their families practice exclusive breastfeeding.

The Solution: A variety of actions are listed that countries should pursue to ensure that health workers follow best practices in breastfeeding counselling in order to increase access to quality support, a variety of key actions.

04 ADVOCACY GUIDANCE 4

Give Breastmilk Only: Guidance for Policy and Programme Managers



Introduction: Policies and programmes that protect, promote and support exclusive breastfeeding, with strategies that address the social, cultural and behavioural drivers are urgently needed to improve exclusive breastfeeding rates across the region.

The problem: Giving water, other liquids and foods in the first 6 months of life has negative consequences, but the practice continues

The solution: Actions are suggested to policy makers and programme managers to implement policies and programmes that protect, promote and support exclusive breastfeeding.

Users: Representatives from governments, United Nations (UN) organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic institutions, advocacy networks, professional associations, private businesses, civil society groups, media and community-based organizations.

Target Audience: Health leaders, policy makers, programme managers, health care workers, civil society

Available format:  PDF Print, PDF Web

Strategic advocacy

TO EDUCATE - Fact sheets

01 FACT SHEET: Breastmilk, the Only Source of Water and Food Babies Need for the First Six Months of Life



Healthy newborns enter the world well hydrated and remain so if they are breastfed exclusively, meaning they receive breastmilk only, on demand (day and night), from the moment of birth and for the first six months of life, even in the hottest and driest climates.

Despite this, infants are given water during the first six months of life in many parts of the world, including in West and Central Africa. This has an impact on infant nutrition, health and survival and limits the prosperity of families, communities and nations.

By investing in early childhood nutrition, including early initiation of and exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, countries can enrich human capital through improved intellectual and physical health, reaping some of the highest returns in the development field.

This fact sheet shares information on:

- Why exclusive breastfeeding (meaning giving babies breastmilk only on demand, day and night, no water, other liquids or foods in the first six months of life) is important.
- Common reasons for giving infants water (and other liquids and foods).
- Risks of giving infants water (and other liquids and foods).
- What can be done to protect, promote and support exclusive breastfeeding.

FACT 1
WHO AND UNICEF RECOMMEND THAT ALL INFANTS BE EXCLUSIVELY BREASTFED FOR THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF LIFE BASED ON SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

Exclusive breastfeeding means that infants receive only breastmilk, on demand (day and night) from the moment of birth and for the first six months of life. No other liquids or foods should be given – no herbal preparations or animal milk, not even water. The only exception is if a health care provider prescribes oral rehydration solution or drops/syrups of vitamins, minerals or medicines.

Giving only breastmilk from the moment of birth and for the first six months of life has many benefits.

Short term benefits for infant and mother:

- Contributes to infant survival.
- Stimulates the bond between mother and baby and protects against stress.
- Facilitates maternal recovery after childbirth and reduces long-term risks of ovarian and breast cancers and overweight.
- Delays the return of the menstrual cycle, thus helping with birth spacing.

Ongoing benefits for physical and mental health:

- Strengthens babies' physical, emotional and intellectual developmental and health.
- Protects against infections. Overweighting

STRONGER WITH BREASTMILK ONLY

Shares information on:

- ▶ **Why giving babies breastmilk only on demand**, day and night, no water, other liquids or foods in the first six months of life **is important**.
- ▶ **Common reasons for giving infants water** (and other liquids and foods).
- ▶ **Risks of giving infants water** (and other liquids and foods).
- ▶ **What can be done to protect**, promote and support exclusive breastfeeding.

Includes messages to persuade mothers, their families, and health workers that breastfed infants do not need to be given water in the first six months of life. These messages and channels must be tailored to each particular context.

Target Audience: Government leaders and policy makers, programme managers, businesses, health workers, families and communities.

▶ Content:

- ▶ **Fact 1:** WHO and UNICEF recommend that all infants be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life based on scientific evidence
- ▶ **Fact 2:** Giving babies water in the first six months of life is a common practice in West and Central Africa
- ▶ **Fact 3:** Giving water (and other liquids and foods) in the first six months of life has harmful consequences for the infant
- ▶ **Fact 4:** Breastmilk already contains all the water babies need in the first six months of life
- ▶ **Fact 5:** Even babies who live in very hot and dry climates do not need extra water
- ▶ **Fact 6:** Babies who are sick with diarrhoea should be breastfed more
- ▶ **Fact 7:** It is possible to stop giving water to babies in the first six months of life
- ▶ **Fact 8:** Babies who are older than six months should continue to be breastfed while being introduced to complementary foods progressively

 4 pages

Available format:  PDF Print and Web

Strategic advocacy

TO EDUCATE - Fact sheets

02 FACT SHEET: Breastmilk Expression, Storage and Feeding



Shares information and includes useful resources on:

- ▶ When should a mother express breastmilk
- ▶ What are the benefits of expressing breastmilk
- ▶ How to express breastmilk
- ▶ How to store expressed breastmilk
- ▶ How to feed a baby expressed milk

Target Audience: Programme managers, health workers, mothers, families and communities

 6 pages

Available format:  PDF Print and Web

03 LIST OF REFERENCES



- ▶ Provides a full list of resources and references related to the following documents:
- ▶ Advocacy guidance: Improve access to skilled breastfeeding counselling
- ▶ Advocacy guidance: Enforce Regulations to Protect Breastfeeding
- ▶ Advocacy guidance: Increase Funding for Breastfeeding
- ▶ Advocacy guidance: Give Breastmilk Only: Guidance for Policy and Programme Managers
- ▶ Fact sheet: Breastmilk, the Only Source of Water and Food Babies Need for the First Six Months of Life

Available format:  PDF Print and Web