

TOGO : EXCLUSIVE MATERNAL BREASTFEEDING SITUATION

GENERAL CONTEXT

- Exclusive maternal breastfeeding for the first 6 months of children's lives is critical to the development of their young immune systems, as it is through breastfeeding that antibodies are transmitted from mother to child;
- For this reason, it is recommended that breastfeeding begin within an hour of a child's birth. This early transmission from mother to child allows the newborn to immediately receive the essential nutrients required to fight various potentially fatal diseases, and it contributes to the child's growth and development;
- To ensure their healthy growth, children under the age of 6 months should be fed exclusively with breast milk. No other form of nutrition should be introduced into their diets before the age of 6 months;
- **UNICEF estimates that the lives of 1.3 million children could be saved each year by encouraging mothers to practice exclusive breastfeeding for children under 6 months of age.**
- Breastfeeding begins on time for only 35% of Togolese children, and 3 out of 10 mothers do not begin breastfeeding within the 24 hours following birth
- Only 3 in 10 children under the age of 6 months are fed exclusively with breast milk
- Exclusive breastfeeding practices are linked to maternal education levels: among children aged 0-3 months, 29% of infants whose mothers have no education are fed using exclusive breastfeeding, whereas 48% of children whose mothers attended secondary school are fed using exclusive breastfeeding



OBJECTIVES

- **Priorities for 2008:**
 - Train 300 partners to promote best practices in child nutrition and feeding;
 - Train 100% of the community health agents operating at the community level to care for children suffering from malnutrition;
 - Train and mobilize 34 maternal breastfeeding support groups to generate a total of 680 individuals who can work to promote exclusive maternal breastfeeding at the community level.
- **Objectives 2012:**
 - In partnership with the World Health Organization, UNICEF will strive to achieve:
 - Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months of a child's life;
 - Continued breastfeeding until the age of 2 years or more;
 - Clean, appropriate and adequate complementary feeding from the age of 6 months onwards.
 - Extend a package of preventive interventions including the promotion of: exclusive maternal breastfeeding, vitamin A supplementation, de-worming and vaccination, to reduce the child mortality rate
 - Reduce the Child mortality rate in Togo by 15%

TOGO : EXCLUSIVE MATERNAL BREASTFEEDING SITUATION

How to help us ?

130 US\$ is the cost of identifying, training, and providing the supplies for a member of a maternal breastfeeding support group to promote exclusive maternal breastfeeding;

9 US\$ is the cost of purchasing the necessary supplies to equip one member of a maternal breastfeeding support group.

6.55 US\$ is the average cost of training one community health agent in exclusive maternal breastfeeding.



Photo UNICEF Togo 2007 / Julie Pudowski

“More than a third of children’s deaths take place within the first few months of life. Through providing early and exclusive breastfeeding, children receive the nutrients they need to be protected from fatal illnesses.”

**Ann M. Veneman, UNICEF
Director General.**

Una McCauley
Representative
Unicef-Togo
(+228) 223 15 22
(+228) 904 23 44
umccauley@unicef.org

**Aissa
Mamadoultaibou**
Nutrition Spécialist
(+228) 223 15 00
amamdoultaibou@unicef.org

Essi Fafa Soulé
Communication
Specialist
(+228) 223 15 10
(+228) 910 96 59
fsoule@unicef.org

For further information :
www.unicef.org/wcaro