

Regional IFE Workshop, 10-13th March 2008
Acknowledgments, Summary and Recommendations
of Evaluation Report
March 2009

Acknowledgements

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Summary

This report was initiated by the ENN to determine the regional impact of the workshop entitled "*Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies: Making it Happen*" conducted in March 2008 in Bali. A total of 112 participants from agencies in 16 countries/special territories² attended the workshop of which 92 participants were working in-country, with another six regional delegates and 14 facilitators/presenters and organisers.

The evaluation focused on constraints/limitations from progressing work on IFE identified by participants at the start of the workshop, specifically poor co-ordination on IFE; lack of national policies with IFE and low capacity to respond on IFE. This evaluation also attempted to identify any further areas of concern / supports required by practitioners to facilitate optimal operations in the area of IYCF and identify any strategies/ recommendations from participants for future workshops on IFE.

Participants were contacted with a questionnaire by email. Contact details were identified from participant lists. The response rate was 30% with fourteen countries represented.

Key findings from participant feedback:

- The majority of countries have now either completed or are planning to complete national policies on IFE (or are incorporating IFE into the national nutrition policies on Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF)).
- Three have completed or planning to complete a policy on managing donations of Breast Milk substitutes (BMS).
- The majority of countries have completed training of technical staff. In terms of co-ordination, the majority of countries have nominated an IFE co-ordinator (or body) and most are in the process of orientating decision makers.
- Developing a media/communication strategy occurred/is currently underway in most countries although some participants indicated some more technical support in this area would be worthwhile.
- Pre-emergency planning and training activities are seen as difficult actions to achieve as funding is considered "*not easily available*" from donors.
- The workshop was considered the best approach to facilitating learning in this area.

¹ Making it Matter. Report of a Regional IFE Workshop. 10-13 March, 2008. IFE Core Group. Available from www.ennonline.net/ife

² From hereon referred to as 'countries'.

- Participants valued the resources given (Operational Guidelines on IFE and CDs in particular), the opportunity to network with peers, donors and experts in this domain.
- Representation of several representatives from each country facilitated the development of technical 'working groups' upon return to work.
- Some input into the organisation and development of the workshop by relevant personnel in key agencies (at field office level) may infer greater support (via a sense of greater ownership for progress) of action post-workshop.

Recommendations:

1. Resources

- Support from decision makers (organisational management/funding bodies) for resource allocation (especially human resources and funding) to develop, roll-out and monitor IFE progress.
- Further development of resources e.g. facilitating the development of 'field manuals' for training local health staff/community health workers, particularly in local/other languages (time/funds were key constraints in developing these).
- More strategies on IFE in countries where bottle-feeding is currently the more common choice of feeding for mothers.
- Development of and consensus to commit to a 'Pledge' or statement of action should be considered in other countries/at future workshops.

2. Workshop

- The emphasis of the workshop on learning via case studies and field experiences ('practical' scenarios) should continue.
- Practical skills/orientation in developing funding strategies (e.g. multi-agency, etc.)
- Representation of several participants from each country enables progress on action.

3. Co-ordination

- Continued emphasis on supporting the breastfeeding message as choice for all mothers, even in non-emergency situations.
- A focal person on IFE should be nominated by each country to provide support in co-ordinating national and regional collaboration/ networking on IFE.
- Development and dissemination of a register of skilled personnel in IFE available for training/advice in and between countries.
- Increased networking via email forums/internet (e.g. ENN website/online working groups).
- Increased dissemination of progress on IFE (results in increasing motivation & networking for local advice/strategies between peers).

Feedback and further information:

For further information, including copies of the evaluation and meeting report, or to further feedback on your experiences, contact:

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