

**Author:** Jane Badham

**Co Author:** Rosalyn Ford, Lara Sweet (JB Consultancy), Elizabeth Zehner (Helen Keller International)

**Topic:** The first 1000 days, infant feeding, and early childhood development

**Title:** Assessment of labelling practices of commercially produced complementary foods in 4 developing countries against the latest guidance from World Health Organization.

**Presentation Type:** Oral

**Introduction:** Complementary feeding plays a critical role in the first 1000 days of life. The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed guidelines to prevent the inappropriate promotion of foods for infants and young children.

**Methods:** Cross-sectional study in Cambodia, Nepal, Senegal and Tanzania whereby labels of commercially produced complementary foods (CPCF) were assessed against WHO guidance. Labels were assessed according to the inclusion or exclusion of messages and images promoting foods for IYCF.

**Results:** Complete IYCF messages were found on 2.9% and 2.4% of CPCF labels in Cambodia and Senegal respectively. None of the Nepali and Tanzanian labels provided complete messages including the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months, the addition of complementary foods from six months and continued breastfeeding up to two years or beyond. A recommended age of introduction <6 months was found on 8.6% of labels in Cambodia, 13.6% in Nepal and 20.2% and 11.5% in Senegal and Tanzania respectively. While 30%, 3.6% and 19.2% of labels in Cambodia, Senegal and Tanzania respectively did not display any recommended age of introduction. Of the labels displaying images of infants; 92.3% from Cambodia, 60% from Nepal, 75% from Senegal and 20% from Tanzania displayed a developmental milestone commonly associated with infants <6 months of age, or no clear milestone reached after 6 months of age.

**Conclusions:** A large number of CPCF labels do not meet the new WHO recommendations aimed at preventing inappropriate promotion of foods for infants and young children and so protecting optimal IYCF.