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

Title: Why breastfeeding has waned from the global nutrition agenda and how to make it wax again.

Presentation Type: Workshop

Title

Why breastfeeding has waned from the global nutrition agenda and how to make it wax again.

Type of session

Interactive presentation with open discussion

Contributor details

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Purpose

The past two decades have seen a shift from the promotion, protection and support of breastfeeding and appropriate complementary feeding (also known as infant and young child feeding or IYCF) to the promotion of product based approaches to address the problem of childhood malnutrition. This has happened with the full knowledge of the UN and bilateral agencies who set the agenda in global nutrition. This move away from food based approaches to commercial approaches (such as micronutrient powders and ready to use therapeutic foods) is backed by “evidence” compromised by conflicts of interest. As a result, national nutrition authorities are under pressure to adopt methods not in keeping with the promotion of local culturally appropriate foods. This session

seeks to bring together breastfeeding champions from around the world to propose concrete ways to overcome international and national apathy to IYCF.

Motivation

Technical merit

A large body of work now exists on this issue but little of it gets disseminated or discussed in nutrition meetings.

Relevance to topics listed

This session is being submitted under the theme of “The political economy of public health nutrition”. The commercially driven agenda of the commercial food producers has deeply infiltrated the “science” of public health nutrition and there is an urgent need to alert public health nutrition actors of the dangers of this development.

Engagement of contributors

There will only be four contributors engaging with participants through ten minute presentations followed by open discussion.

Facilitation of active participation

The chairperson will facilitate active participation of the audience to elicit their thoughts on the question of elevating IYCF on the nutrition agenda.

Tangible outcomes

Participants attending this workshop will have a clear set of priority actions to promote IYCF on international and national nutrition platforms.