

SYMPOSIUM 10: PROMOTION, PROTECTION AND SUPPORT OF EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING IN SOUTH AFRICA: MOVING FROM POLICY TO ACTION

Background

The Tshwane Declaration of 2011 declared South Africa to be a country that actively promotes, protects and supports exclusive breastfeeding as the infant feeding option of choice for all mothers.

Although most mothers in South Africa initiate breastfeeding, rates of exclusive breastfeeding (EBF) are low. However recent reports showed that EBF among HIV-exposed infants at 4-8 weeks post-partum increased in all provinces between 2010 and 2012/13¹. Rates in two provinces, namely KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) and Northern Cape (NC) showed substantial increases. Breastfeeding amongst infants aged 4-8 weeks in KZN increased from 26.1% in 2010 to 42.5% in 2011 and 53.8% in 2012/13. A similar sharp upward trend was observed in the Northern Cape where EBF increased from 43.5% in 2011 to 76.4% in 2012/13.

The objectives of the satellite session are to: **(a)** Provide an opportunity to take stock on what has been achieved since the Tshwane Declaration; **(b)** Share how breastfeeding is promoted, protected and supported in KZN and NC, with a view to identifying best practices which can be scaled-up in other provinces; **(c)** Identify strategies for increasing exclusive breastfeeding in South Africa in the next five years.

Time	Convener: Department of Health and UNICEF South Africa Moderator: Ms Tsepiso Makwetla (MomConnect ambassador)
11h30 – 13h00	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Opening remarks, Dr Yogan Pillay (NDOH) [5mins] 2) Overview of the Tshwane Declaration of support for breastfeeding in South Africa, Ms Lynn Moeng (NDOH) [7mins] 3) The Mother Baby Friendly Initiative lessons learned, strengths & opportunities, Ms Ann Behr (NDOH) [7mins] 4) Protection, promotion and support for breastfeeding in in the Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal Provinces; implementing best practices and overcoming challenges Ms C De Lange (NC DOH) and Ms L Spies (KZN DOH) [15mins] 5) Role of stakeholders in putting the Tshwane declaration into action; successes and challenges, Dr Alison Feeley (UNICEF) [7mins] 6) MomConnect video, Tsepiso Makwetla [10mins] 7) Human Interest story use of MomConnect and BF, Tsepiso Makwetla [10mins] 8) Closing remarks, Dr Herve Ludovic De Lys (UNICEF Representative) [5mins] <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Discussions – All presenters [20mins]</i></p>
	Focal Person/Contact: Dr Alison Feeley/UNICEF and Ms Ann Behr/NDOH

¹ Goga AE, Jackson DJ, Singh M, Lombard C for the SAPMTCTE study group. Early (4-8 weeks postpartum) Population-level Effectiveness of WHO PMTCT Option A, South Africa, 2012-2013. South African Medical Research Council and National Department of Health of South Africa, 2015.