

# Ideas for Action

- Calculate the cost of breastmilk substitutes in your country and how much food that would buy for the family. A baby needs nearly 22kg of infant formula for the first six months or 2.5kg in the first month, 3.2 kg the second month, and 4 kg per month after that. Find the cost per kg of a locally popular brand of infant formula and you can use these figures to calculate the total cost for six months of artificial feeding. But remember that there are many other costs!

- As a rough rule of thumb, the health care costs may be twice as high as the cost of substitutes for that period. This will allow you to more closely estimate the cost of artificial feeding of babies to a family and to the nation.

- Organize community group discussions and presentations on the cost of formula feeding.

- Talk with your boss about the economic benefits of establishing a breastfeeding program at your workplace. Ask for WABA's flyer *Steps Toward a Mother-Friendly Workplace* or get it from the WABA website.



- Find ways through TV and newspapers to give recognition to workplaces that encourage breastfeeding, such as giving a mother-friendly workplace award.

- Give a copy of this folder to the people in government responsible for establishing maternity protection laws, labour regulations and health programs.

- Organize community group discussions and presentations on the cost of formula feeding.

- Offer to talk at schools, women's groups, business groups etc. about the real cost of not breastfeeding.

- Help people recognize that breastfeeding is a valuable natural resource to the country. Calculate the costs of artificial feeding for one year for one infant, multiply it by the number of births, and then compare it with the per capita GNP.

- Write to your governmental representatives at local and national levels mentioning WBW and urge them to promote breastfeeding in government offices and improve the support available for breastfeeding woman on their staff.

- Suggest ways to cut costs and increase savings in hospitals, health facilities, family planning programmes, and for families by promoting breastfeeding.

- Urge health professionals to influence economists, statisticians and those involved in drawing up health and food statistics to include human milk in their calculations of food supply, availability of food and nutrients and the economic value of food.

- Show how hospital costs can be reduced when breastfeeding increases. They realize savings in purchase of IV



fluids, breastmilk substitutes, bottles, staff nursing time, reduced hospital days for premature and newborns and medications.

- In advocacy, first, action should be urged on the basis of breastfeeding as a woman's right; then breastfeeding promoting actions should be encouraged by showing their economic benefits and how easily they pay for themselves by reducing costs for imported infant foods and for health care.



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