

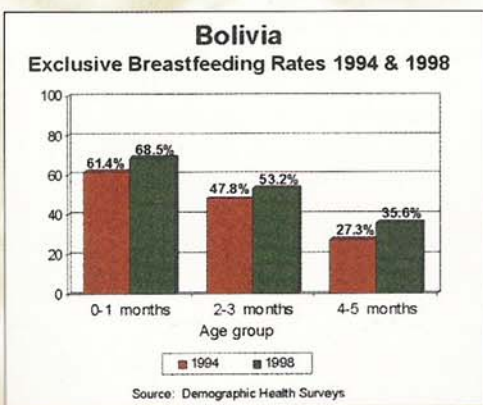
age. Considering the deteriorating conditions, improvements from 1990 to 1997 in infant mortality for babies less than a year and mortality of "under fives" is very impressive.

Breastfeeding appears to have been one of the important keys to saving these lives. Government's commitment, UNICEF support, and community ownership are helping to ensure the sustainability of the Initiative, with plans to integrate breastfeeding policy with broader maternal and child health issues.

Poland's effort to reestablish breastfeeding faced a major challenge from the aggressive promotion of breastmilk substitutes after transition to a market economy. With 100% of the births taking place in health facilities, intensive training of health workers was identified as a key strategy. Using the BFHI training materials as an important resource, over 15,500 health workers were trained during a two year period (1993-1994) and many of these workers have continued to train others. A systematic process of needs assessment and evaluations has both pinpointed key practices needing improvement and measured progress, which has been quite remarkable. For example, rooming-in increased from 19% in 1988 to 60% in 1995, while the practice of giving infants water or other drinks decreased from 54% to 22%. Rates of exclusive breastfeeding as measured by national surveys have increased.



Ongoing monitoring, training, and continued advocacy to counter the pressure from the formula industry are needed to sustain progress and build on gains achieved thus far.



Although **Bolivia's** baby-friendly hospitals have met the criteria for all Ten Steps, Steps 3 and 10 were the most difficult to implement. This was because temporary staff was used to educate pregnant



women, and there were few community outreach programs. In 1993, with the strategy of training of trainers a "cascade" effect began. As a result, 450 trainers received training and trained 2,759 health workers. The trained health workers provide services to families at an institutional level and at home where 70% of deliveries occur. In the context of decentralization, trained health workers have been able to affect health policies not only at the institutional level, but also at the community level. DHS data shows increases in exclusive breastfeeding rates during this time of increased breastfeeding promotion through the BFHI.

United Kingdom: As of February 2000, there were a total of 26 hospitals in the UK designated as Baby-Friendly, with 10 receiving the Global Award given to those with over 75% breastfeeding at discharge. The other 16 passed the assessment on all Global Criteria, but are still working toward a 75% discharge figure. They received a UK Standard Award, which expects a continuing rise in rates. At one hospital so designated, the rate has more than doubled from 27% in 1991 to 61% today. At another, supplementation rates have been halved following a "Babies in Bed" policy that encourages mothers to feed their babies as often as needed while still allowing them to rest. In order to support mothers to breastfeed for as long as they choose, the principles of the Ten Steps are being extended into community services. The UK has launched a Seven Point Plan for the protection, promotion, and support of breastfeeding in community health care settings, and the first certificate of commitment was awarded to a community health provider during National Breastfeeding Awareness Week in 1999.

There are a number of issues that countries have been struggling with including: assurance of quality over quantity, institutionalization of changes, monitoring and reassessment, sustainability of progress, extrapolation of the BFHI approaches beyond the hospital, Step 10, HIV/AIDs and breastfeeding, limiting free and low cost supplies, etc. The challenges we face in bringing the BFHI into the next century only underscore the fact that there is still much that is worthwhile to accomplish. It is not yet the time to move on from BFHI to other issues; it is the time for recommitment. ■