



“If breastfeeding did not already exist, someone who invented it today would deserve a dual Nobel Prize in medicine and economics”

~ Keith Hansen, World Bank

The 823 000 child deaths, 20 000 maternal deaths, and \$302 billion in economic losses each year are stark reminders of the current reality. All of these, and more, could be prevented by scaling up breastfeeding.

Breastfeeding not only saves lives and money, it is the #FoundationOfLife. #WBW2018 focuses on how breastfeeding helps prevent malnutrition in all its forms, ensures food security even in times of crisis and breaks the cycle of poverty. With #WBW2018 just around the corner, it is time to take stock of our progress.

In 2015, the United Nations launched the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs), an agenda to transform our world through sustainable development by 2030. Some progress has been made in relation to the 17 SDGs, however, it has been slow. We must step up our efforts to reach the targets of the 2030 Agenda, and ensure that no one, and no issue is left behind. World Breastfeeding Week can help do just that.

WABA took on this challenge through our WBW-SDGs campaign, making [links](#) between breastfeeding and each of the SDGs. Our annual World Breastfeeding Week campaign highlights these links to ensure that the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding is key to sustainable development.

Malnutrition, food insecurity and poverty affect millions and stand in the way of sustainable development. The [2018 Sustainable Development Goals Report](#) highlights the importance of focusing on these problems. World hunger is rising again, in part due to food insecurity and other crises such as conflict, drought and disasters associated with climate change. Obesity and chronic diseases are rampant. Pockets of the worst forms of poverty still persist and the gap between rich and poor is increasing.

Preventing malnutrition in all its forms



Ensuring food security, even in times of crisis



Breaking the cycle of poverty



Globally, there were **155 million** children under 5 years of age stunted, 52 million wasted and 41 million overweight

In low- and medium-income countries, babies who were breastfed had a **21%** lower risk of death in their first year, compared with babies who were never breastfed

It is estimated that breastfeeding reduces the risk of overweight and obesity by about **10%** compared to formula feeding

More than **1.9 billion** adults (18 years and older) were overweight. Of these, over 650 million were obese

Globally, **815 million** people are chronically food-insecure and malnourished and the vast majority (489 million) live in countries affected by conflict

The global infant formula market is predicted to reach sales of almost **\$70.6 billion** by 2019

More than **4000 litres** of water are needed to produce just 1 kg of infant formula powder

1% The quantity and quality of milk production is relatively unaffected by a woman's nutritional status, except in extremely malnourished women (only 1 percent of women)

Globally, there were about **60 million** refugees and displaced populations many of whom are young children and women at risk of multiple forms of malnutrition, who can benefit from breastfeeding

1 in 5 people in developing regions still live on less than \$1.90 a day

Breastfeeding is one of the best investments in global health. **Every \$1 invested** in breastfeeding generates **\$35** in economic returns

Shorter durations of breastfeeding for children were associated with a **2.6-point loss in IQ scores**

Not breastfeeding is associated with **economic losses of about \$302 billion** annually or 0.49% of world gross national income

One intervention that is often overlooked in overcoming these problems is breastfeeding. Optimal breastfeeding helps prevent malnutrition in all its forms with positive lifelong effects on both children and mothers. Breastfeeding is a climate-smart decision that helps ensure food security even in times of crisis. Breastfeeding improves the health and wellbeing of women and children and is the foundation of a country's development and future. It is the great equaliser that can help break the cycle of poverty. Protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding is crucial for the health of our planet and its people.

By keeping the mother-baby dyad in focus and creating a #WarmChain of support for breastfeeding, we can achieve the [World Health Assembly](#) (WHA) target of at least 50% exclusive breastfeeding by 2025. This will also bring us closer to achieving the SDGs.

Together, we can inform, anchor, engage and galvanise on breastfeeding as the foundation of life. Everyone has a role to play in ensuring a healthier, more prosperous and sustainable future. How will you celebrate World Breastfeeding Week 2018?

OBJECTIVES OF #WBW2018

INFORM
people about the links between good nutrition, food security, poverty reduction and breastfeeding

ANCHOR
breastfeeding as the foundation of life

ENGAGE
with individuals and organisations for greater impact

GALVANISE
action to advance breastfeeding as a part of good nutrition, food security and poverty reduction

Celebrate #WBW2018 by visiting our [website](#) for the latest [materials](#), [social media kit](#), [media kit](#) and other [resources](#), or [pledge](#) and [report](#) your own event now.

Happy World Breastfeeding Week!