INTRODUCTION

On 25 February 1981, the program was officially launched jointly by the Ministers of Health and Social Welfare and Assistance. This was complemented by an impressive photographic exhibition to give publicity to the programme.

The National Working Group provided technical assistance to the state level organizations and five regional meetings were held to exchange information and experience.

The major aspects of national coordination that are currently taking place could be listed as follows:

- full participation of State Health Secretaries;
- training of people in the health sector;
- community participation;
- use of mass-media;
- involvement of universities;
- establishing milk banks;
- full participation of State Secretaries of Education;
- participation of local pediatric associations;
- changing to rooming-in for infants;
- involvement of other local organizations.

The degree of participation varies depending on the capacity of different states.
The ultimate goal of the program is to improve the nutritional, health and overall development of children under one year of age and thereby diminish the chances of infant morbidity and mortality. This is directly associated with the nutrition of pregnant and nursing woman, exclusive breastfeeding of the child from 4 to 6 months and, thereafter, appropriate supplementary feeding. To achieve the goal it is necessary to increase the prevalence and duration of breastfeeding (the latter at least four to six months) and educate vulnerable groups on how the mother and child should be fed.

The immediate goal is to increase from 20 to at least 70 the percentage of children exclusively breastfed for a period not less than 90 days.

OBJECTIVES

1. To inform the health professionals including general practitioners, obstetricians, paediatricians and gynecologists about the subject related to breastfeeding, its advantages and techniques; so that their influence becomes positive. To encourage specific research activities that would be of direct benefit to the programme.
To inform and educate health workers and attendants in
maternity hospitals, health posts and centres about the subjects
related to breastfeeding, its physiology, advantages and
techniques; appropriate practices, and proper nutrition of the
mother to make them a strong informational/motivational vehicle
to the mother.

To move all decision making and implementing groups and hospital
administrators to set up in maternity hospitals the attitudes and
systems that foster breastfeeding (including the right obstetrical
approaches and rooming-in of infants).

The information and communication campaign aimed at the medical
profession is an intervention which needs to be supplemented and
eventually replaced with a more permanent educational input.

To include relevant instructional and technical subject on
breastfeeding, appropriate weaning practices and proper...
nutrition of the mother in the formal educational curricula for
health personnel ranging from health attendants to professional
doctors and hospital administrators.

Based on the international code, to develop, legalize and implement
a code for Brazil to protect the practice of breastfeeding, and
the need to promote breastfeeding where people have been induced
to move away from breastfeeding under influence of marketing
methods.

To enforce existing laws to protect working women who are
pregnant and to provide adequate provisions including creche facili-
ties for working nursing mothers within the community and where
they work. Change and amend existing laws as found necessary.

Organize opportunities for mothers experienced in breastfeeding to
communicate with inexperienced mothers and mobilize community
action and provide the means to support the mother in the breast
feeding option.

To widely spread awareness of the problem and its causes; advocate
the need for comprehensive programme and what needs to be done
short-tern and long-tern by official groups.

To inform educate and reassure the mother: train her to breast
feeding correctly. The inter-personal channels to her must be
cleared of ignorance, while she is simultaneously reached
directly by appropriate messages.
The communication and information campaign is an essential intervention to support actions mobilized in other sectors of the programme. These interventions need to be supplemented by a more permanent educational input by including breastfeeding in the educational system for children and also adults.

To include breastfeeding in the primary school educational curricula and also in adult literacy programmes.

**PRIMARY HEALTH CARE IN BRASILIA (CAPITAL OF BRASIL)**

A new progressive medical assistance system of "Growing complexity" has been installed at the end of 1982. It consists of 41 health centers for primary health care (one for each 35,000 inhabitants), seven regional hospitals (secondary care) and one base hospital (tertiary care).

- growth and development control
- nutritional care, including breast feeding
- immunization (diphteria, tetanus, whooping cough, measles, polio, etc)
- epidemiological control
- oral hydration for prevention and treatment of diarrhea
- odontological care for the pre-school children and high-school teenagers. Children from 7 to 12 have the odontologic care in elementary school
- treatment of the more common pathologies
- supplementary nourishment

All babies born in Brasília are visited in their home by the board of health, counseling on child care.

The board of health makes an appointment for the baby in the health center after the 15th day of birth (first visit).

During the first year of life the child visits the health center on the 15th and 30th days; later on the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 9th, and 12th month.

Each health center offers to the future mothers periodical classes on pregnancy during the pre-natal period (a total of 20 hours for each group of 45 to 70 women); in 1984, 8,564 women attended. These meetings
The health teams give them orientation on nutrition, periodic examinations (blood pressure, weight, edema of the lower members, urine, blood test, syphilis, glucose tests, etc.) They also attend classes on the evolution of pregnancy delivery, newborn care and the benefits of breastfeeding. From the 6th month pregnancy the mothers learn how to do exercises for the breast in order to stimulate the milk production, avoid sore or cracked nipples and to correct inverted or flatted breasts.

With orientation of the mothers during the pregnancy and the practice of the rooming-in in all hospitals in Brasilia, the results of the promotion on breastfeeding is as follows:

in 1969:
- 54% of the mothers breastfed their babies during the first week of life.
- 28% for two months
- 11% for six months
- 4% for one year

in 1983:
- 93% of the mothers breastfed their babies during the first week of life
- 76% up to the second month
- 49% up to the fourth month
- 7% up to one year