

Infant and Young Child Feeding Meeting

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Key things discussed:

i. Breastmilk substitutes (BMS)

- Promotion of BMS has been noticed, especially in the north of the country
- Sales in the south are varying, but requires further investigation
- Anecdotal evidence suggests that Somali mothers consider a good husband one that brings home formula milk
- Information needs to be collected on what types of BMS are being sold, how are they sold, how much do they cost, how available are they, why the buyers feel they are important, and how is buying them.
- Both Save and Concern can do informal assessments of this in the operational areas
- An economist is required for a more in-depth study of BMS in Somalia
- Suggested communication strategy on BMS include highlighting the risks and harmful effects
- Other initiatives to promote appropriate IYCF include voucher systems for good complementary foods (need to look at ACF review in Dadaab camps)
- ACTION: Save and Concern to see about informally collecting data on BSM within their project areas
- ACTION: UNICEF to identify an economist who can carry out assessment of BMS and propose solutions for reorienting the market

ii. Breastfeeding counselors

- Fitsum gave a brief synopsis on how a program of community-based breastfeeding counselors worked within the Indonesian context
- Feasibility and modalities for implementing a program of breastfeeding counselors was discussed in the current Somali conflict
- Concern and Save are interested in starting up this initiative in Lower Shabelle with a pilot in 2010.
- Income-generating activities for women linked with IYCF awareness
- ACTION: Organizations to discuss how community-based breastfeeding counselors could work in their areas.

iii. AOB

- Save the Children is currently looking into and interested in starting up IYCF program in Bossasso. Concern is considering the same for Lower Shabelle.