

The magnificent power of breastfeeding

The magnificent power of breastfeeding is beautifully and systematically celebrated again worldwide this year during World Breastfeeding Week.

I often describe this power as the five petals of of a beautiful flower!

Firstly, the power of the natural way fosters bonding between mother and child in what can only be described as magical!

Secondly, the medicinal value of breastmilk is astounding and we continue at the marvel of benefits it brings.

Thirdly, breastmilk is nutritionally unbeatable.

Fourthly, breastfeeding is totally ecologically friendly. No cans, no plastic, no dirty water, no fires and waste of energy make it a zero-waste product par excellence!

And Fifthly, it is economical. It's free and is not a drain on people's wallets and the nation's finances.

Over the last hundred years, misguided propaganda and greed for profits undermined this treasure but thanks to caring doctors and other health workers, concerned civil society, and the United Nations network especially through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organisation (WHO) the world saw a dramatic return of breastfeeding worldwide. Protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding is now happily a universal agenda.

Increasingly, it is recognised that initiation of breastfeeding in the first hour can have a dramatic impact in reducing mortality.

This year's World Breastfeeding Week tells you why and how. Do visit www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org for inspiration and ideas for action! "

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Chairperson Emeritus,
World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action and recipient of the Right Livelihood Award
popularly known as the "Alternative Nobel Prize".