



Kuwait, 5 October 2022 – The World Health Organization (WHO) Country Office in Kuwait, in collaboration with the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition and the Ministry of Health organized an orientation seminar on the Baby-Friendly Hospital at the United Nations House on 5 October 2022.

In 1991, WHO and UNICEF launched the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) that aims to ensure that mothers and newborns receive timely and appropriate care before and during their stay in a facility providing maternity and newborn services to enable the establishment of optimal feeding of newborns, which promotes their health and development. Given the proven importance of breastfeeding, the BFHI protects, promotes and supports breastfeeding, while enabling timely and appropriate care and feeding of newborns who are not breastfed. This is based on the “Ten steps to successful breastfeeding”.

The orientation programme is a steppingstone towards a nationwide scale-up of the Initiative in Kuwait to promote better rates of exclusive breastfeeding through empowerment of families and facilities. This joint seminar succeeded in disseminating the latest evidence and guidance on the BFHI's Ten steps to 11 private hospitals across Kuwait; there was high-level participation from management, maternity, nursing and pediatric departments of these hospitals.

The WHO Representative for Kuwait Dr Assad Hafeez said, "The low rates of exclusive breastfeeding in Kuwait are strong signs that we must cooperate across all sectors to address optimal infant nutrition." Assistant Undersecretary of the Private Medical Services Dr Fatima Al Najjar reiterated the statistics from the national nutrition surveillance report stating that: "Investment in early childhood has shown substantial impact on health, educational attainment and productivity for a person's lifetime." Dr Mona AlSumaie, Director of Community Nutrition Promotion at the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, opened the technical programme with an overview of the mandates of the national breastfeeding committee and key role in advancing public-private partnerships to promote better nutrition for infants and children across Kuwait.

WHO, in partnership with the Public Authority for Food and Nutrition, will be partnering on more activities throughout October and November 2022 to address breastfeeding rates in Kuwait.

About WHO

Dedicated to the well-being of all people and guided by science, the World Health Organization leads and champions global efforts to give everyone, everywhere an equal chance at a safe and healthy life. We are the United Nation's agency for health that connects nations, partners, and people on the front lines in 150+ locations, leading the world's response to health emergencies, preventing disease, addressing the root causes of health issues, and expanding access to medicines and health care. Our mission is to promote health, keep the world safe and serve the vulnerable.

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