

The 2023 Lancet Series on Breastfeeding

Human infants and young children are most likely to survive, grow and develop to their full potential when breastfed. Despite scientific evidence more infants are fed formula milks today than ever before.

Only one in two newborns are put to the breast within the first hour of life.

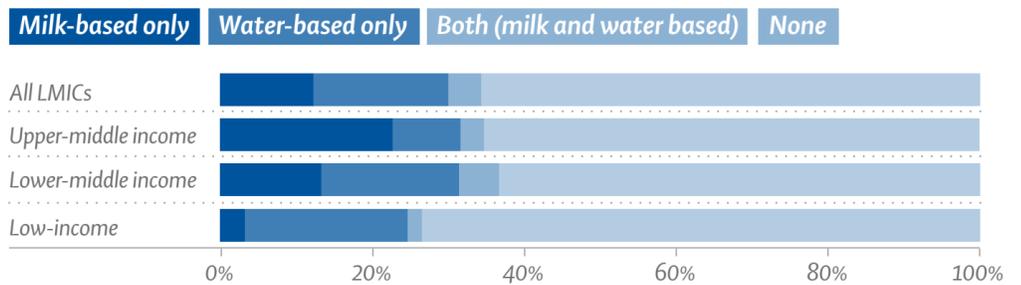


341.3
US\$ billion

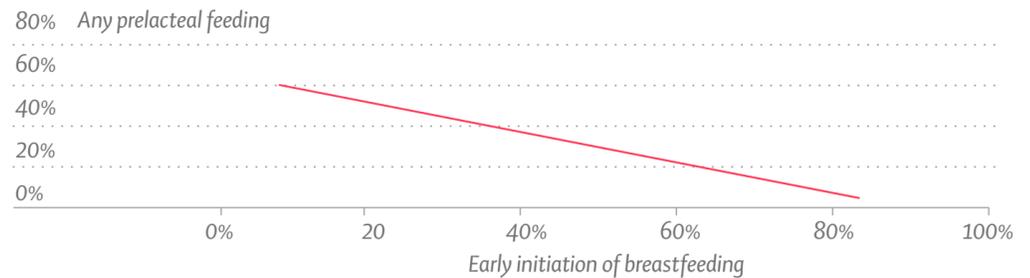


An estimated 341.3 billion US dollars per year is lost globally from unrealized benefits to health and human development because of inadequate investment in protecting, promoting, and supporting breastfeeding.

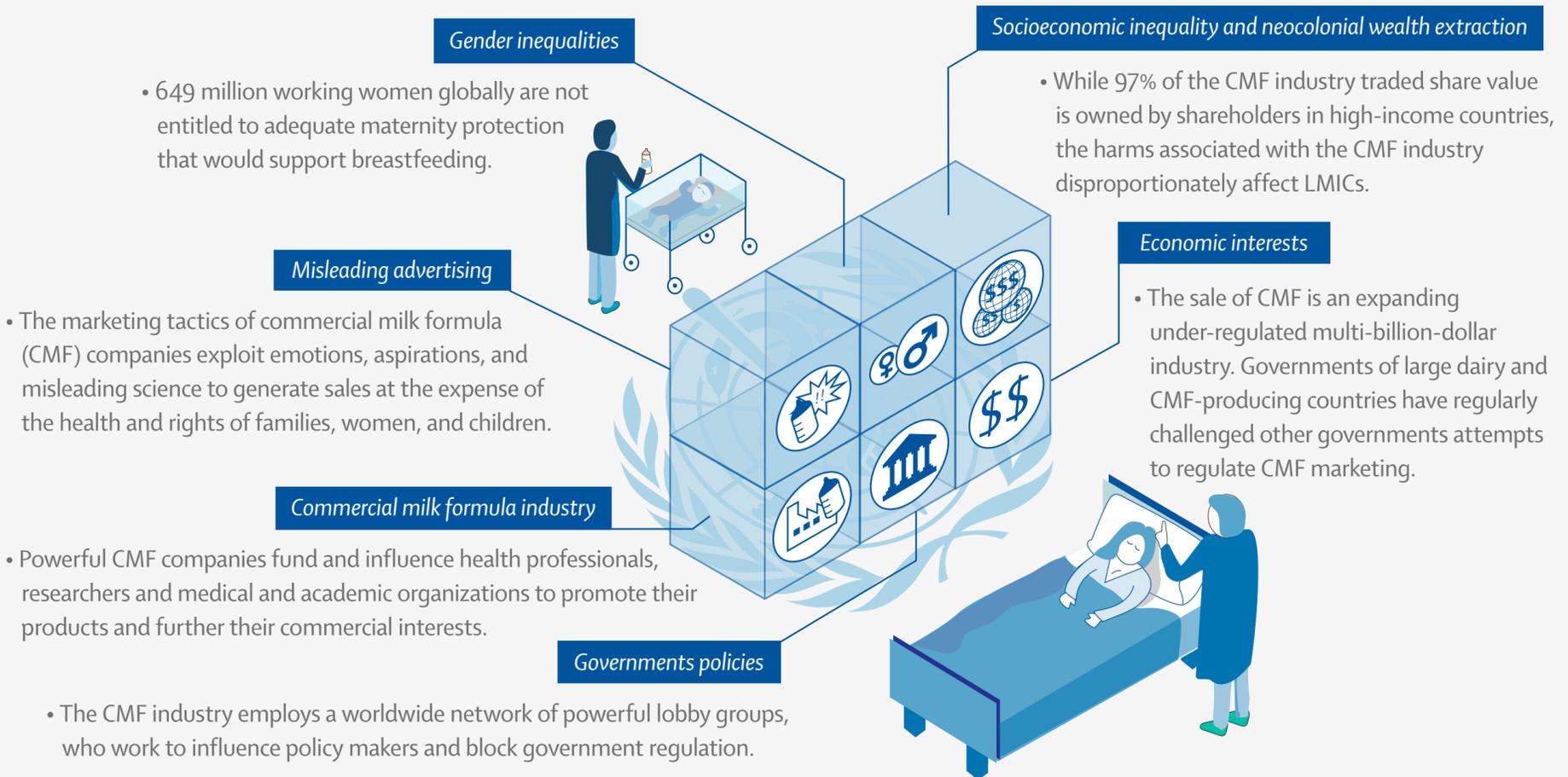
One in three babies in low and middle-income countries (LMICs) are given fluids other than breastmilk during the first 3 days of life, a practice that increases the risk for breastfeeding failure.



Non-breast milk feeding in the maternity facility is strongly associated with delayed initiation of breastfeeding.



Key structural factors

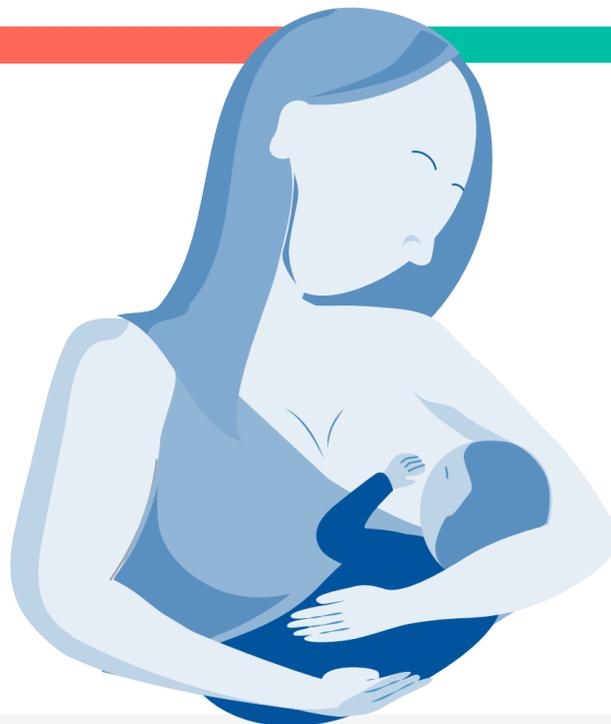


Breastfeeding is not the sole responsibility of women, but society's collective responsibility. It should be protected, promoted and supported by:



Governments and health organisations

- An end to the marketing of formula milk via effective legislation, monitoring and implementation of the Code and development of a legal global treaty.
- Increased regulation and transparency around lobbying to decrease the influence of formula milk companies.
- Investments in maternity protection, supporting breastfeeding at the workplace and enforcing legislation prohibiting discrimination against women during maternity.
- Health organisations rejecting funding from the CMF industry.



Healthcare systems and education

- Healthcare systems to prioritise women-centred and culturally appropriate breastfeeding care and support since pregnancy.
- Improving the breastfeeding education, training and skills of healthcare professionals.
- Empowering parents and families to breastfeed their children for as long as they wish.
- Training providers and families on baby behaviours after birth to prevent unnecessary prelacteals and the early introduction of infant formula, as both practices shorten the duration of breastfeeding.

Read the full Lancet series for more details