The Goal: By 2025, increase to at least 50% the rate of exclusive breastfeeding in the first six months.

Why It Matters:

1. Babies who are fed nothing but breastmilk from birth through their first 6 months of life get the best start.

2. Exclusive breastfeeding provides babies: the perfect nutrition & everything they need for healthy growth and brain development.

3. Protection from respiratory infections, diarrhoeal disease, and other life-threatening ailments.

4. Protection against obesity & non-communicable diseases such as asthma and diabetes.

Recommended Actions:

Limit Formula Marketing:

- What? Significantly limit the marketing of breastmilk substitutes.

Support Paid Leave:

- What? Empower women to exclusively breastfeed.
- How? Enact six-months mandatory paid maternity leave and policies that encourage women to breastfeed in the workplace and in public.

Strengthen Health Systems:

- What? Provide hospital and health facilities-based capacity to support exclusive breastfeeding.
- How? Expand and institutionalize the baby-friendly hospital initiative in health systems.

Support Mothers:

- What? Provide community-based strategies to support exclusive breastfeeding counselling for pregnant and lactating women.
- How? Peer-to-peer and group counselling to improve exclusive breastfeeding rates, including the implementation of communication campaigns tailored to the local context.

Scope of the Problem:

- Globally, only 41% of infants are exclusively breastfed.
- Suboptimal breastfeeding contributes to more than 800,000 infant deaths.

Countries lose more than $300 billion annually because of low breastfeeding rates.