

# Breastfeeding: an overview of what's happening globally and in Canada



# Presentation prepared by:

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# Disclosure:

I have no financial disclosure or conflicts of interest to report.

# Presentation Objectives

- Examine breastfeeding rates in Canada and globally.
- Explore international breastfeeding targets.
- Review progress of BFI designation in Canada.



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# Breastfeeding Rates In Canada

## 1. Government of Canada website

- 2009-2010 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) provides information about breastfeeding initiation, breastfeeding duration and introduction of other liquids or solids in women who had given birth in the last 5 years.

- **[Chapter 6 Infographic: Breastfeeding in Canada - Canada.ca](#)**
  - Breastfeeding initiation rates in Canada have increased: less than 25% in 1965 vs. 90% in 2015/16.
  - In 2011/12, over half (57%) of mothers who breastfed continued some breastfeeding beyond 6 months.

- Close to 25% of women stop breastfeeding before their infant is one month old.
- Breastfeeding rates vary across the country along a general west-to-east gradient.



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## 2. Statistics Canada

- 89% of mothers initiated breastfeeding in 2011-2012, compared with 85% in 2003.
- 26% of mothers breastfed exclusively for six months (or more) in 2011–2012, compared with 17% in 2003.
- Most provinces saw increases in exclusive breastfeeding rates from 2003 to 2011–2012 with British Columbia having the largest increase from 28% in 2003 to 41% in 2011–2012.



## Breastfeeding Initiation in Canada (excluding Territories)

Age Group	Number of Persons		Percent	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
18-34 years	825,200		91.2	
35-49 years	598,300		92.9	

Statistics Canada. [Table 13 -10-0096-24](#) Breast milk feeding initiation, by age group

### **3. The Baby-Friendly Initiative in Canada Status Report**

- Includes information provided by provinces and territories in response to international survey of industrialized countries.
- Last available Status Report is dated 2017.
- Survey issued in January 2020 but pandemic demands prevented completion.

# Rates and time trends in the consumption of breastmilk, formula and animal milk by children younger than 2 years from 2000 to 2019: analysis of 113 countries

Paula A R Neves, Juliana S Vaz, Fatima S Maia, Philip Baker, Giovanna Gatica-Dominguez, Ellen Piwoz, Nigel Rollins, Cesar G Victora

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# Method

## Data sources:

**Countries with standardized surveys** – analyzed nationally representative surveys (Generally low-income and middle-income countries).

**Countries without standardized surveys** – literature search until November 30, 2019 for health services data on breastfeeding indicators that were nationally representative (Generally high-income countries).

# Data Analysis

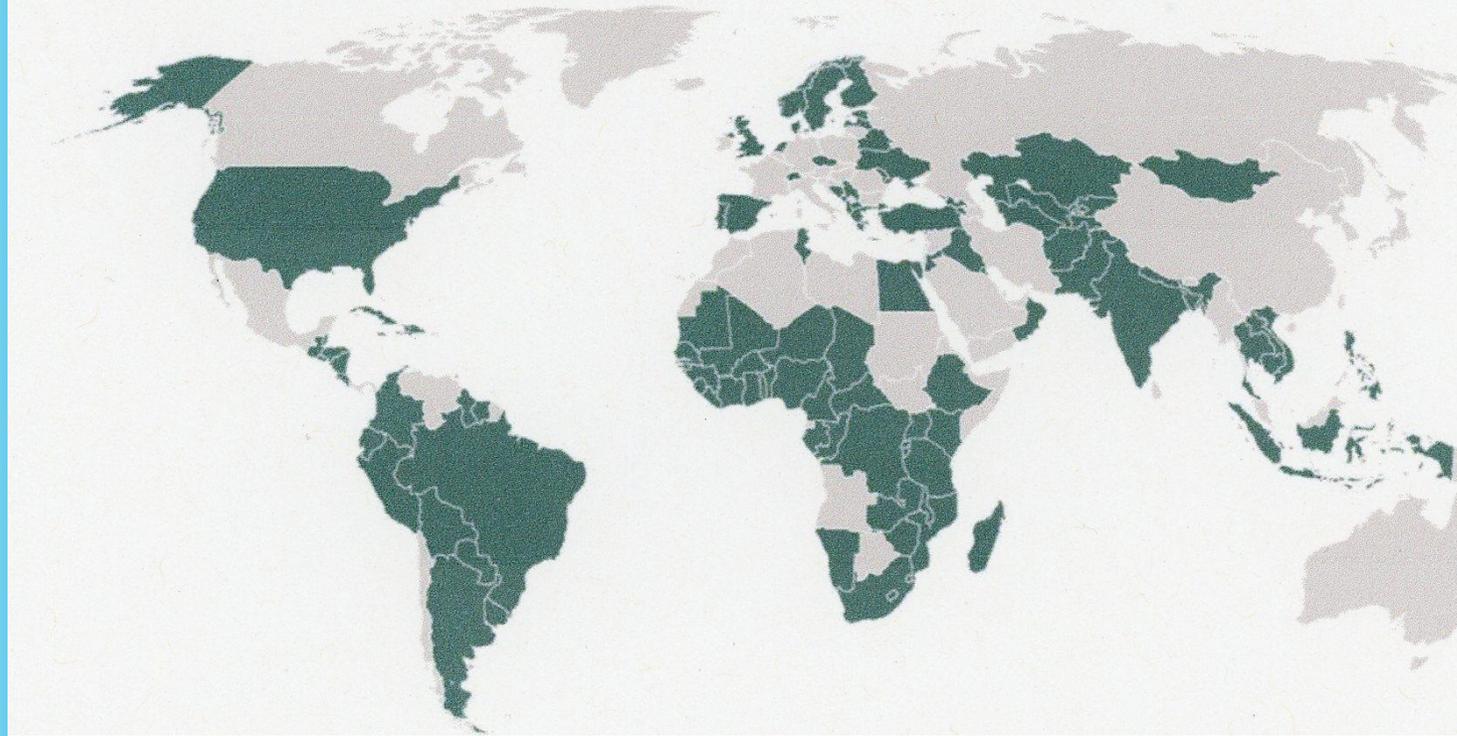
- Investigated 7 infant and young child feeding indicators in 113 countries.
- Calculated the following:
  - Exclusive breastfeeding in infants younger than 6 months.
  - Any breastfeeding at age 6 months and at 1 year.
  - Formula milk consumption in children younger than 6 months and those aged 6 -23 months.
  - Animal milk consumption in children younger than 6 months and those aged 6-23 months.



- Countries with at least two data points with an interval of five or more years were included.
- 487 data points were available.

Indicator	Number of Countries	Number of Data Points
Any breastfeeding at 6 months	110	481
Any breastfeeding at age 1 year	105	445
Exclusive breastfeeding in children younger than 6 months	83 (low and middle income countries)	344
Formula consumption in children younger than 6 months and those aged 6 -23 months	83 (low and middle income countries)	328
Animal milk consumption in children younger than 6 months and those aged 6 – 23 months	83	342

Supplementary figure 1. World map showing the 113 countries included in the trend analyses of infant and young child feeding indicators.



**Source: Supplementary appendix to Neves, P et al. Rates and time trends in the consumption of breastmilk, formula and animal milk by children younger than 2 years from 2000 to 2019: analysis of 113 countries.**

# Limitations

- Small number of surveys for some regions of the world (e.g. east Asia and Pacific, Middle East and north Africa).
- Lack of trend data from some countries (e.g. Canada).
- Unable to calculate pooled trends for exclusive breastfeeding, formula and animal milk consumption for high-income countries because data unavailable – used estimates from national surveys or nationally representative health services whenever available.

# Findings

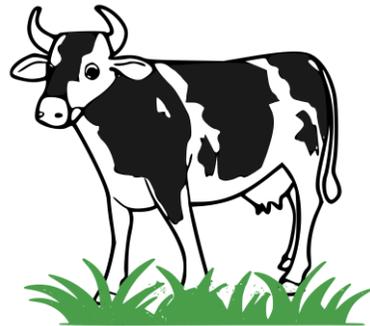
- When all countries with data were pooled together the rate of **any breastfeeding** was constant from 2000 to 2019 at just under **90%** for children younger than **6 months** and around **80%** at age **1 year**.
- Approximately **9/10** children aged **1 year** were breastfed in low- income countries in 2019 compared with **4/10** in high-income countries.

- The rate of **exclusive breastfeeding** in the first 6 months of age increased from **35%** in 2000 to **49%** in 2019 in low-income and middle-income countries.
- **Exclusive breastfeeding** increased in all world regions except the Middle East and north Africa.
- Low income and lower-middle income countries are close to the WHA target of **50%** exclusive breastfeeding at age 6 months but upper-middle income countries had a rate of **37%** in 2019.

- **Formula consumption** in the first 6 months of life increased in upper-middle income countries and in east Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and north Africa, and eastern Europe and central Asia whereas rates remained below 8% in sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia.
- **Formula consumption** showed a significant increase in upper-middle income countries especially with children older than 6 months.



- **Animal milk consumption** by children younger than 6 months decreased from **17.5%** to **9.8%** in low-income and middle-income countries.
- **Animal milk consumption** at age 6 – 23 months decreased from **36%** to **33%** in low-income and middle-income countries.



# Implications of Available Evidence

- If the current rate of exclusive breastfeeding for infants under 6 months continues, the global target of 50% by 2025 will likely be reached (low and middle-income countries).
- The rate of improvement in exclusive breastfeeding for 6 months is insufficient for reaching the global target of 70% by 2030 (low and middle –income countries).

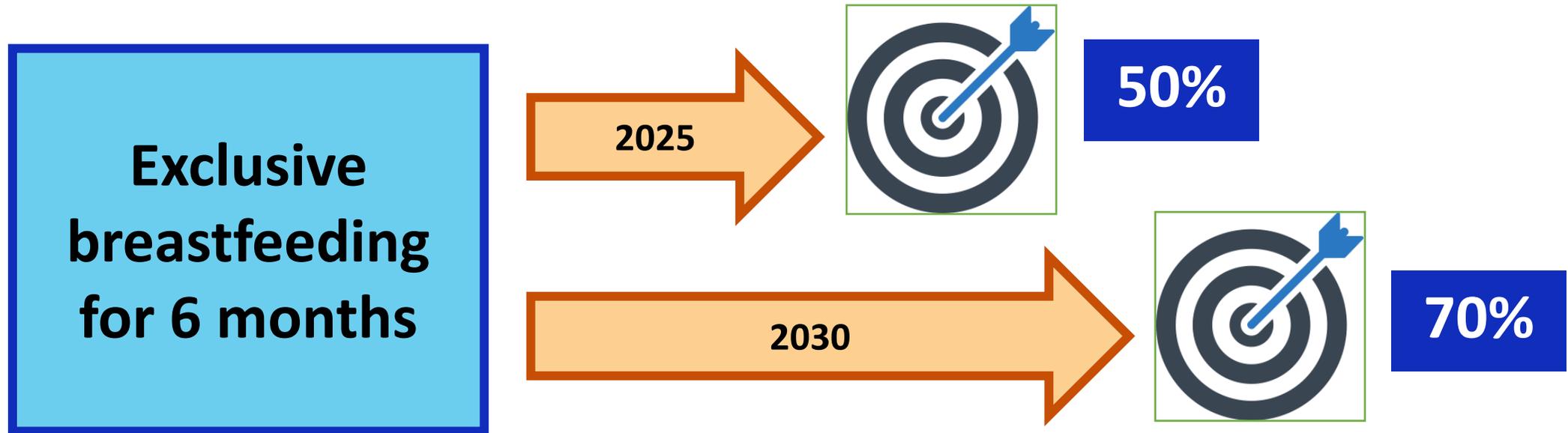
# Implications of Available Evidence

- The rapid increase in formula consumption in all age ranges in upper and middle income countries is alarming.
- Between 2005 and 2019 world total formula sales grew by 121.5%, with further increases of 10.8% projected by 2024. By contrast, exclusive breastfeeding increased by only 20% in the same period.

# Implications of Available Evidence

- More countries need to routinely conduct standardized national surveys.
- Urgent need to place breastfeeding support, promotion and protection as national priorities.
- Urgent need to enforce the recommendations of the *International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*.

# World Health Assembly Breastfeeding Targets



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# Global Breastfeeding Collective Target

**Births occurring  
in BFHI  
designated  
facility**

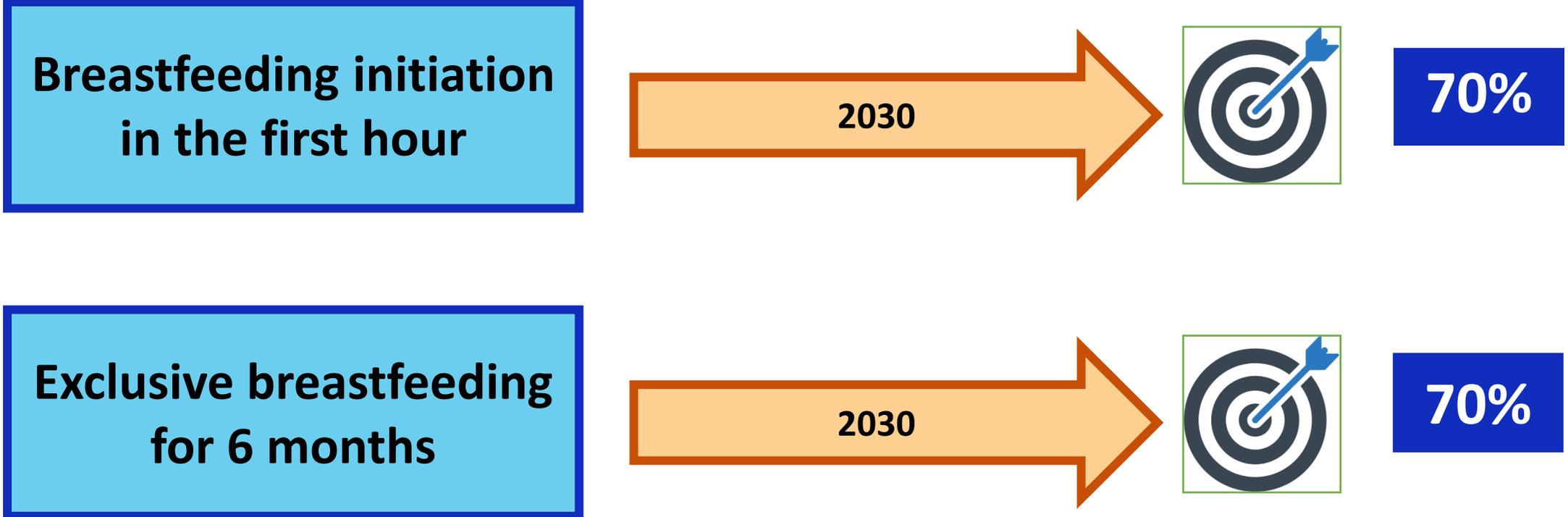
2030



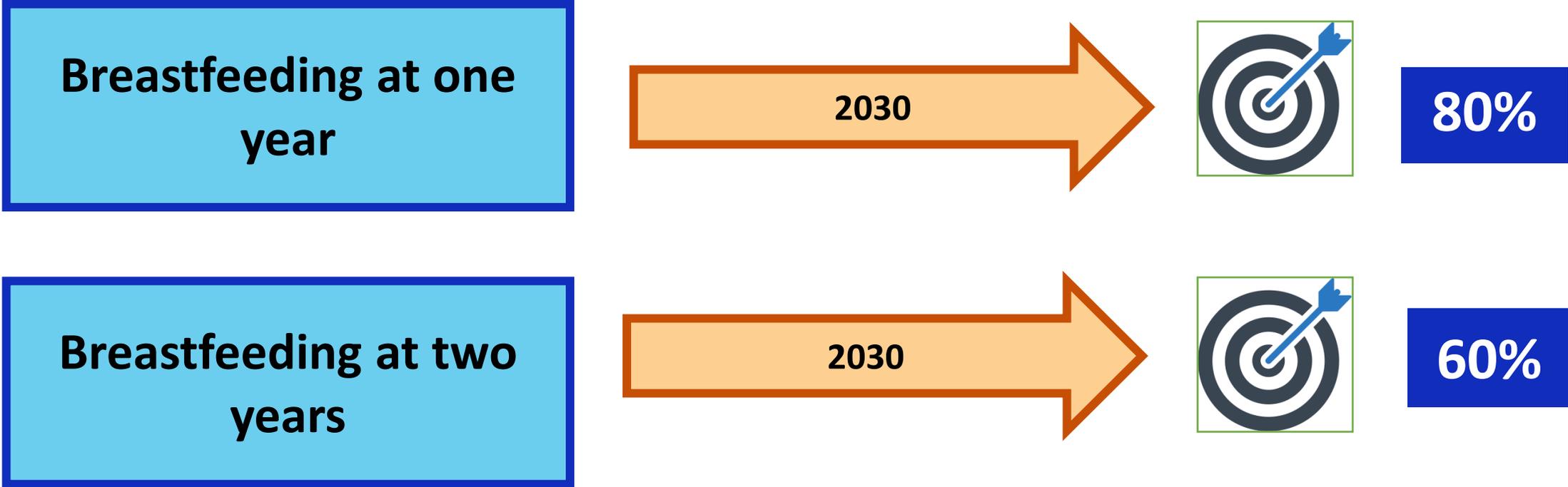
**40%**



# Global Breastfeeding Collective Targets



# Global Breastfeeding Collective Targets



# Global Breastfeeding Collective Target

**National  
monitoring of  
breastfeeding  
policies, programs  
and funding**

2030



**75%**



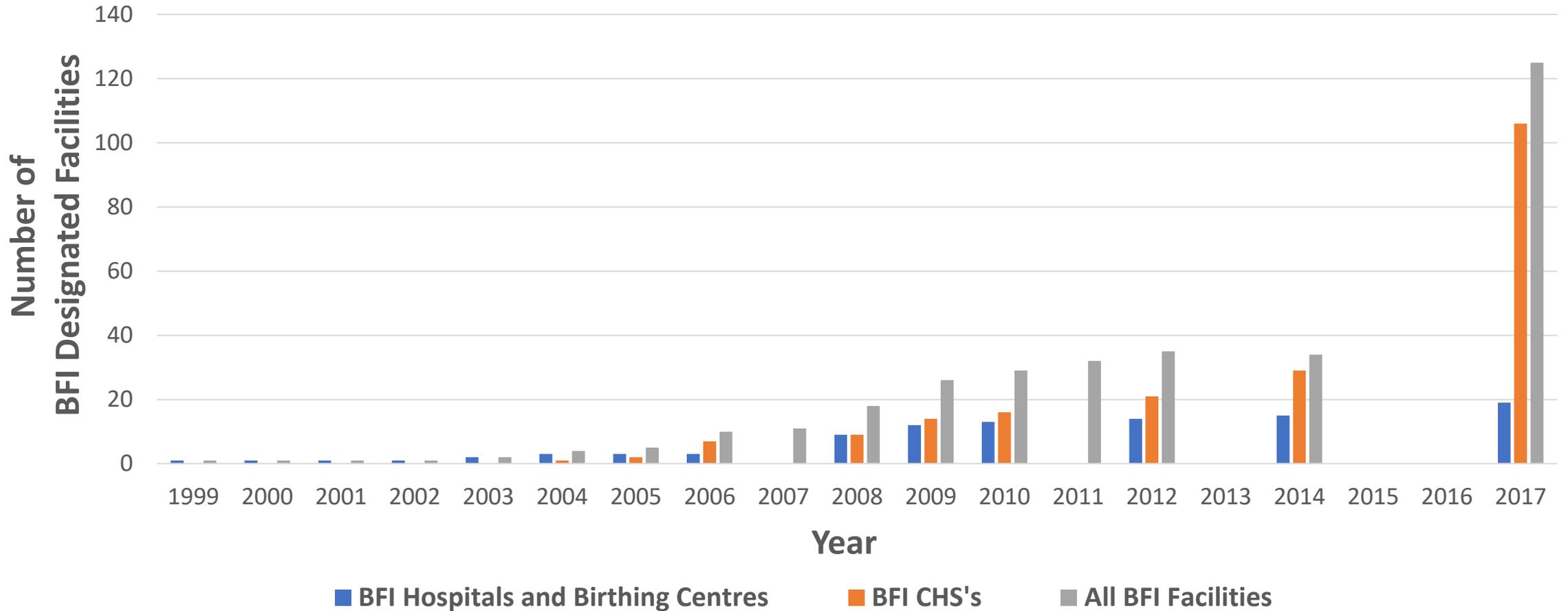
# The Baby-Friendly Initiative in Canada

- 1999 - Canada's first BFI designated Hospital (Brome-Missisquoi-Perkins in Cowansville, Quebec).
- 2004 - Canada's first BFI designated Community Health Service (CLSC Argenteuil in Lachute, Quebec).



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# BFI Designated Facilities in Canada



# BFI Designated Facilities in Canada (August 1, 2021)

Facility	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC*	Nfld	NS	NWT	Total
Hospitals	1	4		1	7	5	1	2	1	22
Birthing Centres						8				8
Community/ CLSC	2		1	3	20	93				119
Native Health Centre						1				1
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>150</b>

\*Data for Quebec is from 2018

# Closing Thoughts

- Implement the BFI as a minimum standard of care.
- National monitoring and reporting of breastfeeding rates based on international standardized indicators.
- Strengthen awareness and enforcement of the *International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*.

