



Learning from an independent Evaluation: Maternity Rights Protection & Promotion of Child Rights to Nutrition

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Context

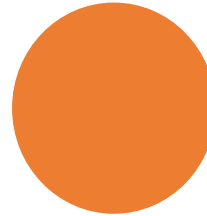
Undernutrition, anaemia and micronutrient deficiencies – threat to the survival and development of millions of women and children

At least

1 in 2 pregnant women
are anemic



1.8 million



- About only **38%** pregnant women access recommended minimum four Antenatal Care (ANC) check-up with only one from medically trained provider and only one in five pregnant (21%) receives ANC with five basic components
- Two in every ten females in reproductive age (15-49 years) are too thin (BMI<18.5) and or with low stature (<145 cm height) and about one third (29%) of them are anemic.

At least

1 in 4 babies
are born with low birthweight



<2,500 g



700
thousand



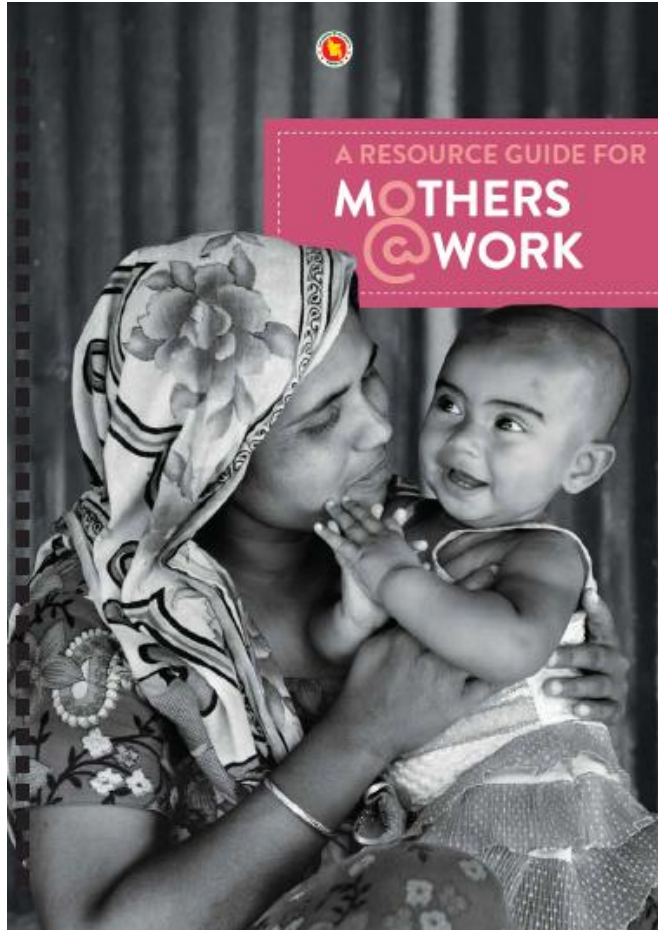
- Recommended **early initiation of breastfeeding practice** (within an hour of birth) which protects the newborn from acquiring infections and reduces the risk of mortality by up to 22%, is **only 44%** while **nearly half (45%) of the infants less than 6 months of age are not exclusively breastfed** as recommended.

Context

Rise of RMG sector - rapid urbanization leads to inadequate access to basic services

- Urban population will be more than 50% by 2045.
- Migrated women workforce for RMGs leaving behind their infants young children with in appropriate caregivers – depriving from child care
- Maternity protection in the workplace enables women to continue their productive work without compromising their reproductive and child care needs. Breastfeeding is critical to achieve many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), asserting that it improves child nutrition, prevents child mortality (SDG 2) and decreases risk of non-communicable diseases (SDG 3), and supports cognitive development and educational attainment (SDG 4).
- Lack of awareness and adoption of appropriate antenatal care (ANC) services and Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices contribute to the high prevalence of undernutrition followed by irreversible damage in cognitive and growth potential among the under-five children, the future generation or workforce

MOTHERS @WORK



- ❑ A national initiative to strengthen maternity rights specially focusing on protecting breastfeeding and continuum of childcare practices among working mothers following the national Labor Law/Acts and Nutrition Policy
- ❑ Mothers@Work is implemented in partnership with public & private sectors and civil society stakeholders
- ❑ Innovation to create an enabling workplace environment for working mothers and their infants & young children in need
- ❑ Guided by 7 minimum standards to ensure maternity benefits, and continuum of child-care practices
- ❑ Partnership to galvanize the private sector to set a responsible business case model on investment in maternity rights protection for the working women that promotes rights to nutrition for children.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR MOTHERS@WORK

Creating Enabling Environment at the Bangladesh Readymade Garment (RMG) Factories on access to Maternal Nutrition, Nurturing Care Practices for Infants & Young Children of Working Women

ILO Conventions 2000 on
Maternity Protection 183

ILO Recommendations on
Maternity Protection 191

National Nutrition Policy
2015, 2nd National Plan of
Action for Nutrition 2016-
2025

IYCF Strategy, 2007, IYCF
Communication Framework,
2013, Comprehensive
National ECCD Strategy for
0-3 years old Children, 2023

Bangladesh Labor Law 2006,
Child Daycare Center Act
2021

Breast Milk Substitute (BMS)
Act 2013, Rules on BMS Act,
2017



1. PHC (Cash & Medical Benefit)



2. Safe-work Provision



3. Paid Maternity Leave



4. Employment Protection



5. Breastfeeding Space

7 Standards



6. Breastfeeding Breaks



7. Early Child care support
(daycare with ECD service)

Implementation Steps



PREPARE

- Engage senior leadership
- Advocate for workplace policy



IMPLEMENT

- Capacity development
- Implementation of 7 minimum standards



COMMUNICATE

- Informing workers about maternity rights in the workplace
- Build ownership among employees



TRACK

- Set targets, monitor, and report



An independent evaluation on the Mothers@Work in the Ready-Made Garments sector of Bangladesh

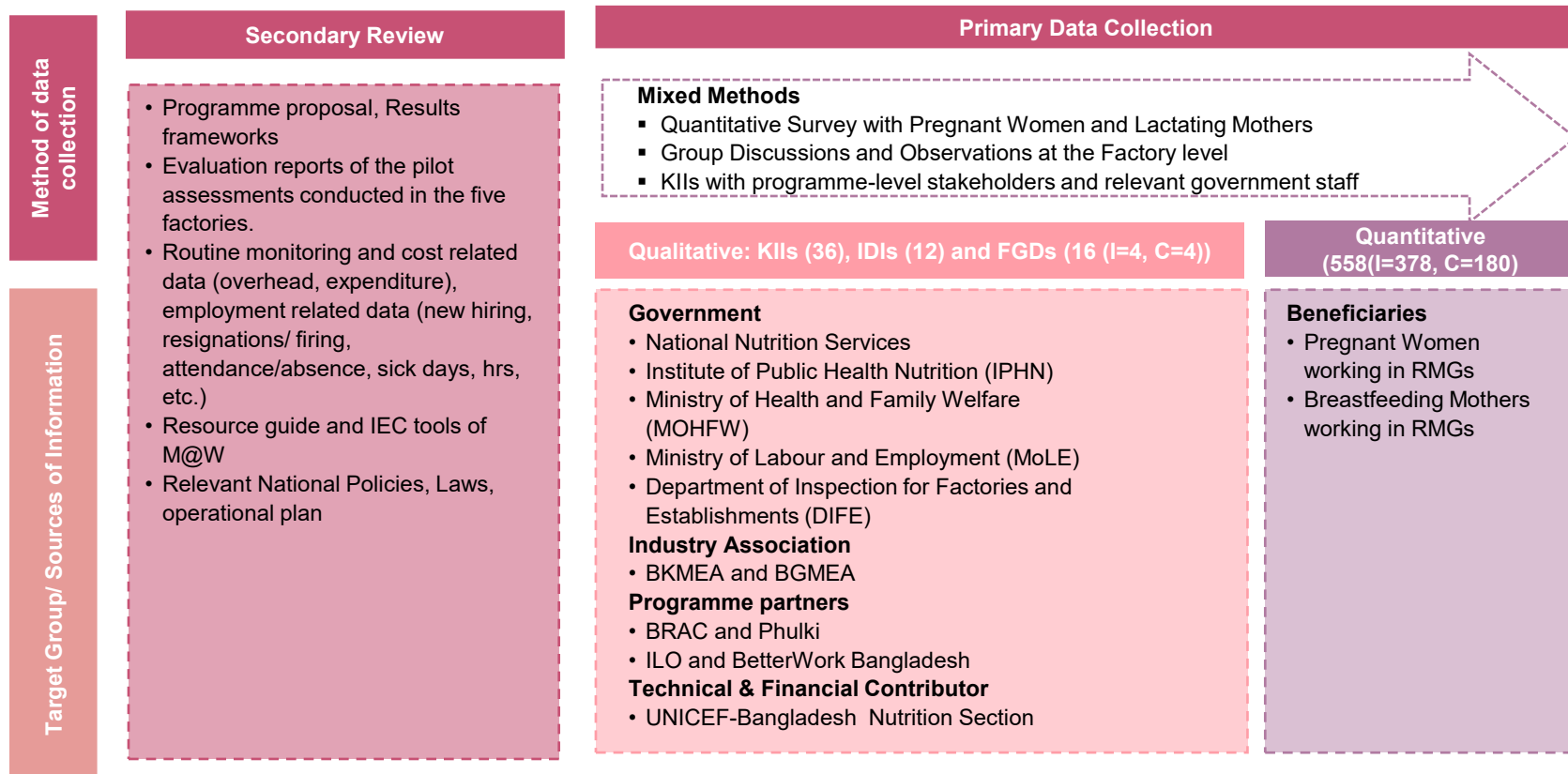
Conducted by Intellectap – Advisory Services Private Limited in 2023

To document on

- key programmatic learnings,
 - determining proof of model,
 - assessing its performance in improving the adoption of seven minimum standards on maternity rights protection for the working women
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- it's scalability scope within and beyond the RMG sector towards establishing a business case for responsible investment in protection of maternity rights for the working pregnant and lactating mothers including breastfeeding and early childcare support for their infants and young children.

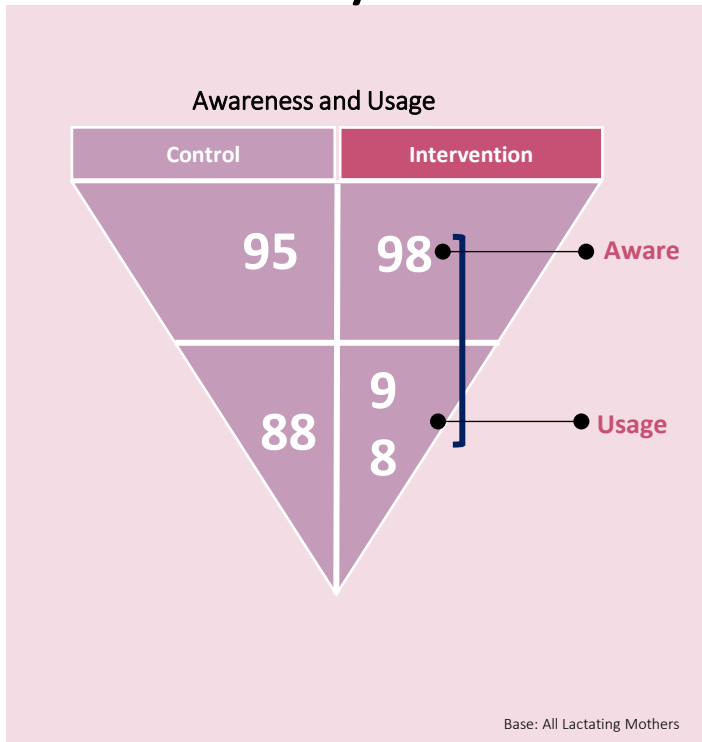


Method/Approach followed in the evaluation



Category	Number of factories	Sample size per factory	Respondent size per factory		Total sample size
			Pregnant women	Breastfeeding Mothers	
Intervention	18	20-22	123	255	378
Control	9	20	52	128	180
Total	27	20-22	175	383	558

High awareness and utilization of paid maternity leave



Data source: Intellectap Analysis | All numbers are in percent

Key highlights

- **High awareness of paid maternity leave**
 - 98% intervention beneficiaries
 - 95% control beneficiaries
 - **Utilization is also very high in both factories**
 - Intervention (98%) and control (88%) factories
 - **68.5% of** women could correctly identify the legal provision of 16 weeks of paid maternity leave
-
- **Maternity leave provides a proper recovery period – 98% of** lactating women in the intervention factories felt well-healed before rejoining work
 - **High satisfaction with the paid maternity leave** among returning mothers in the intervention factory

Paid Maternity Leave is the primary reason for 6 in 10 women to return to work

Positive impact on the physical and mental well-being of new mothers. Ensure work-life balance, reduced anxiety and increased worker loyalty and commitment

Returning mothers opinion on PML	Category	Percentage
Paid maternity leave help me balance my work life	Intervention	99
	Control	88
Mothers feel well healed and recover from childbirth before rejoining work	Intervention	98
	Control	94
Paid maternity leave provided by my factory increases my loyalty and commitment	Intervention	98
	Control	87
My employers respect maternity rights	Intervention	97
	Control	89
Paid maternity leave provided by my factory reduces my anxiety about managing my baby	Intervention	92
	Control	84

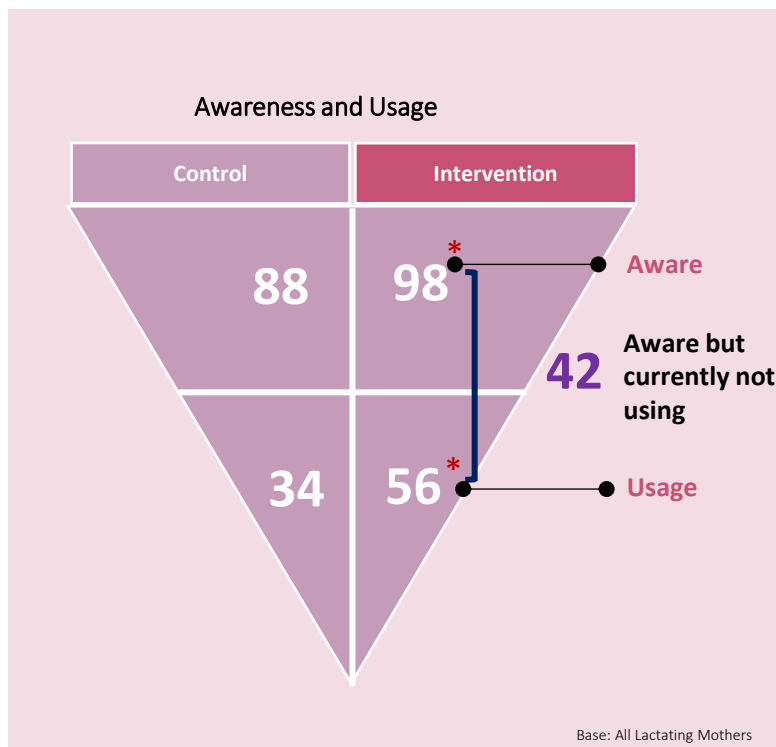
Data source: Intellectap Analysis | All numbers are in percent

Anchored by supportive managers and supervisors but need to invest in building their capacities and shaping their motivation

Supervisor is supportive	Intervention	58
	Control	46
Assurance that leave is paid	Intervention	48
	Control	52

- 1 in 2 pregnant women say, 'assurance that the leave is paid' and 'supportive supervisors' are two reasons why can join work post-delivery
- Information and awareness shared by Welfare officers
- Welfare officers in some factories proactively maintain contact with women during maternity leave

High awareness but low usage of the breastfeeding space. However, M@W could influence in increasing the usages

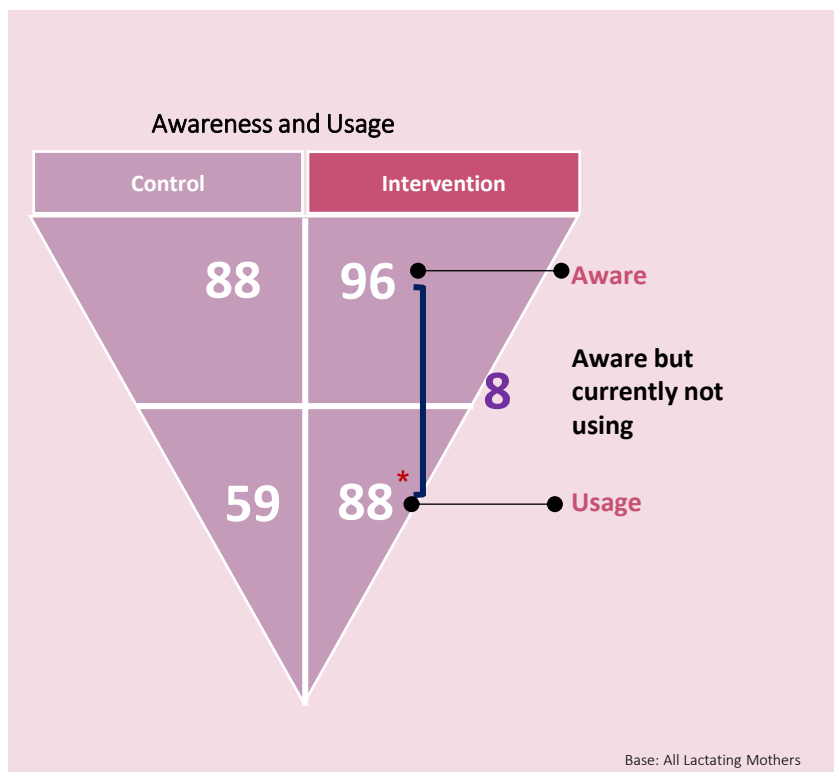


Data source: Intellectap Analysis | All numbers are in percent

Key highlights

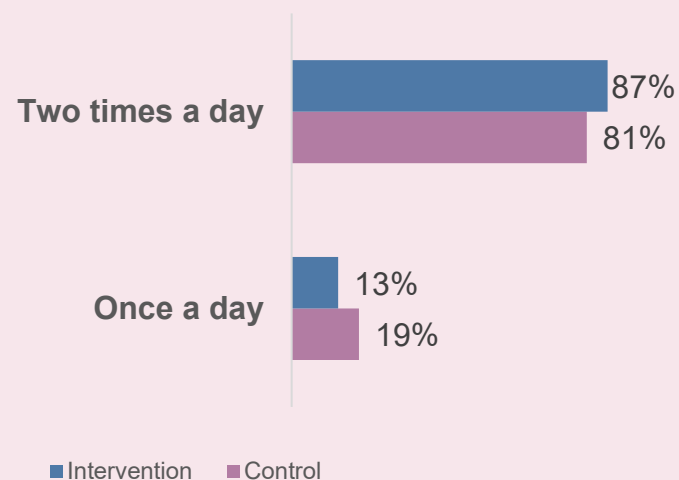
- **High awareness of the breastfeeding space**
 - 98% intervention beneficiaries
 - 88% control beneficiaries
- **Low usage of breastfeeding space**
 - Intervention (56%) and control (34%) factories
- Breastfeeding spaces enabled women to **access safe and dignified environments, in fulfilling their care responsibilities**
- BF spaces enable working mothers to **effectively balance their work and breastfeeding**
- **Over 90% of women gave high ratings to the physical infrastructure:** privacy, well-ventilated, comfortable seating, access to hygiene facilities, and distance suitable to work shifts

High awareness and lower usage of breastfeeding breaks, M@W improved the utilization of the BF breaks

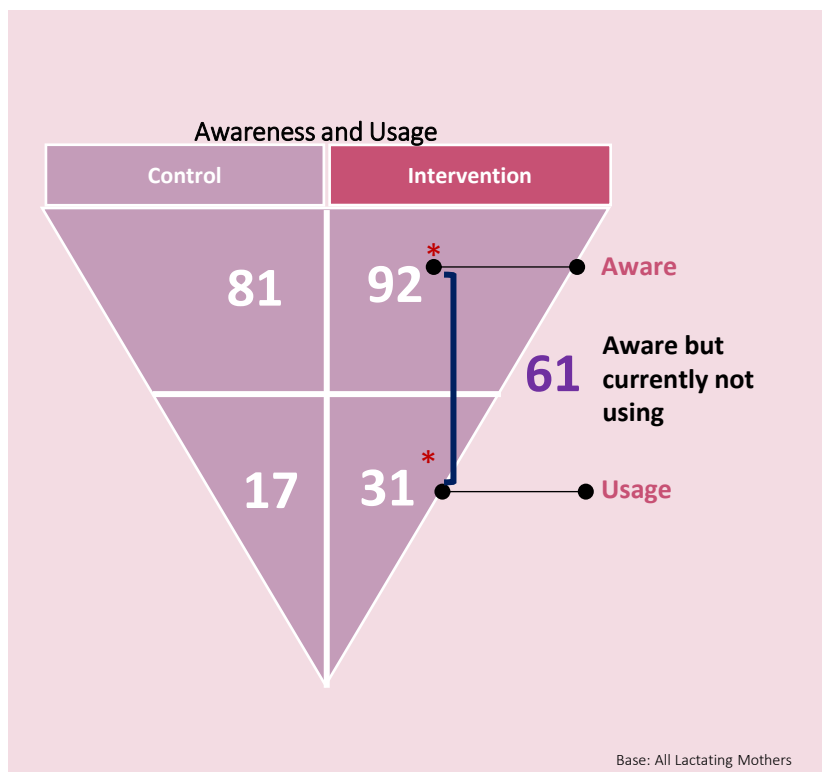


Data source: Intellectap Analysis | All numbers are in percent

Most mothers take two breastfeeding breaks, some women combine the two breaks to take one long break.



High awareness and low utilization of the childcare center, M@W needs to strengthen its efforts



Data source: Intellectap Analysis | All numbers are in percent

Key highlights

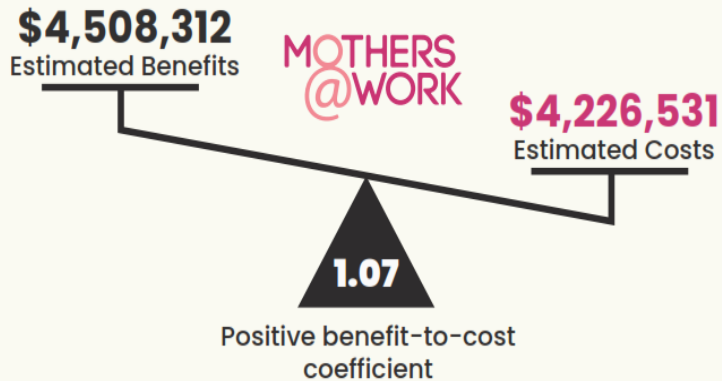
- **High awareness of the childcare centre**
 - 92% intervention beneficiaries
 - 81% control beneficiaries
- **Usage is significantly low in both factories**
 - Intervention (31%) and control (17%) factories
- **61%** of beneficiaries who are aware currently do not use the childcare facilities

Women articulated the benefits of CC centres

- **Provides a safe and secure environment** for the children
- **Help keep children nearby, ensuring timely breastfeeding and in managing anxieties**
- **3 out of 4 pregnant women** in intervention factories stated their intent to use the CC facility after delivery

Cost Benefit Analysis of **Mothers@Work** Programme

Positive Net Present Value (NPV) as well as high Internal Rate of Return (IRR)



Cost Benefit Analysis (CBA) based
on 113 factories implemented
M@W during 2018-2022

US\$ 1 invested by the
Programme yielded an
economic benefit equivalent to
US\$11.66

US\$ 1
invested by **UNICEF** leveraged
an investment of
US\$5.48
by the private sector

US\$ 1
invested by the RMG and
UNICEF yielded a return of
US\$1.20
for the RMG Factory



WAY FORWARD

1. Expand the coverage of M@W by including:
 - a. Other factories / smaller units (including Tier2 and Tier3 factories)
 - b. Replicating it across other sectors (such as leather, agro processing that have higher female work participation)
2. Establish and conduct significant capacity development activities of the RMG functionaries on Monitoring, Evaluation, Feedback and Learning (MEFL) for the M@W Programme
3. Expand the scope of M@W programme; a workplace intervention model, to integrate and develop linkages for accessing other critical health, nutrition and ECCD services
4. Take a stewardship role in championing M@W Programme across other sectors of the economy
5. Establish a standard package of practices and services at child day care centres. Improve the quality of the services delivered at the child day care centres. Programme may consider:
 - A. Accreditation of child day care centres at the factory
 - B. Integrating with complementary government Programmes
6. Explore linkages with community-based child day care centre models and service providers.



As per recommendations, UNICEF's current focus on Improving access to maternal nutrition, breastfeeding & early childcare practices

REACHING ONE MILLION WORKING MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN THROUGH THE BANGLADESH RMG F FACTORIES



Key services
to be improved

Measuring
Weight



Breastfeeding
Support



Nutrition
Counselling



Early
Childhood Care

Improving Access to Maternal Nutrition through M@W



- Pregnancy weight gain monitoring



- Dietary counselling



- IFA/Multiple Micronutrient Supplementation (MMS)

- ✓ Capacity readiness of RMG-PHC with training-IEC Tools and IFA/MMS supplies

- Pregnancy weight gain monitoring,
- Maternal nutrition counselling
- IFA/MMS distribution



Strengthening ECCD for 0-3 years children at the RMG based Child Daycare



Digital Monitoring System



- ❑ **Development and institutionalization of digital monitoring system to track on the 7 stds implementation & generate data to :**
 - ✓ understand if the standards are implemented as per guidance
 - ✓ see if the initiative is benefiting the working women and their children
 - ✓ identify the champions for certification which will encourage and help the RMGs in their business growth



Thank you

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