

# SUPPORTING MOTHERS TO BREASTFEED EXCLUSIVELY IN BANGLADESH

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23

ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

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## Speaker: Dr Rukhsana Haider

Founder & Chairperson of the Training & Assistance for Health & Nutrition Foundation (TAHN) in Bangladesh, and Co-Chair, Steering Committee of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA).

Supporting mothers to breastfeed exclusively in Bangladesh Specific programs to inform and support employed women for breastfeeding are lacking in Bangladesh. Ready-made garment factory workers in particular, are reported to have poor infant feeding practices and undernourished children. In order to improve the infant feeding practices of factory workers and their unemployed neighbours, a peer counselling project was implemented from 2015-17 in Chattogram. Peer counsellors visited mothers regularly at home from pregnancy until children were 18 months old. A cross-sectional survey undertaken when the project ended, showed that breastfeeding practices of the counselled factory workers were significantly better than those of the non-counselled factory workers. Unemployed counselled mothers also had optimal breastfeeding practices. These results will be further shared during the webinar. Despite the challenges being faced during the Covid-19 pandemic, peer counsellors continue to provide home-based services to both unemployed and employed women in TAHN Foundations' programme areas.

