

Nepal 2024-25



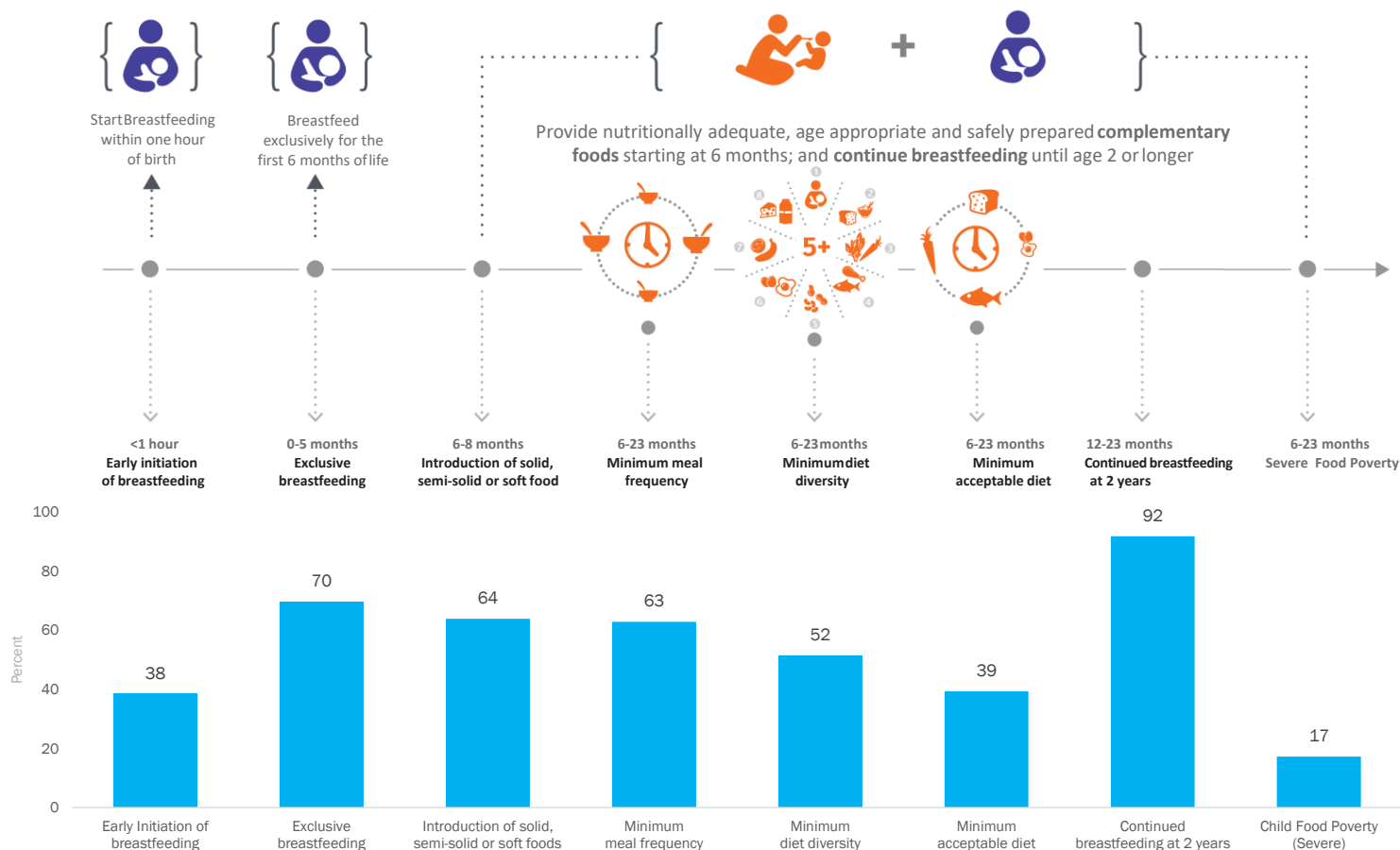
Infant & Young Child Feeding (IYCF)

Multiple Indicator
Cluster Surveys

Infant & Young Child Feeding



Government of Nepal
Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers
National Statistics Office

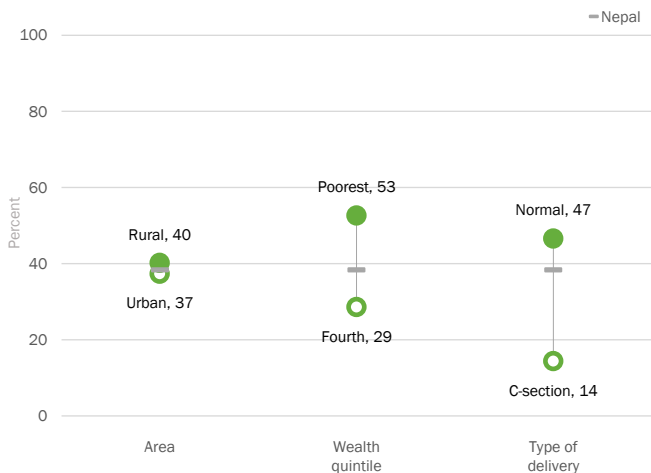


Early initiation: percentage of newborns put to breast within 1 hour of birth; **Exclusive breastfeeding:** percentage of infants aged 0-5 months receiving only breastmilk; **Introduction to solids:** percentage of infants aged 6-8 months receiving solid or semi-solid food; **Minimum diet diversity:** percentage of children aged 6-23 months receiving 5 of the 8 recommended food groups; **Minimum meal frequency:** percentage of children aged 6-23 months receiving the recommended minimum number of solid/liquid feeds as per the age of child; **Minimum acceptable diet:** percentage of children aged 6-23 months receiving the minimum diversity of foods and minimum number of feeds; **Continued breastfeeding at 2 years:** percentage of children aged 20-23 months who continue to receive breastmilk. **Child food poverty** is defined as to have received foods from 4 or fewer food groups during the previous day.

Key Messages

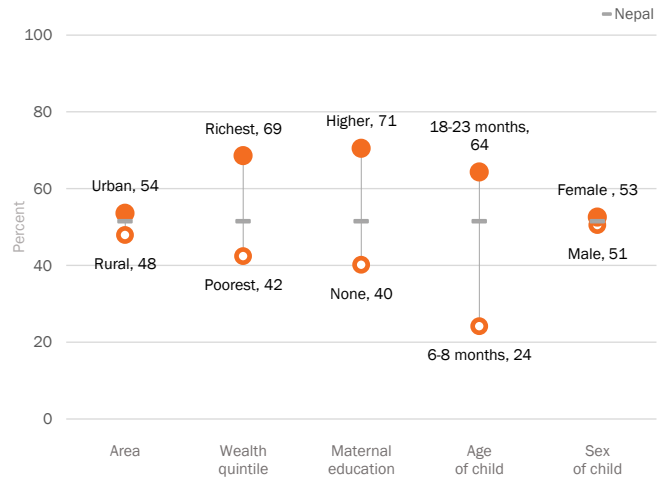
- Findings from MICS 2024-25 show low overall rates of early initiation of breastfeeding (38%). Women from the richest households and those who have a higher education are less likely to initiate early breastfeeding (30% and 37% respectively) within one hour of birth than are women from the poorest households (53%) and those with no education (38%). More needs to be understood about why the richest and better educated women are not initiating breastfeeding within one hour of birth.
- Caesarean section greatly impacts early initiation of breastfeeding. Only 14% of women who delivered by caesarean section breastfeed within the first hour of birth, compared to 47% of women who had a normal delivery.
- In Nepal, most women (92%) continue breastfeeding for children aged 12-23 months, indicating that many children in Nepal experience the benefits of receiving breastmilk into their first two year of life. However, only 63% of children aged 6-23 months receive the minimal recommended meal frequency. Even fewer children aged 6-23 months received the recommended minimum diet diversity (52%) and a minimum acceptable diet (39%).
- Nearly half of children in Nepal do not receive the recommended minimum diet diversity. However, children who live in rural and poor households and whose mothers/caretakers have low levels of education and children age 6-8 months are far less likely to receive the minimum recommended diet diversity.
- Severe food poverty (17%) among 6-23-month-olds directly drives the sharp rise in stunting and underweight during the critical complementary feeding period.
- These data indicate that poor nutrition for children in Nepal is not only a result of lack of access to good food and economic constraints. Lack of knowledge regarding a healthy and diverse diet is evident even in urban, wealthy, and educated households. There is an urgent need to provide mothers, caretakers and health professionals with knowledge about appropriate feeding of young children, including the consumption of appropriate, adequate and safe complementary foods after six months, which leads to better health and growth outcomes for children.

Early Initiation of Breastfeeding



Percent of newborns put to the breast within one hour of birth, by background characteristics

Minimum Diet Diversity

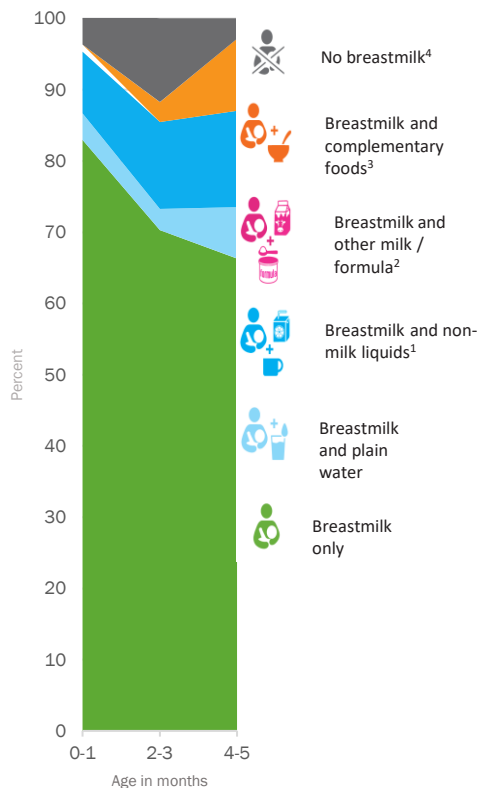


Percent of children aged 6-23 months that were fed food from at least 5 out of 8 food groups, by background characteristics

IYCF: What are the Youngest Infants Fed?

Liquids or foods consumed by infants 0-5 months old

Percent of infants aged 0-5 months receiving breastmilk only, breastmilk and plain water, breastmilk and non-milk liquids, breastmilk and other milk/formula, breastmilk and complementary foods and no breastmilk



Notes: 1) may also have been fed plain water; 2) may also have been fed plain water and/or non-milk liquids; 3) may also have been fed plain water, non-milk liquids and/or other milk/formula; 4) may have been fed plain water, non-milk liquids, other milk/infant formula and/or solid, semi-solid and soft foods.

Provincial Data

Province	Early Initiation of breastfeeding	Minimum Diet Diversity
Nepal	38.4	51.5
Koshi	42.0	51.7
Madhesh	26.5	36.8
Bagmati	38.7	70.2
Gandaki	35.9	64.0
Lumbini	31.9	52.7
Karnali	61.1	51.9
Sudurpashchim	57.5	49.8

Percent of newborns put to the breast within one hour of birth, and percent of children aged 6-23 months that were fed food from at least 5 out of 8 food groups by geographic region

The Nepal Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) was carried out in 2024-25 by the National Statistics Office (NSO) as part of the global MICS programme. Technical support was provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). UNICEF and Government of Nepal provided

financial support. The objective of this snapshot is to disseminate selected findings from the Nepal MICS 2024-25 related to Infant & Young Child Feeding (IYCF). Data from this snapshot can be found in tables TC.7.1, TC.7.2, TC.7.3, TC.7.5, TC.7.6 and TC.7.7

in the Survey Findings Report. Further statistical snapshots and the Survey Findings Report for this and other surveys are available on mics.unicef.org/surveys.