



GHANA STATISTICAL SERVICE

MONTHLY PRESS RELEASE



www.statsghana.gov.gh

No. 03 August 2024

Almost half of infants under 6 months not exclusively breastfed

Data from 2022 GDHS provides insight on breastfeeding practices

Almost half (47.4%) of children aged 0 to 5 months in Ghana were not being exclusively breastfed according to the 2022 Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (GDHS). **The percentage of children under 6 months who are not exclusively breastfed has stagnated over the past two decades:** increasing marginally by 0.8 percentage points between 2003 (46.6%) and 2022.

The GDHS indicates that breastfeeding is near universal: 96.8 percent of children born in the two years preceding the survey had ever been breastfed. However, the initiation and duration of exclusive breastfeeding fall short of the [World Health Organisation recommendations on breastfeeding](#) state that “children initiate breastfeeding within the first hour of birth and be exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months of life.”

Two in every five (41.8%) children born in the two years preceding the 2022 GDHS did not start breastfeeding within the first hour of life. In three regions, more than half of the children did not start breastfeeding within the first hour of life: Greater Accra (56.2%), Ahafo (56.1%), and Eastern (51.7%). The region with the lowest percentage that ~~initiated~~ did not initiate breastfeeding within the first hour was the Bono East Region (29.4%) followed by the Volta Region (31.6%).

Nationally, the median duration for exclusive breastfeeding was 2.9 months. The Western North Region had the shortest median duration for exclusive breastfeeding of one month followed by the Western (1.2 months) and the Greater Accra (1.4 months) regions. **Half of the 16 regions had a median duration for exclusive breastfeeding that was less than three months.** The Savannah Region had the longest median duration for exclusive breastfeeding (4.7 months) followed by the Volta Region (4.4 months).

World Breastfeeding Week is commemorated annually during the first week in August to highlight the importance of breastfeeding and to promote access to breastfeeding support and opportunities. The theme for 2024 is “Closing the Gap: Breastfeeding Support for All”.

The 2022 Ghana Demographic and Health Survey reports and microdata are available to download at no cost from www.statsghana.gov.gh.

About the Ghana Statistical Service

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) provides comprehensive, reliable, quality, relevant, accurate, and timely statistical information to guide national development as stipulated in Section 3 of the Statistical Service Act, 2019 (Act 1003). The organisation's vision is to be a trusted provider of official statistics for good governance and its mission being the efficient collection, production, management, and dissemination of quality official statistics based on international standards, using competent and motivated staff for evidence-based decision-making, in support of national development.

The Statistical Service produces monthly and quarterly data on important economic indicators such as inflation, Consumer Price Index, Producer Price Index, and Gross Domestic Product. GSS also regularly generates periodic population, housing, demographic and economic data at the locality, district, and national levels from routine surveys and censuses. The statistics generated by GSS can be utilised by a wide cross-section of users including public sector, businesses, academia, civil society organisations and development partners. For more information visit www.statsghana.gov.gh.