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Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly: A Guide to Global Scale-Up (BBF)¹ is a Yale University initiative led by Dr. Rafael Pérez-Escamilla that is being conducted in collaboration with partners around the world.

BBF Vision:

- Evidence- based program enables countries to assess their readiness to scale up breastfeeding protection, promotion and support.
- BBF Toolbox guides countries in this assessment and helps policy makers make data–driven decisions to successfully scale up their breastfeeding programs.
- The long-term objective of the project is to identify the concrete measures a country can take to sustainably increase its breastfeeding rates. The Toolbox enables countries to navigate the necessary steps to do this.

The BBF Index (BBFI) invites participating countries to assess 8 simultaneous conditions – the **gears** in the BBF model – that are measured against specific **benchmarks** to produce a country **score**. Having benchmarks within each individual gear provides valuable data for identifying specific gaps where action is needed after the BBF assessment. To help facilitate the assessment, detailed recommendations are provided about how to take each step, alongside **case studies** with examples of best practices from numerous countries and across multiple sectors.

The Breastfeeding Gear Model (BFGM)² is the foundation for the BBF. It stipulates that these eight “gears” must be at work and in harmony for large-scale improvement in a country’s national breastfeeding program:

- Evidence-based advocacy generates political will to enact policies and legislation that are needed to ensure healthy breastfeeding practices.
- These generate the necessary resources to encourage workforce training and program delivery, as well as promotion through media outlets;
- Research and evaluations are conducted to maintain the quality and success of the programs; and
- A coordinating master gear keeps the multisectoral program(s) on track by setting and monitoring goals, facilitating the flow of information across gears, and providing timely feedback on actions needed to improve or sustain the quality of large scale programs.



Figure 1. BFGM

The BBFI was developed between August 2015 and January 2016 by Yale University in collaboration with a 13-member Technical Advisory Committee of breastfeeding experts working in Canada, the United Kingdom, Latin America, West Africa, South and South East Asia and for international organizations including the World Health Organization (Laurence Grummer-Strawn), UNICEF (France Begin), TAHN Foundation (Rukhsana Haider), The Gates Foundation, PAHO and GAIN.

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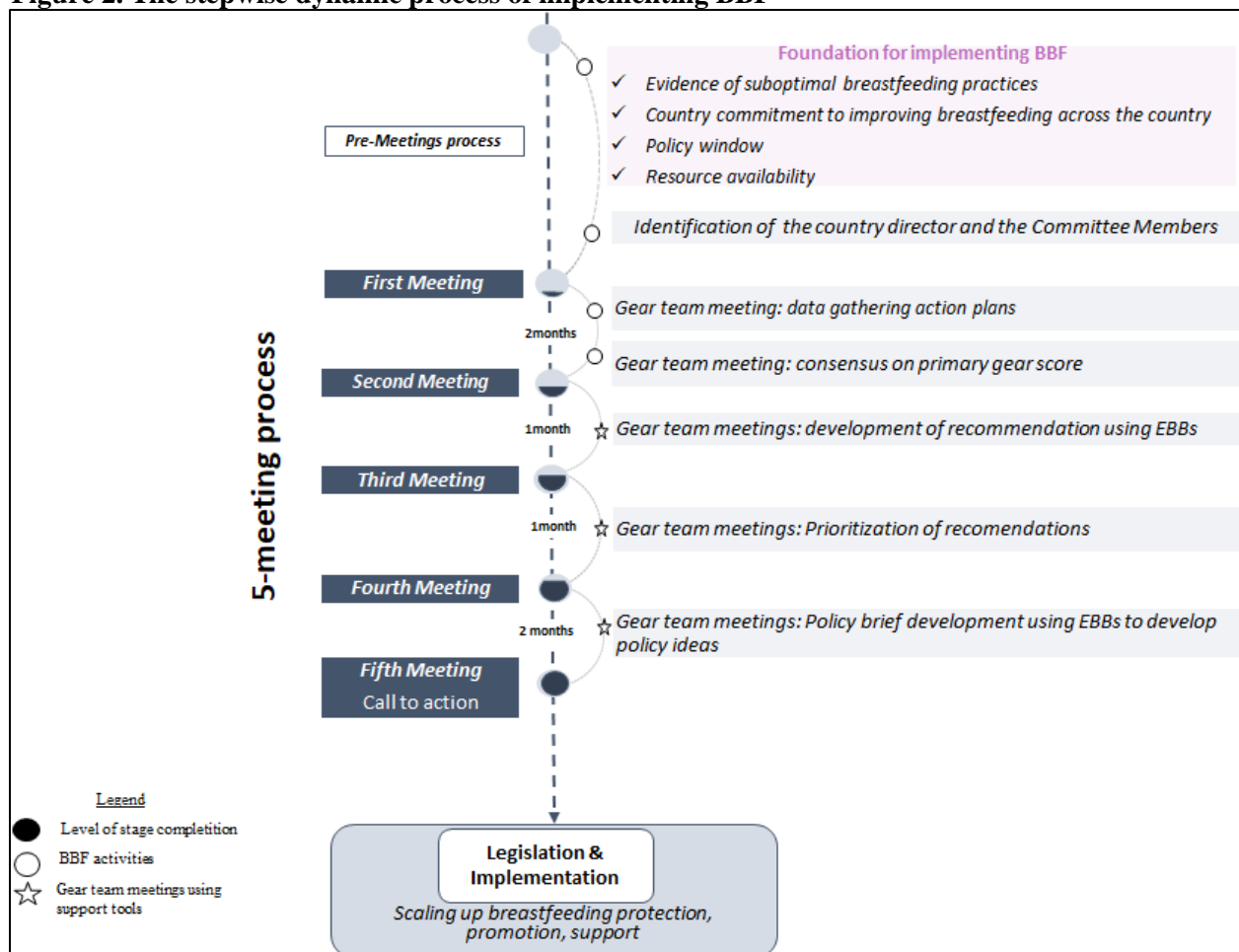
The BBF Toolbox

- Consists of BBF Index plus a guide detailing how to use data to make decisions
- BBF Index measures country readiness to scale up breastfeeding protection, promotion, and support. Provides assessment of readiness within each gear as well as overall.
- Each gear is measured by a different number of benchmarks

How to Assess

- Garner support from government and non-governmental officials to implement this process
 - Identify a committee of 10-12 experts that have: a) time to commit to the process (including attending all meetings and completing the work in between meetings), b) expertise within one or more of the gears, and c) ability to work in teams
 - Identify a chair of the committee and he/she will assign committee members to one to two gears, but no more than three
- Conduct at least five meetings to carry out the BBF baseline assessment process from beginning to end, over the course of 9 months-1 year

Figure 2. The stepwise dynamic process of implementing BBF



Publications

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