

The development and initial findings of the MOTHERS' MILK TOOL



A global tool to value the economic contribution of women through breastfeeding

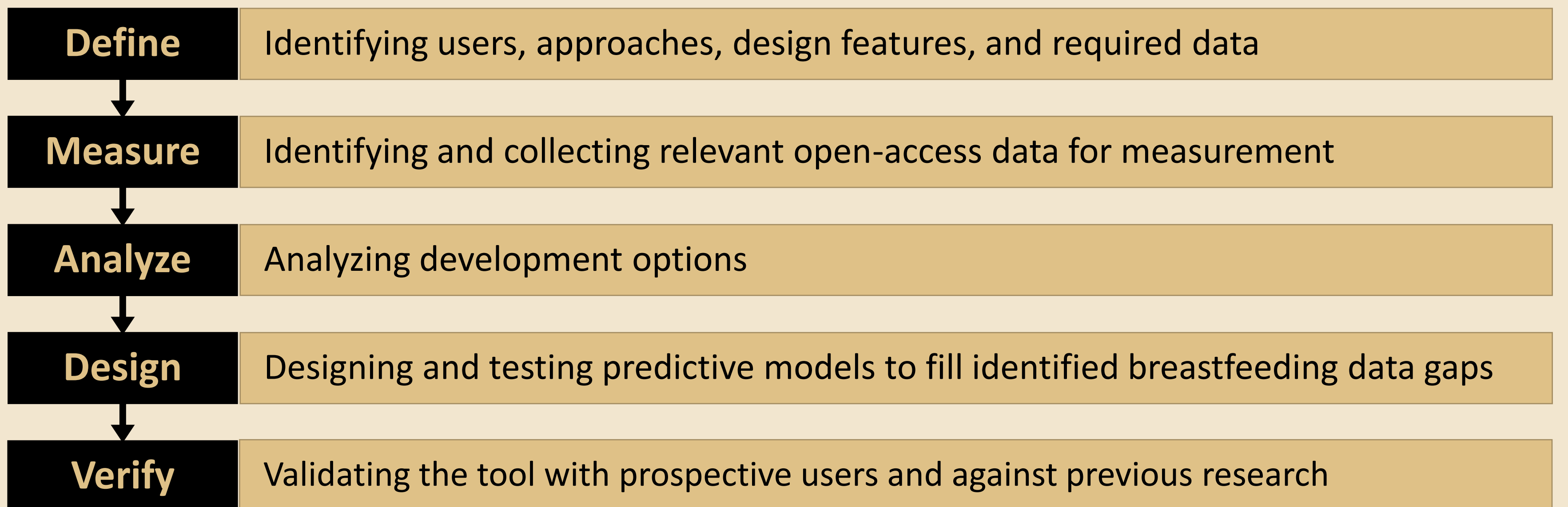
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Human milk production can and should be counted in economic statistics

- Breastmilk is a commodity that can be stored, exchanged and traded so it fits the international (SNA) guidelines to be measured in GDP.
- Methods and data for economic valuation of breastfeeding have improved.
- The macroeconomic value of human milk production is substantial even if most is not sold or exchanged.
- This is now well demonstrated for multiple countries.

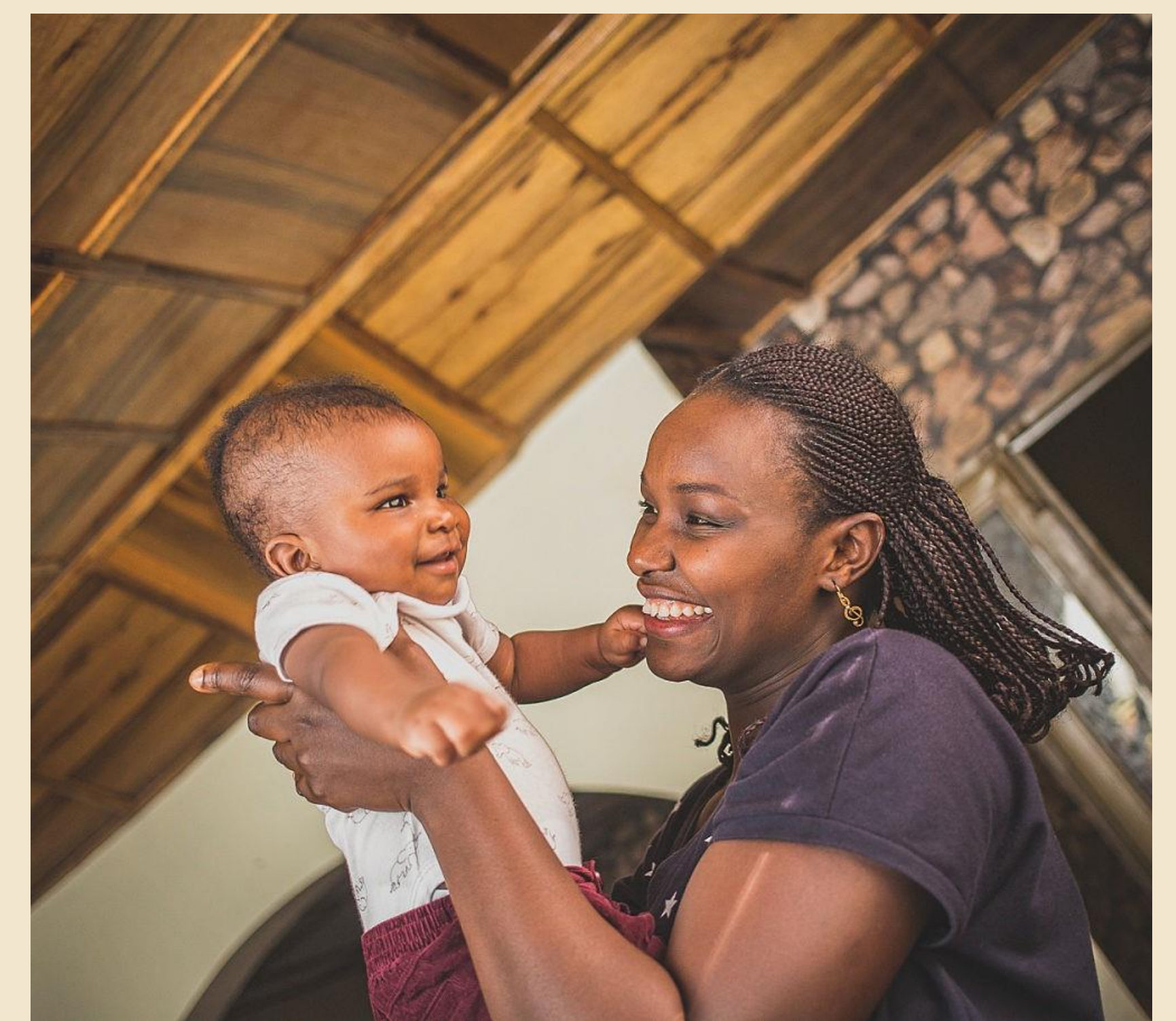
Steps for the development of the tool



The tool estimates volume and monetary value of breastmilk production and lost milk

The interface shows the 'Country calculator' where 'Nepal' is selected. The 'Data entry' screen for Nepal includes fields for 'No. of breastfeeders' (54000), 'Year recorded' (2020), 'Country' (Nepal), 'Exchange rate USD' (118.49), and 'Currency code' (NPR). The 'Results' screen for Nepal shows a 'Total for 3 years' estimate for 36 data entries with the following values:

	Volume (million liters)	Value (million USD)	Value (million Nepalese Rupee)
1. Actual annual production of breastmilk	221.25	22,124.92	2,619,621.89
2. Potential production of breastmilk	230.25	23,025.31	2,726,229.16
3. Lost breastmilk	10.31	1,031.49	122,130.09
4. Percent lost	4.5%		



The world loses around 22 billion liters breastmilk or 2.2 trillion USD annually

	Year	Total production (million liters)	Potential production (million liters)	% of breastmilk lost	Value of breastmilk lost (billion USD)
Australia*	2010	51	143	65	9.2
Brazil*	2019	425	1,213	65	79
Canada*	2009	55	170	68	12
India	2017	8,738	10,200	14	146
Indonesia	2017	1,211	1,887	36	68
Ireland*	2013	4	24	82	2.0
Kenya*	2014	451	599	25	15
Nepal	2019	221	230	4	0.9
Nigeria	2018	2,150	2,997	28	85
Norway*	2018-2019	11	25	58	1.5
Philippines	2017	574	826	30	25
United Kingdom*	2011	58	314	82	26
USA*	2018	605	1,686	64	108
Viet Nam	2013-2014	423	673	37	25
Global*	2022	35,556	57,490	38	2,193

* Used prediction models

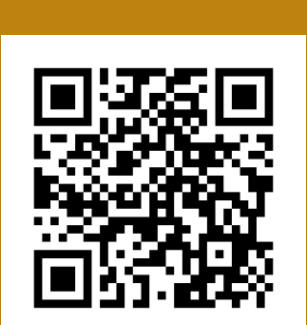
Key points

- Milk provided by breastfeeding mothers is a crucial but largely invisible national food resource
- The economic value of women's milk production can and should be measured, to ensure this contribution is visible and properly valued
- Much valuable production of this food is 'lost' due to cultural barriers and structural impediments to breastfeeding
- A supportive breastfeeding culture is an important national capital asset with large economic value
- Breastfeeding provides food security for a country's children while minimizing food system pressures on the environment

Next steps

- Count breastfeeding and mothers' milk production in national food balance sheets, food statistics, and food surveillance systems
- Create experimental national economic accounts to value mother's milk in countries' GDP and SNA
- Urgently begin SNA time use accounting for unpaid infant and young child feeding and care
- Account for health and environmental costs of milk formula and depletion of cultural and environmental assets in economic statistical systems

Mothersmilktool.org



Use the tool



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