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Subject: Definition of prelacteal feed in Indonesia DHS

Posted by [lhuri](#) on Wed, 14 Oct 2020 11:00:58 GMT

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Dear DHS Team,

I'm writing to ask about the exact definition of prelacteal feed variable.

If there is an inconsistent variable definition between reports in original version and English version, which one should I use?

The Indonesian version is:

"Dalam 3 hari setelah melahirkan, sebelum air susu Ibu keluar (mengalir) dengan lancar, apakah (NAMA) diberi minuman selain ASI?", which translates to

"In the first three days after delivery, before your milk began flowing regularly, was (NAME) given anything to drink other than breast milk?"

The English version is just:

"In the first three days after delivery, was (NAME) given anything to drink other than breast milk?"

It does not ask whether the breastmilk had come out or began flowing regularly.

I've been defining prelacteal feed as "anything to drink other than breast milk during the first three days of life". I acknowledge that specifically in Indonesian version of 2017 IDHS, the definition was not exactly the same, but I chose to follow DHS Guide and the English version of IDHS, as it was less ambiguous. This definition was also used by most of peer reviewed papers. However, I'm just making sure that this is acceptable and that DHS Program is aware of this.

Thank you.

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Subject: Re: Definition of prelacteal feed in Indonesia DHS

Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Wed, 14 Oct 2020 22:58:01 GMT

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Following is a response from DHS Research & Data Analysis Director, Tom Pullum:

I could look into the reason for the slightly different wording of this question in the Indonesia survey, but it could be hard to track down. I agree with your decision to treat it the same as in other countries. Thanks for letting us know.

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Subject: Re: Definition of prelacteal feed in Indonesia DHS

Posted by [lhuri](#) on Fri, 16 Oct 2020 13:38:21 GMT

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Thank you Tom and Bridgette for replying.

I have also noticed that the English version of previous IDHS are the same with the translated Indonesian version of 2017 IDHS, where the "before milk part" is included i.e. "In the first three days after delivery, before your milk began flowing regularly, was (NAME) given anything to drink other than breast milk?". So it is the English version of 2017 IDHS that seems to be different from previous IDHS reports and versions, but is consistent with other countries' DHS reports and guidelines.

Another question that I would want to clarify in 2017 IDHS is question number 466 about breastfeeding initiation (which refers to variable m34 in Stata dataset). In p.483 of the English version, it reads "How long after birth did you first put (NAME) to the breast?". The same question number 466 in Indonesian version (p. w-35) asks about timing but with different wording and translates to "How long after birth did you breastfeed (NAME) for the first time?". These sentences are not exactly similar in meaning.

In the DHS guide ([https://dhsprogram.com/data/Guide-to-DHS-Statistics/Initial\\_Breastfeeding.htm](https://dhsprogram.com/data/Guide-to-DHS-Statistics/Initial_Breastfeeding.htm)), variable m34 is defined as when child put to breast but it is also used to define timing of breastfeeding. In my understanding, putting a baby to breast doesn't technically equal to starting breastfeeding. Please correct me if I'm mistaken, but in this context, can I interpret this question as the timing of breastfeeding for the first time?

Thank you again and have a nice weekend,  
Lhuri

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Subject: Re: Definition of prelacteal feed in Indonesia DHS  
Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Mon, 19 Oct 2020 13:04:20 GMT  
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A team member is reviewing your post. We will respond asap - probably within the next two weeks.

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Subject: Re: Definition of prelacteal feed in Indonesia DHS  
Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Tue, 27 Oct 2020 17:24:26 GMT  
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Following is a response from DHS Lead Nutrition Research Associate, Rukundo Benedict:

Thanks for bringing to our attention the inconsistencies between the English language and Indonesian-language translation for prelacteal feeding and breastfeeding timing questions. We will bring this to the attention of our colleagues.

With regards to your analyses, as per Tom Pullum's response, it is correct to use the prelacteal definition of "anything to drink other than breast milk during the first three days of life". Similarly,

for breastfeeding initiation, it is correct to use m34 "when child put to breast" to calculate timing of breastfeeding (for the first time). The use of the terminology "put to breast" aligns WHO recommendations for early initiation of breastfeeding. ([https://www.who.int/maternal\\_child\\_adolescent/documents/9789241596664/en/](https://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/documents/9789241596664/en/)).

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