

## CONCEPT NOTE

### The Breastfeeding Run 2025

**Vision:** Protecting, Promoting, and Supporting Breastfeeding in Kenya

**Event Tagline:** Every Step Counts for Breastfeeding Support

### Background

Globally, optimal breastfeeding practices could prevent over 820,000 child deaths annually (World Health Organization & UNICEF, 2023). Workplace barriers have been identified as a leading factor causing early cessation of exclusive breastfeeding (Nguyen et al., 2021). In Kenya, exclusive breastfeeding rates have risen markedly, from 13% in 2003 to approximately 60% by 2022, as reported in the 2022 Kenya Demographic and Health Survey (World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa, 2025). However, many women, especially those working in informal and rural sectors, still lack practical and legal support to continue breastfeeding upon returning to work.

Despite significant progress in exclusive breastfeeding rates in Kenya, from 13 percent in 2003 to 61 percent in 2022, many mothers continue to face formidable challenges when returning to work. A primary barrier is the absence of lactation rooms in both government and private institutions. Studies have shown a positive association between workplace lactation support and exclusive breastfeeding among formally employed mothers (Ickes et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2021). However, fewer than 5 percent of Kenyan mothers report having access to such facilities (Ickes et al., 2022), and compliance with the 2017 mandate for employers to provide lactation rooms remains low (Poverty Action Lab, 2023). Compounding this issue, the enforcement of the Breast Milk Substitutes (Regulation and Control) Act and related laws remains weak, leaving critical protection mechanisms underutilized. Furthermore, awareness of the Breastfeeding Mothers' Bill is limited among both employers and employees, hindering its potential impact.

Socio-cultural stigma continues to hinder public breastfeeding, with studies highlighting persistent negative attitudes and taboos that discourage mothers from feeding openly (World Health Organization & UNICEF, 2023; WHO Regional Office for Africa, 2025). These attitudes are reinforced by cultural beliefs related to privacy, public exposure, and milk purity—issues documented in both local and regional contexts (Poverty Action Lab, 2023; Sociocultural context narratives, 2024). Together, these systemic, legal, institutional, and cultural barriers underscore the urgent need for comprehensive, multi-sectoral action to support and normalize breastfeeding across all spheres of Kenyan society.

Addressing these gaps requires a comprehensive and inclusive national strategy that combines legal reform, workplace innovation, and community empowerment. Building on this momentum, CAMFEB has conducted annual breastfeeding runs since 2018 to raise awareness and catalyze policy action. To further this advocacy campaign, The Breastfeeding Run 2025 will be held in Nairobi at Waterfront Mall, Karen, and will feature 5km, 10km, 15km, 20km, and 25km races.

## About The Breastfeeding Run 2025 by CAMFEB

The Breastfeeding Run by CAMFEB, now in its sixth edition, is a flagship advocacy and fundraising initiative aimed at promoting breastfeeding-friendly workplaces and mobilizing support for the creation of lactation spaces across Kenya. The 2025 edition is scheduled for Saturday, August 2, 2025, and is set to amplify national focus through active engagement of both public and private institutions.

The event will feature participation by stakeholders and media influencers to generate momentum around breastfeeding rights and workplace inclusion. This edition places particular emphasis on institutions, government agencies, hospitals, schools, markets, and corporations that employ large populations of women of reproductive age. Despite their size and influence, these institutions often lack enabling infrastructure and policies, undermining maternal health and workplace productivity.

By spotlighting the critical role of institutional support, The Breastfeeding Run 2025 reinforces Kenya's commitment to inclusive, rights-based maternal and child health systems and aligns with ongoing national efforts to mainstream lactation support into workplace policy and practice.

## Objectives

The Breastfeeding Run 2025 by CAMFEB is envisioned not merely as a symbolic event but as a catalytic movement for systemic change in breastfeeding support and maternal-child health. The initiative seeks to influence policy, mobilize resources, and galvanize cross-sector partnerships for sustainable impact.

### Specific objectives include:

- i. To raise public awareness on the significance of exclusive breastfeeding and the urgency of institutional lactation support across Kenya.
- ii. To promote broader understanding and enforcement of the Breast Milk Substitutes (Regulation and Control) Act (BMS Act) as a tool for protecting optimal infant feeding practices.
- iii. To advocate for the passage and operationalization of the Breastfeeding Mothers Bill, 2024, particularly provisions relating to workplace accommodations.

- iv. To mobilize financial and in-kind resources through sponsorships, partnerships, and public donations to create breastfeeding-friendly workspaces across Kenya.
- v. To strengthen coordination among the government, civil society, and the private sector toward scaling up breastfeeding-friendly environments nationwide.

## Proposed Key Campaign Activities

Aligned with the Breastfeeding Run 2025's transformative vision, this section delineates the core operational activities essential for achieving each of the campaign's five strategic objectives. Structured by objective and mapped to responsible organisations, the tables below translate advocacy ambitions into actionable steps, ensuring cohesive execution across media, community engagement, logistics, partnerships, and implementation. These activities form the backbone of a coordinated, multi-sectoral effort to normalize breastfeeding, advance policy enforcement, secure legislative change, expand lactation infrastructure, and institutionalize sustainable partnerships for nationwide impact.

**Table: Proposed Activities of The Breastfeeding Run 2025**

**Estimated Budget: Shs100,000,000**

| Objective   | Key Activities   |
|---|--|
| The Breastfeeding Run Event Logistics   | Plan and execute The Breastfeeding Run 2025                    |
|   |  |
| To raise public awareness on the significance of exclusive breastfeeding and the urgency of institutional lactation support across Kenya. | Develop culturally resonant messaging on EBF benefits & stigma |
|   | Produce/disseminate testimonial videos from diverse mothers    |
|   | Organize community forums addressing taboos                    |
|   | Train CHWs/volunteers as breastfeeding champions               |
|   | Integrate stigma-busting messaging into all outreach           |
|   | Partner with religious leaders for supportive sermons          |
|   | Organize public "Latch-On" events to normalize breastfeeding   |
|   | Include advocacy materials in race kits                        |
|   |  |
| To promote broader understanding and enforcement of the Breast Milk Substitutes (Regulation and Control)                                  | Mobilize CHWs for BMS Act awareness & reporting                |
|   | Conduct workshops for county enforcement officers              |

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| Act (BMS Act) as a tool for protecting optimal infant feeding practices.   | Facilitate retailer compliance pledge drives                                |
|  | Launch a campaign on unethical marketing practices                          |
|  | Run social media "naming and shaming" of violators                          |
|  | Issue press releases on enforcement gaps/successes                          |
|  | Establish a public SMS/web violation reporting system                       |
|  | Track violations & enforcement actions                                      |
| To advocate for the passage and operationalization of the Breastfeeding Mothers Bill, 2024, particularly provisions relating to workplace accommodations.      | Target corporate sponsors for bill advocacy                                 |
|  | Mobilize mass petitions/signatures  |
|  | Organize constituency meetings with MPs                                     |
|  | Engage informal sector women's groups                                       |
|  | Secure high-profile bill endorsements for The Breastfeeding Run initiative. |
|  | Draft technical specs for workplace accommodations                          |
| To mobilize financial and in-kind resources through sponsorships, partnerships, and public donations to create breastfeeding-friendly workspaces across Kenya. | Develop lactation space sponsorship tiers                                   |
|  | Draft technical specs for workplace accommodations                          |
|  | Develop model workplace policy templates                                    |
|  | Secure county government matched funding                                    |
|  | Launch "Adopt a Lactation Space" public fundraising                         |
|  | Secure in-kind donations (furniture, equipment)                             |
|  | Finalize scalable lactation space specifications                            |
|  | Develop a rollout schedule across the country.                              |
|  | Coordinate procurement, installation & maintenance                          |
|  | Acknowledge space donors/ sponsors visibly and publicly.                    |
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|  | Convene structured partnership meetings with MOUs                           |

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| To strengthen coordination among the government, civil society, and the private sector toward scaling up breastfeeding-friendly environments nationwide. | Develop joint resource mobilization strategies      |
|  | Formalize CHW roles in monitoring/support           |
|  | Integrate partners into the lactation space rollout |
|  | Define joint accountability frameworks              |
|  | Track partnership activities/outputs                |
|  | Document partnership models in the final report     |
|  |   |

All project activities are structured within a defined three-phase timeline: pre-Run preparation (June – August 2025), execution on Run Day (August 2, 2025), and post-Run consolidation (September 2025 – April 2026), ensuring synchronized progress toward objectives. Crucially, key dependencies underpin this workflow: successful fundraising for breastfeeding-friendly workspaces (Objective IV) is essential to enable their implementation, while strategic media amplification directly fuels community engagement efforts. Underpinning these workflows, CAMFEB maintains rigorous governance through integrated Gantt charts and dashboards, enabling real-time monitoring and cross-organisational coordination. Fundamentally, the principles of gender inclusion, risk management, and sustainability are systematically embedded throughout every phase and activity of the initiative.

## Expected Results

Against the backdrop of Kenya’s persistent breastfeeding barriers, critically low workplace lactation access (<5%), weak enforcement of protective laws, and deeply rooted socio-cultural stigma, The Breastfeeding Run 2025 by CAMFEB translates its multi-level advocacy strategy into measurable outcomes. Grounded in an asset-based community development (ABCD) approach, these results leverage existing local strengths (CHWs, women’s groups, progressive institutions) to deliver tangible progress across five interconnected objectives. Each result directly addresses Kenya’s documented gaps, advancing SDGs 3, 5, and 8 by converting grassroots mobilization into infrastructure expansion, policy acceleration, enforcement accountability, norm transformation, and institutionalized partnerships. Together, they mark concrete steps toward the campaign’s ultimate vision: **A Kenya where no mother is forced to choose between her livelihood and her child’s right to thrive.**

**Table: Expected Results of The Breastfeeding Run 2025**

| Objective   | Key Expected Results  |
|---|---|
| To raise public awareness on the significance of exclusive breastfeeding and the urgency of institutional lactation support across Kenya.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased public knowledge: Measurable rise in awareness of EBF benefits (target: 70% of surveyed participants post-Run vs. baseline).</li> <li>• Reduced stigma: Higher observed comfort in public breastfeeding (e.g., 30% increase in "Latch-On" event participation) and decreased negative social media sentiment.</li> <li>• Amplified community voices: Strengthened networks of trained CHWs/volunteers (target: 500+ champions) leading ongoing dialogues, embedding norm-shifting within local structures (ABCD).</li> </ul> |
| To promote broader understanding and enforcement of the Breast Milk Substitutes (Regulation and Control) Act (BMS Act) as a tool for protecting optimal infant feeding practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced public vigilance: Functional violation reporting system operational (target: 200+ reports logged by Dec 2025).</li> <li>• Improved institutional compliance: Increased retailer adherence (target: 40% of engaged retailers sign compliance pledges) and documented enforcement actions by county officials.</li> <li>• Accountability momentum: Public dashboards tracking violations and enforcement, catalyzing sustained pressure for policy implementation (SDG 3, 8).</li> </ul>  |
| To advocate for the passage and operationalization of the Breastfeeding Mothers Bill, 2024, particularly provisions relating to workplace accommodations.                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accelerated legislative progress: Bill tabled/advanced in Parliament with demonstrable public support (e.g., 100,000+ petition signatures).</li> <li>• Employer readiness: Adoption of model workplace policies by key private/public entities (target: 20+ early adopters).</li> <li>• Cross-sector advocacy: High-profile endorsements (e.g., MPs, CEOs) secured during The Breastfeeding Run and beyond, translating grassroots mobilization into policy leverage (ABCD → SDG 5, 8).</li> </ul>                                     |
| To mobilize financial and in-kind resources through sponsorships, partnerships, and public donations to create breastfeeding-friendly workspaces across Kenya.                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tangible infrastructure expansion: across the country, directly addressing the &lt;5% access crisis.</li> <li>• Sustainable resourcing: Diversified funding secured (e.g., 30% county govt co-funding, corporate sponsorships, and public donations).</li> <li>• Demonstrated scalability: Standardized, low-cost space model validated, enabling replication beyond 2025 (SDG 3, 5, 8).</li> <li>• Resource synergy: Joint fundraising strategies yielding 20% increase in pooled resources vs. 2024.</li> </ul>                      |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutionalized sustainability: Documented partnership framework enabling nationwide scale-up of breastfeeding-friendly environments beyond the Run (ABCD → SDG 17).</li> </ul> |
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