

# Nutrition counseling for the HIV- exposed infant and family

# Counseling



What do we do when we counsel someone?

## Counseling



- A confidential dialogue between a person and a care provider aimed at enabling the person to cope with stress and make informed personal decisions in relation to HIV (WHO, 1994)
- Helping relationship, done through one-to-one communication specific to the needs of the individual
- Helps to explore options for clients to make informed decisions

## Counseling



- When you counsel a mother, you
  - Listen to her
  - Help her to understand the choices that she has to make
  - Help her decide what to do
  - Help her to develop confidence to carry out her decision

## Counseling



- More than advising
  - Advising implies that you *tell* her what she should do
- More than education and providing information
- Does not make a decision for a woman nor push her towards a certain decision

## Counseling skills



- Important skills in counseling include:
  - Using helpful, non-verbal communication
  - Asking open questions
  - Using responses and gestures which show interest
  - Reflecting back what the mother said
  - Empathizing - show that you understand how she feels
  - Avoiding words which sound judging

## Helpful non-verbal communication



- What kinds of non-verbal communication may make a woman feel uncomfortable and less willing to open up?
- What kinds of non-verbal communication may make a mother feel that you are interested in listening so that she finds it easy to talk?

## Asking open-ended questions



- Which of these are open-ended questions?
  - Is your baby feeding frequently?
  - How often does your baby feed?
  - Do you breastfeed your baby?
  - What are you feeding your baby?
- How do you think that open-ended questions help during counseling?

## Avoiding words that sound judging



- Do not ask
  - “Are you preparing your baby’s feeds properly?”
  - “Do you give your baby enough milk?”
    - \* How do you think a woman would respond when asked these questions?

## Counseling for infant feeding decisions



- When could or does infant feeding counseling take place?

## Counselling for infant feeding decisions



- When could or does infant feeding counseling take place?
  - Before a woman is pregnant
  - During pregnancy
  - Soon after baby is born
  - When baby is older
  - When mother is ill or has died

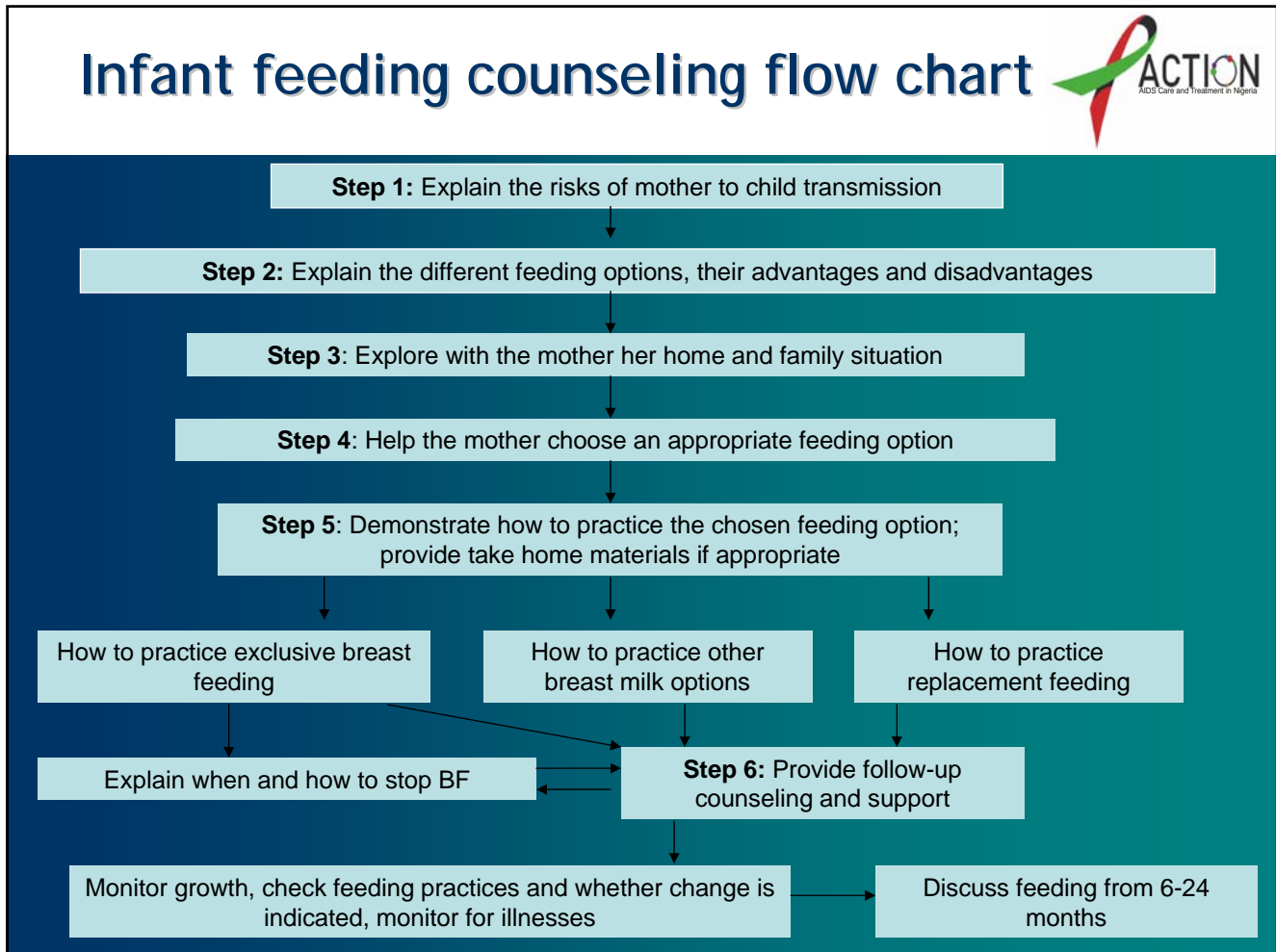
## The various infant feeding options

- What are the infant feeding options for a child under 6 months of age?

## The various infant feeding options

- What are the infant feeding options for a child under 6 months of age?
  - Exclusive breastfeeding (until AFASS)
  - Express and heat treat breast milk
  - Infant formula
  - Home-modified animal milk
  - Wet nursing (not recommended esp when HIV status of the breastfeeding woman is unknown)

# Infant feeding counseling flow chart



## Assessing a mother's situation

Question	Score = 2	Score = 3
What is your source of drinking water?	River, stream, pond, well, public stand pipe	Constant piped or bottled water
What is your type of toilet/latrine?	None or pit latrine, VIP latrine	Flush/water system
Can you afford to buy a month supply of formula (450g or 500g powder at Naira 650/tin)?	Can't have more than cost of 1 tin of BMS at a time; can only afford a week/2 weeks supply at a time	Assured of over 5500 Naira for BMS
Refrigerator?	No or available in neighborhood and accessible	Available in the house
Electricity supply?	None or less than 18 hr/day; yes but supply erratic	Constant or available > 18 hrs/day
Can you be able to boil water when preparing feeds?	Not possible or sometimes possible	Possible with no difficulty

## Assessing a mother's situation

Question	Score = 2	Score = 3
Do you have appropriate and clean utensils?	Unavailable utensils or cleaning is not always assured	Utensils available with no difficulty in cleaning
Would you be able to prepare feeds at night?	Not possible or sometimes possible or some difficulty	Possible with no difficulty
Are other family members (esp parents-in-law) aware of your HIV status?	No/Can't discuss/don't know/ living alone; only partner is aware	Partner and most of family aware
Will other family members support your choice of feeding the baby?	No/Can't discuss/don't know or only partner support	Assured support of partner and most other family members
Is your family willing to practically help with feeding this baby?	No/Can't discuss/don't know or only partner support	Assured practical help by partner and most others

**Total score < 22 = BF by mother or an HIV negative wet nurse but could consider stopping whenever AFASS criteria met.**

**Total score >=22: Replacement feeding or cup feeding with heat-treated breast milk**

## Summary



- In this presentation, we have:
  - Discussed general counseling principles
  - Discussed various infant feeding options that an HIV-infected woman/couple could choose from based on the individual situation
  - Discussed the steps for infant feeding decisions using the infant feeding counseling flow chart
  - Described how to assess a mother's situation to help her choose an appropriate infant feeding option