

# Association between Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices and Nutritional Status of Under-Two Children: Evidence from Nationally Representative Data of Five South Asian Countries

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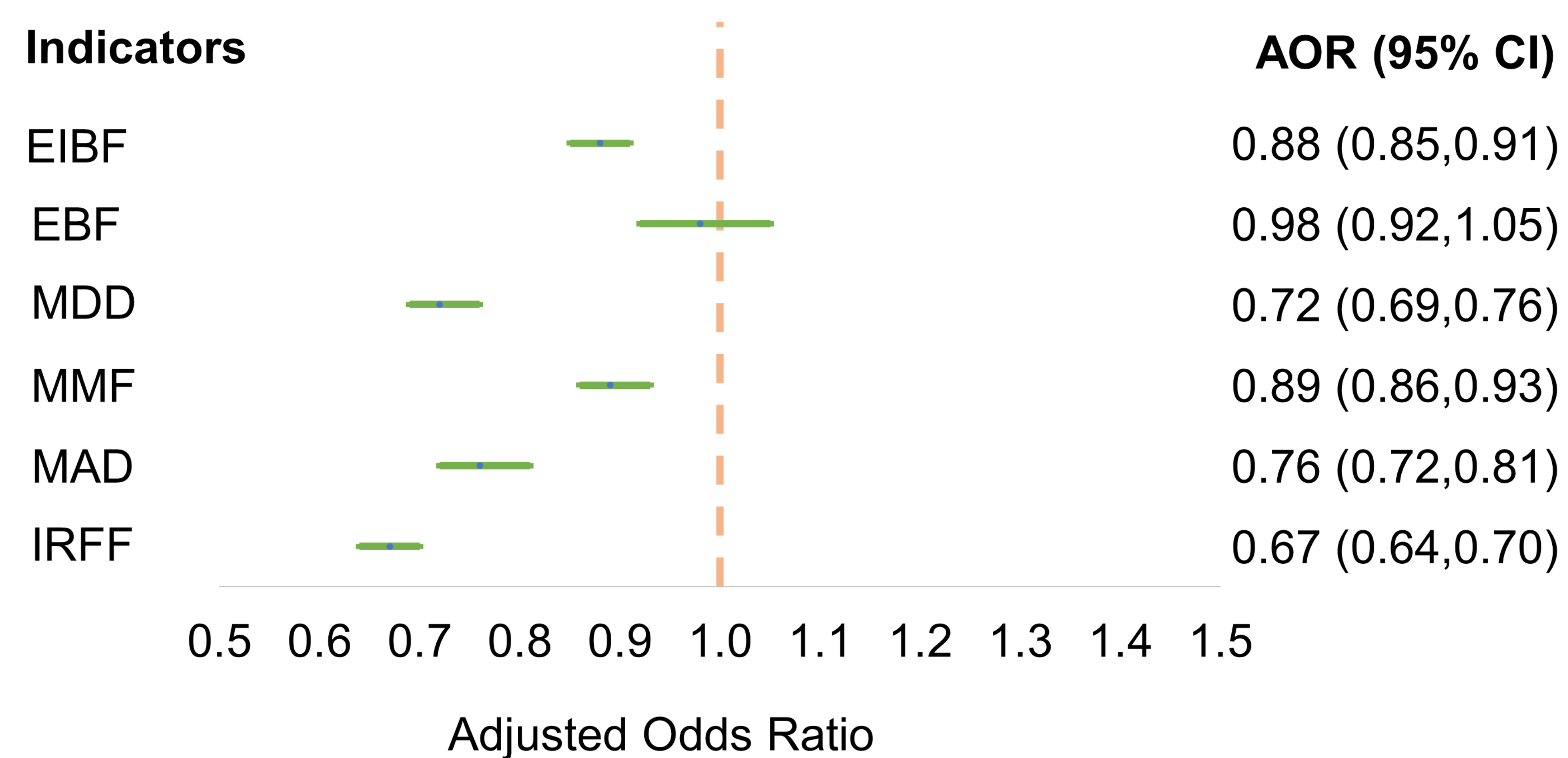
## Rational and objectives

The association between all World Health Recommended (WHO)'s recommended eight-core Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) indicators and child's nutritional status including stunting, wasting, and underweight are yet to be explored in South Asia (SA). We aimed to explore the association between WHO's eight-core IYCF indicators and nutritional status among under-two children in SA.

## Results

- Significantly lower odds were observed among children of mothers practiced early initiation of breastfeeding (EIBF), introduced solid/semisolid or soft foods within 6-23 months of child's age, met minimum dietary diversity (MDD) criteria, met minimum meal frequency (MMF) criteria minimum acceptable diet (MAD) and consumption of iron-rich or iron-fortified foods with stunting (Adjusted Odds Ratio, AOR 0.78 to 0.97), wasting (AOR 0.79 to 0.92) and underweight (AOR 0.69 to 0.90), respectively
- Similar association was observed in India. In Maldives and Nepal, lower odds of EIBF and exclusive breastfeeding (EBF), respectively with wasting were also observed. We detected significantly lower odds in EIBF (AOR 0.81; 95% CI: 0.67-0.98) and EBF (AOR 0.61; 95% CI: 0.40-0.90) with underweight in Bangladesh
- Similar lower odds were observed for EBF and MDD in Nepal

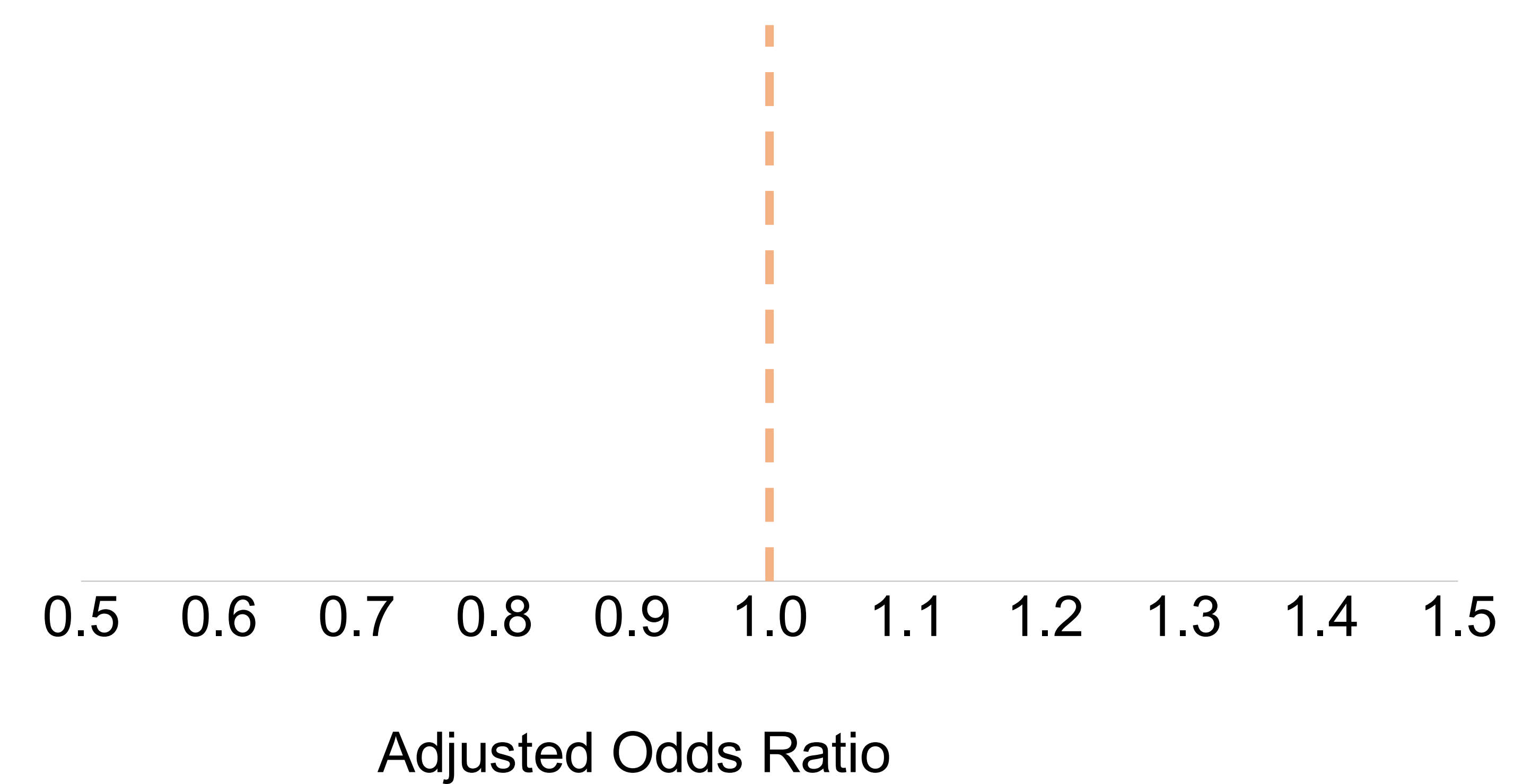
**Figure 3:** Association of IYCF indicators and underweight in South Asian under-five children



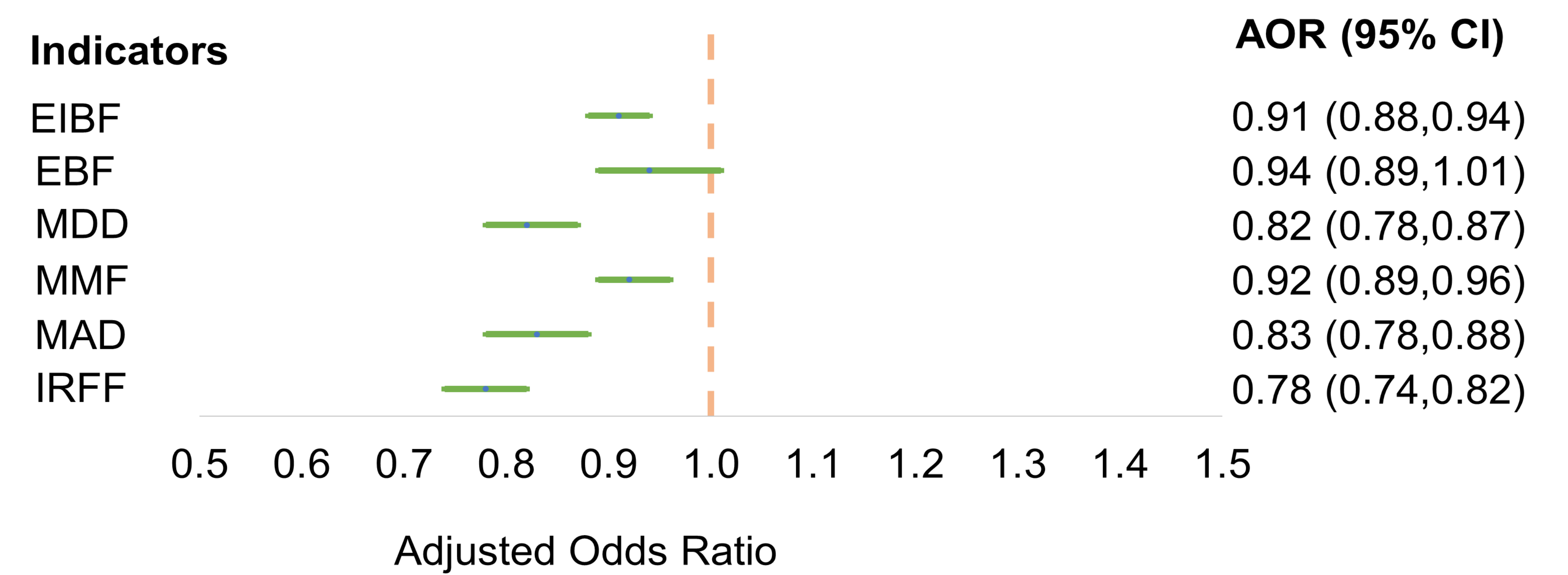
## Methods

We analyzed the most recent nationally representative Demographic and Health Survey data of five South Asian countries— Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Nepal, and Pakistan. Multiple binary logistic regression models were applied to explore the association between IYCF indicators and nutritional status.

**Figure 1:** Association of IYCF indicators and stunting in south Asian under-five children



**Figure 2:** Association of IYCF indicators and wasting in South Asian under-five children



## Implications

This study portrayed that interventions improving IYCF practices play an important role in improving the nutritional status of under-two children. The findings of this study might be directives for policymakers in SACs, to design interventions for improving IYCF practices which ultimately play role in improving the nutritional status.

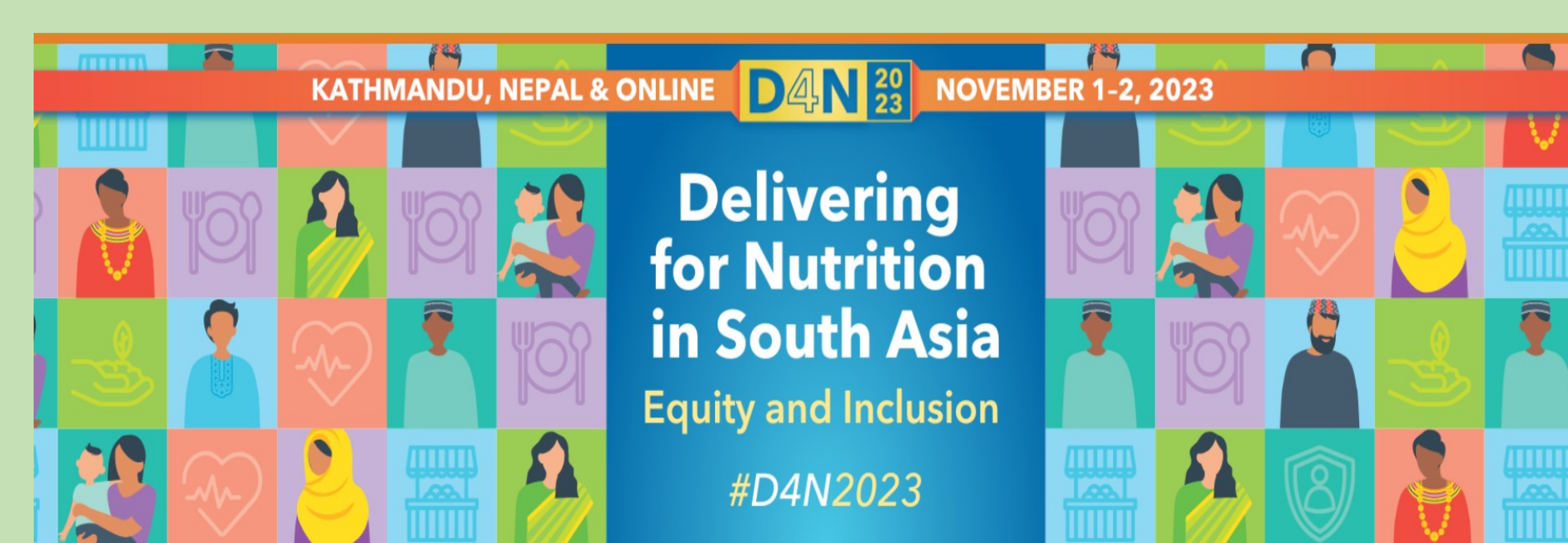
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EIBF=Early initiation of breastfeeding, EBF=Exclusive breastfeeding, MDD=Minimum Dietary Diversity, MMF=Minimum Meal Frequency, MAD=Minimum Acceptable Diet, IRFF=Iron Rich of Iron Fortified Foods

