**Why feeding of children under 24 months using a bottle with a nipple is not recommended in SSA**

By Rachael Nagaddya, 18th August 2025.

The WHO organization recommends avoiding feeding children under two years using a bottle with a nipple because it is linked to interference with optimal suckling behaviour and nipples are difficult to keep clean making them a route of transmission of pathogens. For example, the 2005 [“Guiding principles for feeding non-breastfed children 6-24 months of age”](https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9241593431) report showed that 35 percent of bottle teats in peri-urban Peru tested positive for E. Coli, which is an indicator of faecal contamination. In addition, bottle feeding is associated with the risk of developing incorrect relation between the teeth as well as the risk of overfeeding that is associated with more rapid weight gain during infancy.

Therefore, a lower percentage of children under two years of age who are using a bottle with a nipple, indicates that the country is closer to WHO recommendations. The most recent data shows that almost 11 percent of Uganda’s children below 24 months are fed using a bottle with a nipple. Although this is a relatively low percentage in comparison with South Africa’s 45 percent, it is higher than Burundi, the lowest ranking country.