



World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi)

# Assessment Tool



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## **WBTi UK Working Group**

<http://www.lcgb.org/wbti/>

### ***Coordinators***

Clare Meynell RM (rtd) IBCLC

01243512327

07584 160892

[claremeynell@gmail.com](mailto:claremeynell@gmail.com)

Helen Gray MPhil IBCLC

[helengray123@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:helengray123@yahoo.co.uk)

07973 262659

88 Drakefield Road

London SW17 8RR

## Indicator 1: National Policy, Programme and Coordination

**Key question:** *Is there a national infant and young child feeding/breastfeeding policy that protects, promotes and supports optimal infant and young child feeding and the policy is supported by a government programme? Is there a mechanism to coordinate like National infant and young child feeding committee and a coordinator for the committee ? (See Annex 1)*

### Background

The “Innocenti Declaration was adopted in 1990. It recommended all governments to have national breastfeeding committees and coordinators as established mechanisms to protect, promote and support breastfeeding in the country. World Summit for Children (2000) recommended all governments to develop national breastfeeding policies. The Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (2002) calls for an urgent action from all member states to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate a comprehensive policy on IYCF. The Innocenti Declaration on Infant and Young Child Feeding (2005) captures the renewed commitments made at this historic anniversary meeting and records the additional five operational targets that were identified as part of the ongoing global strategy on Infant and Young Child feeding including the WHA resolutions regarding IYCF. The Planning Guide for national implementation of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (2007) calls for implementation of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding into concrete focused national strategy, policy and action plans.

### Possible Sources of Information

- Most countries would have their National Plans of Action on Nutrition and/or National Plan of Action for the Child as a follow up to the UN Summit for Children.
- Apart from this, National Nutrition Policies and National Health Policies should accommodate Infant and Young Child Feeding.
- Many countries have taken action and already have established National Breastfeeding Committees. Minutes of this committee as well terms of reference of the committee would be quite useful.
- Many countries also have CRC meetings and minutes and reports of these meetings could be used.
- Discussions on implementation of the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding can be held at national level with the National Breastfeeding Coordinator, officials from the Ministries of Health, Planning, and/or Labour, government regulatory representatives, WHO, UNICEF, and country breastfeeding promotion groups like IBFAN. Find out and get written copies of whatever national policies cover infant and young child feeding.
- Other sources could be BFHI policy and programme, national legislation as a follow up to the *International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes* (The Code) and its implementation process, or reports of community based organizations on nutrition and health.

<i>Guidelines for scoring</i>	
<b>Criteria</b>	√ <i>Check all that apply</i>
1.1) A national infant and young child feeding/breastfeeding policy has been officially adopted/approved by the government	1
1.2) The policy recommended exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, complementary feeding to be started after six months and continued breastfeeding up to 2 years and beyond.	1
1.3) A national plan of action developed based on the policy	2
1.4) The plan is adequately funded	2
1.5) There is a National Breastfeeding Committee/ IYCF Committee	1
1.6) The national breastfeeding (infant and young child feeding) committee meets , monitors and reviews on a regular basis	2
1.7) The national breastfeeding (infant and young child feeding) committee links effectively with all other sectors like health, nutrition, information etc.	0.5
1.8) Breastfeeding Committee is headed by a coordinator with clear terms of reference, regularly communicating national policy to regional, district and community level.	0.5
<b>Total Score</b>	<b>___/10</b>

**Information Sources Used (please list):**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Conclusions** (Summarize which aspects of IYCF policy, program and coordination are appropriate; which need improvement and why; and any further analysis needed ):

**Gaps** (List gaps identified in the implementation of this indicator) :

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Recommendations** (List actions recommended to bridge the gaps):

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

### Policy issues<sup>1</sup>

***National governments should adopt comprehensive policies on infant and young child feeding that:***

- Promote infant and young child feeding practices consistent with international guidelines.
- Ensure functioning of a strong national committee and coordinator.
- Monitor trends and assess interventions and promotional activities to improve feeding practices.
- Provide technically sound and consistent messages through appropriate media and educational channels.
- Strengthen and sustain the Baby-friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) and fully integrate it within the health system.
- Provide health workers in health services and communities with the skills and knowledge necessary to provide counselling and support related to breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and HIV and infant feeding, and to fulfil their responsibilities under the *International Code of Marketing on Breast-milk Substitutes*.
- Strengthen pre-service education for health workers.
- Promote the development of community-based support networks to help ensure optimal infant and young child feeding to which hospitals can refer mothers on discharge.
- Formulate plans for ensuring appropriate feeding for infants and young children in emergency situations and other exceptionally difficult circumstances.
- Ensure that the *International Code of Marketing on Breast-milk Substitutes* and subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions are implemented within the country's legal framework and enforced.
- Promote maternity protection legislation that includes breastfeeding support measures for working mothers, including those employed both in the formal and informal economy.

***Policies on infant and young child feeding should be:***

- Officially adopted/approved by the government.
- Routinely distributed and communicated to those managing and implementing relevant programmes.
- Integrated into other relevant national policies (nutrition, family planning, integrated child health policies, etc.).

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<sup>1</sup> Summarized from the *WHO Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (I)*, pages 13–15.