

Policies and programmes: Indicators 1–10

Key gaps	Key recommendations	Score
Indicator 1 National policy, programme and coordination Is there a national infant and young child feeding strategy, a national coordinating committee and a national coordinator, as recommended in the <i>Global Strategy</i> ?		
a. No established UK-wide infant feeding (IF) group for sharing good practice. b. No national paid sustainable leadership as no IF committee or IF coordinator.	a. Welsh government to support establishing a high-level, sustainable UK-wide IF group for policy leads and special advisors in IF, to share good practice. b. Government to set up a national, sustainable, strategic IF committee, with multi-sectoral representation, coordinated by a high-level funded specialist lead.	4
Indicator 2 Baby Friendly Initiative Do all mothers have access to accredited Baby Friendly maternity care?		
Encouragement but no mandate or dedicated funding to implement the Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) nationally, and no time-bound expectation.	Government to mandate and fully fund time-bound implementation and maintenance of the BFI across all health boards.	6.5
Indicator 3 International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes Are the provisions of the International Code and subsequent World Health Assembly Resolutions enacted in national legislation and fully enforced?		
The <i>Code</i> is not fully implemented in Wales, and there is no enforcement of the UK Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula and Regulations.	Government to support improvements to the current EU Directive and strengthening of the Regulations. The responsible authorities to take coordinated action to enforce the Regulations.	6
Indicator 4 Maternity protection Do women have adequate paid maternity leave and breastfeeding breaks?		
a. No legally required provision for breastfeeding breaks or suitable facilities in workplaces, educational institutions and the judicial system. b. Access to employment tribunals limited by high fees.	a. Government to legislate for reasonable breastfeeding breaks and suitable facilities for breastfeeding/expressing in workplaces, educational institutions and the judicial system. b. Government to ensure that tribunal access is available to women from all income brackets.	6.5
Indicator 5 Health professional training Are all health professionals who work with mothers and babies adequately trained to support breastfeeding?		
a. UK Most pre-registration training for healthcare practitioners (HCPs) who work with mothers, infants and young children has many gaps in the high-level standards and curricula, unless it is BFI accredited. b. Infant and young child feeding (IYCF) in-service training optional except for midwives and health visitors in health boards working towards/with BFI accreditation. c. IF leads sometimes do not have an IF qualification.	a. Institutions responsible for relevant pre-registration training standards and curricula to set mandatory minimum standards for core knowledge on breastfeeding and young child feeding for HCPs. These to align with World Health Organization (WHO)/BFI standards. b. Implementation of BFI standards across all relevant healthcare facilities to ensure minimum levels of in-service training in IYCF, including separate basic standards for paediatricians/GPs. c. Health boards to require IF leads to have an IF qualification.	5.5
Indicator 6 Community-based support Do all mothers have access to skilled breastfeeding support from health professionals and others in the community?		
Variation nationally in antenatal and postnatal provision of breastfeeding education and support, individually and in groups. Also, little integration of community services.	Commissioners to ensure there is a range of integrated postnatal services that include voluntary sector breastfeeding support, meet local needs and provide clear access to specialist support.	8
Indicator 7 Information support Is there a comprehensive national information, education and communication strategy, with accurate information on infant and young child feeding at every level?		
No implementation of an information, education and communication strategy.	Government to implement an IYCF information, education and communication strategy, free from commercial influence.	7
Indicator 8 Infant feeding and HIV Are national policies and programmes to support HIV+ mothers in their feeding decisions supported by up-to-date evidence?		
Misinformation on HIV and IF is widespread, and HCPs/community workers may not receive training.	Train all HCPs/community workers on up-to-date WHO and British HIV Association recommendations on HIV and IF.	8.5
Indicator 9 Infant and young child feeding during emergencies Are guidelines in place to provide protection to infants and young children in case of emergency?		
No national strategy addressing IYCF in emergencies.	Government to develop a national strategy on IYCF in emergencies, integrated into existing emergency-preparedness plans.	0
Indicator 10 Monitoring and evaluation Are monitoring and evaluation data regularly collected and used to improve infant and young child feeding practices?		
Current data collection is incomplete and too limited in scope.	Government to mandate additional routine data collection beyond 6 months and incorporate into standard midwifery and health-visiting services.	5

Scores are out of 10: 0-3.5 4-6.5 7-9 >9

Subtotal 57/100

What is the WBTi?

The World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) is a collaborative national assessment of the implementation of key policies and programmes from the WHO's *Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding*. Unlike other assessments, the WBTi brings together the main agencies and organisations involved in aspects of IYCF in a particular country to work together to collect information, identify gaps and generate recommendations for action. This is the first WBTi assessment for the UK; the process is repeated every 3–5 years in order to track trends.

WBTi UK Core Group members

Association of Breastfeeding Mothers (ABM)
 Baby Feeding Law Group (BFLG)
 Baby Milk Action
 Best Beginnings
 Breastfeeding Network (BfN)
 Child and Maternal Health Observatory (CHIMAT)
 Department of Health
 First Steps Nutrition
 Institute of Health Visiting (iHV)
 Lactation Consultants of Great Britain (LCGB)
 La Leche League GB (LLLGB)
 Maternity Action
 Northern Ireland infant feeding lead
 NCT
 National Infant Feeding Network (NIFN)
 Public Health England (PHE)
 Scotland Maternal and Infant Nutrition Coordinator
 Start4Life
 Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative

Feeding practices: Indicators 11–15

Indicator 11 Early initiation of breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth	60%	9
Indicator 12 Mean percentage of exclusive breastfeeding for first 6 months	13%	6
Indicator 13 Median duration of breastfeeding	2 weeks	3
Indicator 14 Bottle feeding: percentage of babies of 0–12 months fed with bottle	88%	3
Indicator 15 Complementary feeding: percentage of babies receiving solids by 8 months	98%	10

Scores are out of 10: 0–3.5 4–6.5 7–9 >9 **Subtotal 31/50**

Feeding practices scores are calculated using WHO definitions and the data are drawn mainly from the 2010 Infant Feeding Survey.

Total score **88/150**

Committee on the Rights of the Child recommendations

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child is the body of 18 independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by its state parties. The UK is a signatory to the Convention and was last assessed in June 2016. The Committee recommends the following:

- Systematically collect data on food security and nutrition for children, including those relevant to breastfeeding, overweight and obesity, in order to identify root causes of child food insecurity and malnutrition.
- Regularly monitor and assess effectiveness of policies and programmes on food security and nutrition of children, including school meal programmes and food banks, as well as programmes addressing infants and young children.
- Promote, protect and support breastfeeding in all policy areas where breastfeeding has an impact on child health, including obesity, certain non-communicable diseases and mental health, and fully implement the *International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*.

Abbreviations: **BFI** Baby Friendly Initiative **HCP** healthcare practitioner **IF** infant feeding **IYCF** infant and young child feeding **UK** United Kingdom **WBTi** World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative **WHO** World Health Organization