

International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN)

142th session of the Executive Board



Agenda Item: 4.6.1 Comprehensive implementation plan on maternal, infant and young child nutrition: biennial report

Implementing supports for breastfeeding is vital for progress in carrying out the comprehensive plan. Progress remains slow with only 40% of infants under 6 months exclusively breastfed. Thus 60% are not meeting the recommendations of the WHO GS for IYCF. Additionally we are concerned that sustained breastfeeding to 2 years or beyond is not included in the global target. IBFAN's World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative which tracks policies and practices in over 84 countries to date reports an average rate of breastfeeding initiation within the 1st hour at just above 50%. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months to be 38%, and the median duration of breastfeeding to be 15.5 months. On policies that are needed to support mothers, IBFAN's monitoring found that only 21 out of 84 countries have a policy that includes infant feeding in emergencies yet this need is increasing. Of 84 countries only 10% provide more than 26 weeks of maternity leave. Women in the informal sector, which form 90% of the world's working women, have no maternity protection. Only 46 countries reported having some breastfeeding and child care facilities at work. For the elimination of commercial interference in IYCF through the implementation of the International Code, IBFAN since 2015 has worked with 77 countries on implementing some or all of its provisions and of 2016, 40 countries have implemented most of the Code. We are pleased to have worked with recent entrants – Armenia, Bolivia, Kosovo, Kuwait and Vietnam and have witnessed the opposition from baby food industries in their struggle to achieve this. Additionally another 31 have partially implemented the Code and 56 others, including EU members only some aspects as regulations, while 12 have voluntary measures. IBFAN does have concerns regarding the proposed revisions to the BFHI, however we are pleased that WHO has increased work on Code implementation through NETCODE and to make significant contributions to its independent monitoring work.

Patti Rundall, prundall@babymilkaction.org +447786523493

Alessia Bigi alessia.biggi@gifa.org

Elisabeth Sterken: esterken@infactcanada.ca