

Proposed Alternative WHA 71 Decision Point for Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition

The Seventy-first World Health Assembly, having considered the Secretariat report on maternal, infant and young child nutrition, decided to:

- (1) Acknowledge the importance of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life, continued breastfeeding, and nutrient-rich, age-appropriate complementary foods for older infants and young children, as critical for child survival, health, nutrition and development, as well as maternal health;
- (2) Reaffirming the need to promote exclusive breastfeeding practices in the first 6 months of life, and the continuation of breastfeeding up to 2 years and beyond, and recognizing the need to promote optimal complementary feeding practices for children from ages 6–36 months based on WHO¹ and FAO dietary guidelines and in accordance with national dietary guidelines, which contributes substantially to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals on nutrition and health, and is a core element of health care;
- (3) Urge the development of evidence-based national dietary guidelines, responses, strategies or plans to improve infant and young child nutrition, including breastfeeding, in routine and in emergency settings;
- (4) Celebrate World Breastfeeding Week as an official public health event, according to national context;
- (5) Request the Director-General to:
 - a. Provide, upon request, technical support to Member States in implementation, monitoring, and the assessment of recommendations, such as the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, to support infant and young child feeding, including in emergencies, and to review national experiences with implementing such recommendations and mobilization of resources to build the evidence base on their effectiveness and consider changes, if needed;
 - b. Support Member States on establishing nutrition targets and intermediate milestones for maternal, infant and young child nutrition indicators, consistent with the timeframe of the Sustainable Development Goals (2030);
 - c. Continue providing adequate technical support to Member States, upon request, in assessing and evaluating their maternal, infant and young child nutrition policies and programs, including capacity for high-quality data collection and analyses;
 - d. Report to the Health Assembly, through the Executive Board, periodically on progress made in protection, promotion, and support of breastfeeding, as part of existing reporting on maternal, infant and young child nutrition.

¹ Pan American Health Organization, World Health Organization. Guiding principles for complementary feeding of the breastfed child. Washington (DC): Pan American Health Organization; 2003; Guiding principles for feeding non-breastfed children 6–24 months of age. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2005.