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In reply please
refer to:

Your reference:

Dr Arun Gupta, MD FIAP
Managing Director
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India

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Dear Dr Gupta,

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recognizes the value of breastfeeding and optimal infant and young child feeding practices to contribute to women's and children's health, nutrition, development and survival, as well as its role in prevention of non-communicable diseases. WHO is committed to the World Health Assembly resolution of 2012 that endorsed the "Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition: Comprehensive Implementation Plan" having set 6 nutrition targets by 2025. One of the target is to increase rates of exclusive breastfeeding from 38% in 2012 to 50%.

WHO is also committed to scaling up interventions to improve infant and young child nutrition in an integrated manner with the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding and recognises that breastfeeding makes substantial contributions to the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. WHO is further committed to its 13th General Programme of Work that explicitly supports exclusive breastfeeding.

The recent launch of the Global Breastfeeding Collective, led by WHO and UNICEF has called for seven priority actions at the country level to achieve the WHA targets. One indicator of national action on the seven priorities is the percent of countries that have completed an assessment of policies and programmes using the IBFAN World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) tool in the past five years.

International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) has pioneered the development of the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi), which mobilises alliance building and partnerships at the national level to call for strengthening action on infant and young child feeding based on a national analysis. WHO supports IBFAN's plans to expand WBTi to 165 countries over the next five years. This work is reflected in their official plan of action 2017-2019 registered with WHO.

WHO believes that this national push will help achieve the WHA target for increasing exclusive breastfeeding rates to 50% by 2025. WHO would be glad to work with IBFAN on this project, participating in planning and review and supporting implementation both regionally and nationally.

We wish IBFAN success in this endeavor!

Yours sincerely,

Dr Francesco Branca
Director
Department of Nutrition for Health
and Development

