

Australia: Report Card 2018

25.5

The assessment of implementation of policies and programs from the World Health Organization's Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (GSIYCF).

Policies and programs: Indicators 1–10

*IBFAN Asia Guidelines for WBTi for rating individual indicators 1 to 15 are as follows: 0–3 is rated Red, 4–6 is rated Yellow, 7–9 is rated Blue and more than 9 is rated Green.

Score out of 10

1. National policy, program and coordination <i>Concerns national policy, plan of action, funding and coordination issues.</i>	0
2. Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (in Australia: Baby Friendly Health Initiative, BFHI) <i>Concerns percentage BFHI hospitals, training, standard monitoring, assessment and reassessment systems.</i>	5.5
3. Implementation of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (WHO Code) and all subsequent World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolutions <i>Concerns implementation of the Code as law, monitored and enforced.</i>	1.5
4. Maternity protection <i>Concerns paid maternity leave, paid breastfeeding breaks, national legislation encouraging workplace accommodation for breastfeeding and/or childcare and ratification of ILO MPC No 183.</i>	6
5. Health and nutrition care systems <i>Concerns health provider schools and pre-service education programs, standards and guidelines for mother-friendly childbirth procedures and in-service training programs.</i>	2.5
6. Mother support and community outreach: community-based support for the pregnant and breastfeeding mother <i>Concerns the availability of and women's access to skilled counselling services on infant and young child feeding during pregnancy and after childbirth.</i>	5
7. Information support <i>Concerns public education and communication strategy for improving infant and young child feeding that is actively implemented at local levels.</i>	0
8. Infant and young child feeding (IYCF) and HIV <i>Concerns policy and programs to address infant feeding and HIV issue and on-going monitoring of the effects of interventions on infant feeding practices and health outcomes for mothers and infants.</i>	3.5
9. Infant and young child feeding during emergencies (IYCF-E) <i>Concerns policy and program on IYCF-E and material on IYCF-E integrated into pre-service and in-service training for emergency management.</i>	0.5
10. Mechanisms of monitoring and evaluation system <i>Concerns monitoring, management and information systems as part of the planning and management process.</i>	1

Feeding practices: Indicators 11–15

Requires national data that is no more than five years old and meets the WHO Indicators for assessing IYCF practices.

	Data	Score out of 10
Early initiation of breastfeeding within 1 hour of birth	No available data	0/10
Mean percentage of babies 1–<6 months exclusively breastfed	No available data	0/10
Median duration of breastfeeding	No available data	0/10
Bottle-feeding: percentage of babies 0–12 months fed with a bottle	No available data	0/10
Complementary feeding: percentage of babies receiving solids by 8 months	No available data	0/10
Subtotal		0/50

Subtotal:
25.5/100

Total score = 25.5/150

The full report is available at www.wbtiaus.com or wbtiaus@gmail.com

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Overall gaps

Australia has no national policy, national committee or nationally-coordinated programs that protect, promote and support breastfeeding in line with global recommendations for exclusive breastfeeding, adequate maternity leave or guidelines that refer to the current research for breastfeeding, including for HIV/AIDS and IYCF-E.

The integration of breastfeeding support between health care systems and the community through BFHI accreditation and peer-to-peer support for breastfeeding and IYCF is not currently recognised, adequately funded or prioritised.

The current Marketing in Australia of Infant Formula: Manufacturers and Importers Agreement (MAIF) fails to meet Australia's responsibilities to enact, monitor and enforce the WHO Code and all subsequent WHA resolutions regarding health and nutrition claims for foods for infants and young children (0–36 months).

There is no current pre-service training requirement for breastfeeding and IYCF skills and knowledge for all health professionals who can reasonably be expected to care for women and/or infants in their professional role.

There is no routine collection of nationally representative data measuring breastfeeding and IYCF practices that align with the global indicators to provide guidance that can be used for monitoring and evaluation of breastfeeding and IYCF practices, nor is the value of women's care work, such as breastfeeding included in official statistics.

Overall recommendations

That the Australian Government enact, adequately fund and effectively communicate a national breastfeeding and IYCF policy and associated guidelines to adopt global recommendations for exclusive breastfeeding, adequate maternity leave, and international recommendations on breastfeeding and HIV/AIDS and IYCF-E policies.

That the Australian Government establish a national breastfeeding and IYCF advisory committee to include government and non-government stakeholders free from conflict of interest and tasked with coordinating programs, influencing legislation and ensuring community education of breastfeeding and current IYCF practices.

That the Australian Government support the integration of breastfeeding and IYCF services between the health care system and community through establishment and funding of an independent, WHO Code-compliant body to administer, monitor and expand BFHI, and ongoing adequate funding of trained peer-to-peer breastfeeding counselling services.

That the Australian Government enact and enforce legislation or other effective measures to implement and enforce the WHO Code and all subsequent WHA resolutions.

That all health professionals who can be reasonably expected to care for women and/or infants and young children be required to complete pre-service and continuing education on breastfeeding and IYCF.

That the breastfeeding and IYCF advisory committee be tasked with working with relevant agencies to establish a sustainable and standardised national data collection system that uses current global breastfeeding indicators and includes timely reporting, and to establish a mechanism to measure the unpaid care work of mothers.

Partner organisations

Core group

- Australian Breastfeeding Association
- Lactation Consultants of Australia and New Zealand

Reference Group

- UNICEF Australia
- Breastfeeding Coalition Tasmania
- Childbirth and Parenting Educators of Australia
- South East Qld Breastfeeding Coalition

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IBFAN
International Breastfeeding Federation

WBTi
World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi)

The World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) is IBFAN Asia's flagship. WBTi is being implemented as an integral part of two projects "Global Breastfeeding Initiative for Child Survival" (GBICS), in partnership with the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and Global Proposal for Coordinated Action of IBFAN and WABA: Protecting, Promoting and Supporting Breastfeeding through Human Rights and Gender Equality" in partnership with Swedish International Development Agency (Sida).