

## Media Briefing

### The World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) Congratulates Bangladesh on achieving Rank No. 1 and the “Green” status in Supporting Breastfeeding Women

*Bangladesh scores 91.5/100 on 10 parameters of policy and programmes in support of breastfeeding women, and demonstrated / improved breastfeeding practices.*

**New Delhi, August 23, 2020:** The World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) congratulates Bangladesh for having achieved the status of “Green” Nation in supporting breastfeeding women along with Sri Lanka. Only 2 countries out of 98 have achieved this so far.

[Bangladesh also gets the Rank No. 1 by scoring 91.5 out of 100.](#) This is based on its performance on ten indicators of policies and programmes the WBTi uses to color- code and rank countries. In an ascending order of performance WBTi color codes are Red, Yellow, Blue and Green.

“Bangladesh who scored 91.5/100 earned a Green color code, which implies best level of performance. This is the result of persistent efforts since 2005 to pursue improvements. Bangladesh demonstrated high level commitment led by it’s Prime Minister, towards health and nutrition of mothers and babies” says Dr. Arun Gupta the global coordinator of *WBTi*.

“MOHFW is actively supporting the Breastfeeding actions on a continuous basis and looks for further development of IYCF in Bangladesh. In the latest report of 2020, several partners together did this assessment and we scored Green code in 5 out of 10 indicators, other 5 are in blue and we made progress from our last report of 2015 when Bangladesh got 86 out of 100. We do want to get Green in other indicators as well. ” says Dr. S K Roy Chairperson of Bangladesh breastfeeding Foundation, who led this effort of assessment.

Experts at the Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India in Delhi developed the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative ([WBTi](#)) and launched it worldwide. So far 125 countries have been involved and trained to do this assessment in WBTi and 98 have completed assessments and reported. Many have done it twice or thrice. [First 10 countries include](#) Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Cuba, Gambia, Bolivia, Turkey, El Salvador, Niger, Kenya, and Kuwait. India stands at 79, Nepal at 39 and Maldives at 19; three other countries in South Asia.

The WBTi assists countries to assess and analyse gaps, and then calls for action to bridge the gaps. It has led to development of a [data repository of policy& programmes](#). Alongside, the WBTi portal provides scoring, ranking, color-

coding of the country performance on 10 indicators of policies and programmes that it measures. The WBTi makes this information available to everyone. The WBTi process includes re-assessment every 3-5 years as an integral part to check the trends in country. It feeds into the [Global Breastfeeding Collective's measurements](#) of its seven policy asks, as "Last Date of WBTi Assessment"

According to the findings of the ["Making A Difference- An Evaluation Report](#) of the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) in Mobilising National Actions on Breastfeeding and IYCF: 2020, it has been seen that more countries do re-assessment the better are the improvements in policy and programmes/services to women to remove the barriers they face while breastfeeding. Gains included in infant feeding during emergencies, BFHI and funding and the report showed if policy scores improved it was associated with improved practices.

What WBTi *does is to* raise awareness of gaps and generate action to ask the governments and employers to bridge the gaps where needed.

The WBTi tools generate color- coded simple graphics, which are easily understandable by the policymakers to identify and prioritize areas for investment. For example if an indicator is in 'Red' it needs greater attention. Thus the WBTi comes in handy to strengthen a country's policy implementation and services.

[Inadequate breastfeeding costs the global economy almost \\$1 billion each day.](#) This loss is due to lost productivity and healthcare costs. In addition it saves 700,000 lives annually. Breastfeeding majorly benefits child health, women's health and prevents non -communicable diseases. This can only be achieved through galvanizing national actions to protect, and support every pregnant and lactating woman.

[41% of infants less than 6 months of age are exclusively breastfed, far short of the 2030 global target of 70%.](#)

[According to WHO and UNICEF](#) every pregnant and breastfeeding woman and the baby require an enabling environment in order to begin breastfeeding within an hour of birth, breastfeed exclusively for 6 months and continue breastfeeding along with adequate foods till 2 years or beyond. The Global Breastfeeding Collective led by UNICEF and WHO clearly calls for 7 policy actions that include spending of about US\$ 5 per child born on activities related to breastfeeding protection and promotion while maternity protection and leaves require additional finding support.

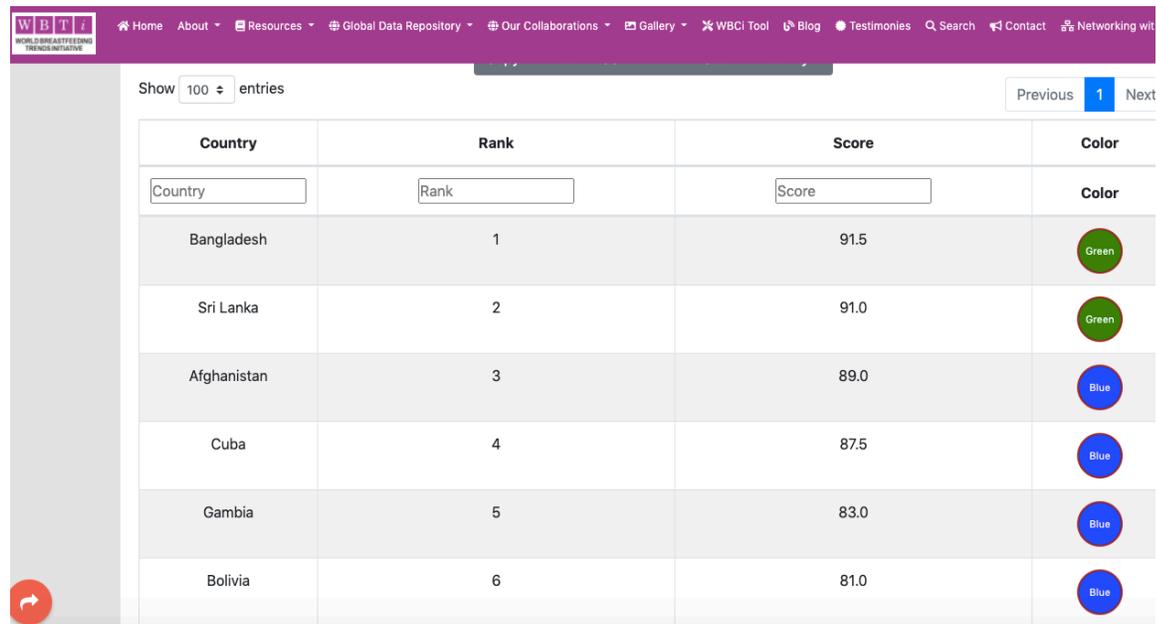
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Country	Rank	Score	Color
Bangladesh	1	91.5	Green
Sri Lanka	2	91.0	Green
Afghanistan	3	89.0	Blue
Cuba	4	87.5	Blue
Gambia	5	83.0	Blue
Bolivia	6	81.0	Blue