

## PURPOSE

1. To provide critical information to governments, needed to bridge gaps in policy and programmes in order to increase rates of breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding practices and to use the WBTi tools to galvanise action at country level.
2. To maintain a global data repository of information on policies in programmes related to breastfeeding and IYCF.

## VISION

The WBTi envisages that all countries create an enabling environment for women to be successful in breastfeeding their babies optimally at home, health facilities or at work places. The WBTi aspires to be a trusted leader to motivate policy makers and programme managers in countries, to use the global data repository of information on breastfeeding and IYCF policies and programmes. WBTi envisions to serve as a knowledge platform for programme managers, researchers, policy makers and breastfeeding advocates across the globe.

## MISSION

WBTi's mission is to reach all countries to facilitate assessment and tracking of IYCF policies and programmes through mobilising local partnerships without conflicts of interest and building a data repository for advocacy.

## ETHICAL POLICY

The WBTi works on 7 principles of IBFAN and does not seek or accept funds, donation, grants or sponsorship from manufacturers or distributors and the front organisations of breastmilk substitutes, complementary foods, infant and young child feeding related products like breast pumps, or from any organization that has conflicts of interest.

*WBTi global data repository has information from 100 countries on policies and programmes related to breastfeeding and infant and young child feeding.*



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# The World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi)

*Galvanising action and  
making a global data repository  
(breastfeeding & infant and young  
child feeding- policies and programmes)*

**W B T i**  
WORLD BREASTFEEDING  
TRENDS INITIATIVE

# INTRODUCTION

The Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI) and International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) launched the World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) in 2004, with a goal of assisting countries to assess the status of and benchmark the progress in implementation of the *Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding* in a standard way. The WBTi assesses the strengths and weaknesses in 10 indicators of policy and programmes on breastfeeding and IYCF and documents gaps. It builds and maintains a Global Data Repository on policies and programmes of all countries that is quickly retrievable. It generates reports and report cards for advocacy. Further, it stimulates local action to bridge the gaps. It brings multiple sectors together to build consensus on findings and recommendations. It also colour codes and scores based on the performance. The WBTi has 940 partners/organisations in 100 countries and has shown positive impact.

# Why WBTi

Despite the evidence that breastfeeding saves 823,000 under five child deaths annually, provides major benefits to women health, and is valuable to national productivity and economy, only about 1 in 2 infants below 6 months are exclusively breastfed. Even as rate of exclusive breastfeeding has reached 48% from 38% in 2012, lot more needs to be done.

Inadequate attention to policy and programmes, that help women remove barriers to successful breastfeeding at home, health facilities or at work places and infant and young child feeding practices, are the root cause of sub-optimal breastfeeding and complementary feeding.

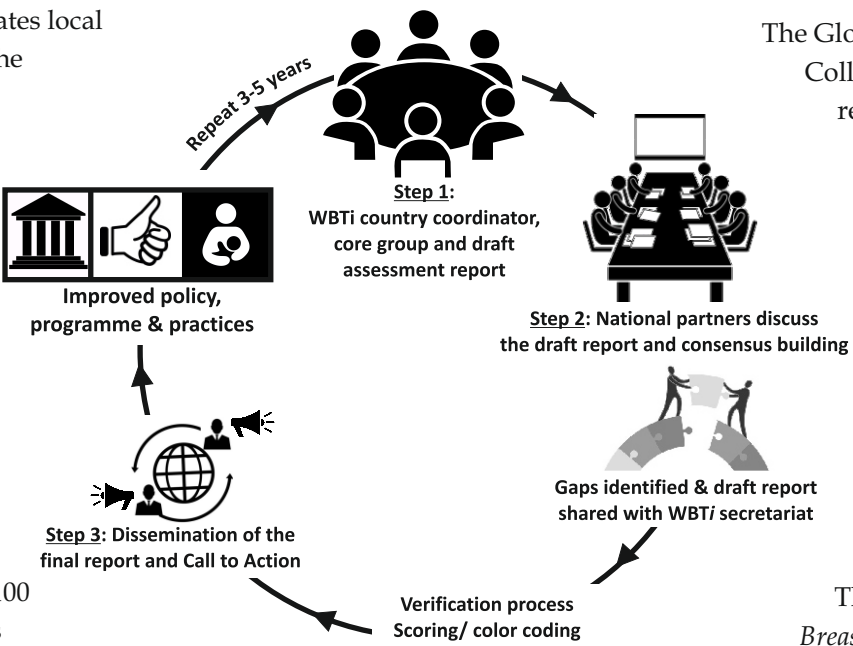


Fig: WBTi Assessment Process

The Global Breastfeeding Collective has set a target to reach 70% by 2030, to which all nations need to contribute. The WBTi provides a useful tool to assess how countries are fairing, and what stands out as a gap. Use of this information helps to galvanise action to achieve the targets at country level.

The recently launched *Global Breastfeeding Collective* led by W.H.O. and UNICEF, has

recognised conducting a WBTi assessment every five years. Further, it has set a target that at least 75 percent countries of the world should do their WBTi assessment by 2030.



# STEPS for WBTi Assessment

- Create a core group with diverse partners that include government departments, UN, civil society, health professionals and experts without *conflicts of interest* at country level
- Conduct the national assessment
- Discuss the gaps, build consensus and develop action plan to bridge them
- Develop country report and report cards and use these to advocate for increased funding of policy and programmes
- Repeat assessment after 3-5 years to study trends and advocate for changes still needed.

# TESTIMONIES

“WBTi has shown progressive trend over the four assessments.... due to WBTi, IYCF policy and strategy was developed and approved by Ministry of Public Health, Government of Afghanistan..”

Dr. Mohammad Hamayoun Ludin  
*Director of Public Nutrition Department, Ministry of Public Health, Afghanistan*

“The World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi) helps countries to assess their breastfeeding programmes and policies and create an action plan to address any gaps. Only 7% of countries have completed a WBTi assessment in the last five years, indicating inadequate programme evaluation worldwide... By 2030, the Collective aims to increase these percentages to 75%.”

Global Breastfeeding Scorecard 2023  
*UNICEF -WHO*