

Religious Institutions

- Is breastfeeding understood and supported by religious leaders? If so, which ones?
- How does the institution encourage breastfeeding support groups? Does it lend its space or help organise meetings?
- Are breastfeeding women made to feel welcome at religious services?

What we know...

- ✓ *Breastfeeding is approved as a family planning method in many cultures and religions. In Buddhist tradition, the father is responsible for providing the best nutrition for the mother while she is breastfeeding. The Quran specifies that a baby be breastfed for two years and that the health of the mother be a priority in the family.*

Government

- Is there a national breastfeeding committee?
- Does the Ministry of Health have any policies regarding breastfeeding?
- Do welfare mothers receive support for breastfeeding in the form of extra food?

What we know...

- ✓ *The Innocenti Declaration called upon all governments to appoint a national breastfeeding coordinator and to establish a "multisectoral national breastfeeding committee composed of representatives from relevant government departments, non-governmental organisations and health professional associations".*
- ✓ *The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes requires that there be no words or pictures idealising artificial feeding, including pictures of infants on labels of products.*
- ✓ *In India, one of 24 countries to have implemented the Code, the Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods Act came into effect in 1993 and aims to regulate distribution and promotion of these products to ensure they do not interfere with breastfeeding.*

Work Place

- How mother-friendly is the work place?
- Is there an on-site or nearby creche?
- Are women allowed breaks for breastfeeding?
- Are clean and private facilities available for women who want to express milk?

What we know...

- ✓ *The International Labour Office's minimum standards require 12 weeks of maternity leave with cash benefits amounting to at least 66% of previous earnings, prohibition of dismissal during maternity leave, and once a woman has returned to work, two half-hour breastfeeding breaks during each working day. The 1990 'Innocenti Declaration' and 1995 'Platform for Action' from the UN World Conference on Women, called on all governments to protect the breastfeeding rights of working women.*
- ✓ *Employers in countries such as Guatemala, Swaziland and Mauritius have set up creches for breastfed babies setting an example to other employers to become mother-friendly work places.*

For further investigation, please contact the WABA Secretariat for details of the Global Participatory Action Research (GLOPAR) Project.

ANALYSIS

ONCE YOU HAVE SURVEYED various sectors of the community using the sample questions, it is time to take a look at the responses. Now is also the time to begin asking the questions why? Or why not? Expand the questions you have posed in the assessment stage to more analytical questions. For example: Why is infant feeding largely ignored in high school biology classes? Or, why has the local newspaper relegated breastfeeding to the family pages instead of to the science or health sections? Or, is there a way for women to breastfeed at the local factory? Or, could the community centre provide space for a weekly mother-support group meeting?

These questions will most likely inspire discussion, and this discussion will begin to point you towards specific actions that will address the needs and gaps that you have uncovered.

ACTION

THE ACTIONS YOU PLAN should link directly back to the Assessment phase, and propose solutions to problems uncovered through the Analysis. Actions will be different in every community, based on the area of most apparent need, and also based on where the best opportunities exist. Success depends in large part on the involvement of the entire community. If teachers, religious leaders, health workers, employers, government and business leaders and family members are brought into the process early on, if their insights and opinions are thoughtfully considered and worked into a plan of action, then their continued support is far more likely.

