

The agreed common impact of the gBICS is to contribute to:

“Scaling up of breastfeeding and infant and young child interventions to reduce child mortality and undernutrition, and to improve child growth and development as well as maternal health, through the protection, promotion and support of optimal infant feeding practices (early initiation and exclusive breastfeeding for six months followed by safe and adequate complementary feeding with continued breastfeeding for 2 years or beyond)”.

Breastfeeding is the first and vital food for infants, ensuring their survival with health. Breastfeeding is naturally produced, zero-waste, and does not contaminate the environment. It promotes the reproductive health and informed decision-making of women. By working for enhancing of breastfeeding rates, the gBICS contributes to efforts aimed at addressing reproductive and health rights of women and is in keeping priorities of climate change, natural resource management, gender inequality including in areas of survival and reproductive rights of women and their economic empowerment, in the framework of human rights.

The gBICS emphasizes that all of its work to improve early and exclusive breastfeeding and adequate complementary feeding is based on the evidence of proven scientific research: breastfeeding saves lives, is a women’s right and contributes to a healthier future for women, men and children and to a sustainable environment.

The gBICS action plan is based on advocating and supporting the implementation by governments of internationally agreed policy documents, and more specifically on the 1981 *International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (the Code)* and subsequent *WHA resolutions*, the 1990 and 2005 *Innocenti Declarations on the Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding*; the 2002 *Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (GSIYCF)*; the 2010 *Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health*; the 2012 *Maternal, infant and young child nutrition: comprehensive implementation plan*. This work is underpinned by fundamental human rights principles conveyed by the *Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC)*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)*, the *Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)* and other human rights instruments.

Milestones and strengthening of the network.

Over the next 10 years, gBICS aims to strengthen the policy environments and scale up programmatic interventions so that the duration of breastfeeding (initiation, exclusive and continued) can increase globally to have significant positive impact not only on public health through child health and survival, but also on maternal health and women rights, and on the environment, contributing to climate change prevention and mitigation.

In the next 5 years of implementation, gBICS aims to:

- a) raise awareness and strengthen action on the Global Strategy for IYCF and environmental issues among the public, UN agencies, NGOs, governments, partners and other important allies at all levels;
- b) advocate for national policies on IYCF that cover HIV and infant feeding- and protection of women during emergencies; for strengthening legislation on marketing, and for realisation of Women’s Rights and adequate Maternity Protection;
- c) strengthen human rights based accountability through monitoring of performance of governments as duty bearers, promoting corporate accountability and empowerment of breastfeeding advocates to claim

accountability on women's and children's rights; defend human rights and right to adequate food, particularly for the mother-baby dyad;

d) build a critical mass of people with ability to advocate for comprehensive policies and technical capacity for:

i) monitoring and evaluating policies and programmes;

(ii) building strategic alliances with other actors at all levels, developing local competence;

(iii) being technically skilled in developing and implementing programs that support the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding, the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, and protect the environment.

Strategic Action Plan.

After a year of discussions, two gBICS Core Partners meetings in India, and following up the results of the 2012 World Breastfeeding Conference, gBICS has developed its strategic action plan for the next 5 years, 2013-2017; outcomes, output, indicators, and budgets can be seen in Annex 1. gBICS maintains its distinctive position, demonstrating added value, developing actions based on 34 years of experience, and with the particular skills of its network partners and high degree of specialization in themes of protection of infant feeding from various angles, unique to the gBICS core partners. The main programme areas are:

- ✚ Comprehensive national policies and programmes to implement the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding
- ✚ Monitoring and evaluation of national policies and programmes
- ✚ Implementation, monitoring and reporting on the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and relevant WHA resolutions
- ✚ Health and safety standards of the Codex Alimentarius Commission - risks of artificial feeding and food safety and food security
- ✚ Corporate accountability and safeguarding public interest - democratisation of global public health and nutrition
- ✚ Conflicts of interests, sponsorship and Public-Private (for-profit) Partnerships
- ✚ Right to health and adequate food of women and children worldwide
- ✚ Labour Rights and Maternity Protection in all economic sectors
- ✚ Protection of the environment –protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding as environmentally friendly, to counterbalance to the negative environmental impact of formula feeding
- ✚ Building of knowledge and skills on breastfeeding protection, promotion and support in Health and Nutrition care systems
- ✚ Information, communication and social mobilization on IYCF among the general public
- ✚ Optimal policies and practices for infant feeding and protection of sexual and reproductive rights, particularly in difficult circumstances such as HIV context or during emergencies
- ✚ Strengthening of capacities for planning, coordination, partner liaison and fundraising

Specific priority areas with regional focus are: Women's rights, organizing Youth, Women and children friendly communities, Human milk banks, Breastfeeding at work and in public places, Baby Friendly Hospital and Community Initiative, Mother support- Peer counselling, Breastfeeding and reduction of obesity.