

## Health and Nutrition Care Systems

It has been documented that many of the health and nutrition workers lack adequate skills in counseling for infant and young child feeding which is essential for the success of breastfeeding.

Ideally, new graduates of health provider programmes should be able to support optimal infant and young child feeding practices from the outset of their careers. All providers who interact with mothers and their young children should attain the basic attitudes, knowledge and skills necessary to integrate breastfeeding counseling, lactation management, and

infant and young child feeding into their care. The topics can be integrated at various levels during education and employment. Therefore the total programme should be reviewed to assess this.

This indicator examines whether health care providers undergo skill training and whether their pre-service education curriculum supports optimal infant and young child feeding. It also provides information on whether these services support women to breastfeed at birth. (Table 5)

**Table 5: Key question and subset questionnaire for indicator on health and nutrition care systems and scoring criteria**

**Key question:** Do care providers in these systems undergo *skills training*, and do their pre-service education curriculum support optimal infant and young child feeding; do these services support mother and breastfeeding friendly birth practices, do the policies of health care services support mothers and children, and whether health workers responsibilities to Code are in place?

### Guidelines for scoring Criteria

✓ **Scoring**  
**Check that apply**

**Adequate Inadequate No Reference**

5.1) A review of health provider schools and pre-service education programmes for health professionals, social and community workers in the country* indicates that infant and young child feeding curricula or session plans are adequate/inadequate.	2	1	0
5.2) Standards and guidelines for mother-friendly childbirth procedures and support have been developed and disseminated to all facilities and personnel providing maternity care.	2	1	0
5.3) There are in-service training programmes providing knowledge and skills related to infant and young child feeding for relevant health/nutrition care providers.**	2	1	0
5.4) Health workers are trained on their responsibility under the Code implementation / national regulation throughout the country.	1	0.5	0
5.5) Infant feeding and young child feeding information and skills are integrated, as appropriate, into training programmes focusing on (diarrheal disease, acute respiratory infection, IMCI, well-child care, family planning, nutrition, the Code, HIV/AIDS, breast cancer, women's health, NCDs etc.)	1	0.5	0
5.6) In-service training programmes referenced in 5.5 are being provided throughout the country.***	1	0.5	0

	<u>Adequate</u>	<u>Inadequate</u>	<u>No Reference</u>
5.7) Child health policies provide for mothers and babies to stay together when one of them is sick.	1	0.5	0
<b>Total Score:</b>	-----/10		
<p>* Types of schools and education programmes that should have curricula related to infant and young child feeding may vary from country to country. Which departments within various schools are responsible for teaching various topics may also vary. The assessment team should decide which schools and departments are most essential to include in the review, with guidance from educational experts on infant and young child feeding, as necessary.</p> <p>** The types of health providers that should receive training may vary from country to country, but should include providers that care for mothers and children in fields such as medicine, nursing, midwifery, nutrition and public health.</p> <p>*** Training programmes can be considered to be provided “throughout the country” if there is at least one training programme in each region or province or similar jurisdiction.</p>			

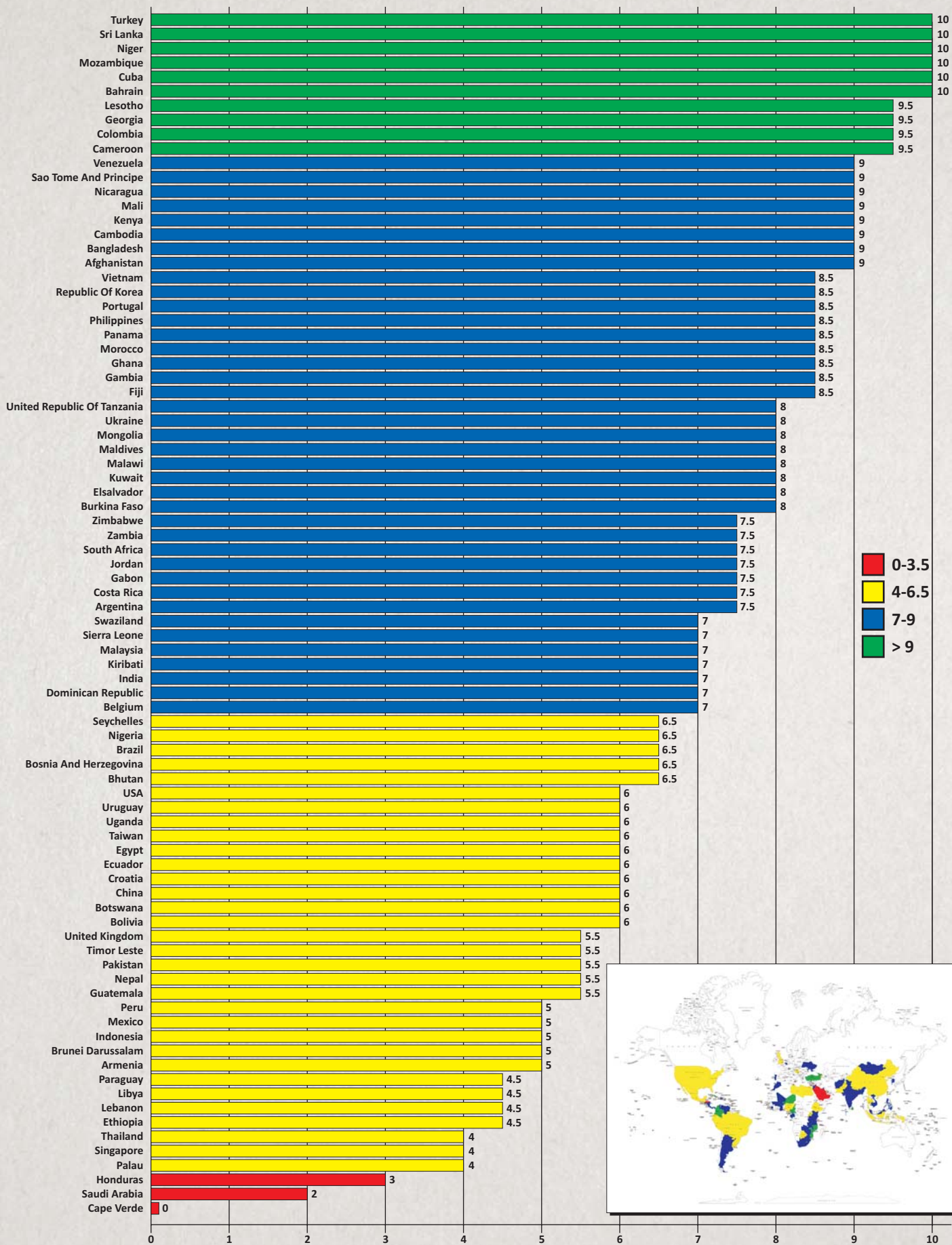
Only ten out of 84 countries have a full score of 10; the average score is 7.04 out of 10 (Figure 13). Almost half the countries (40) score between 7 and 9, 31 countries score between 4 and 6.5 and only three countries are coded red, of which one has a score of zero.

It shows all are making efforts. Few countries of Africa, Asia and Europe are coded Green. It shows they have capacity

building of health care providers in place. Africa sets an example specially after HIV crisis to have a combined approach not only medical and hospital interventions but also cultural, social and economic determinants are to be given attention, that peer counseling is crucial in mother support. Training of health workers and promoters needed to change the focus on prevention and support.



Figure 13: The state of health & nutrition care system in 84 countries on a scale of 0-10



## Analysis and Conclusion

Analysis of subsets (Figure 14) reveals that only 31 countries have adequate pre-service plans, in 44 countries standard guidelines on support at birth are in place and in 54 countries training programmes are in place. However, in only 24 countries health workers are trained about their responsibility towards Code implementation.

Analysis also reveals that most of the countries are working on integrating

IYCF in pre-service or in-service training and health workers are being trained in skilled counseling. However, there is a need to incorporate the International Code in the curriculum of health workers with emphasis on their responsibility towards its implementation as the key to enhance infant and young child feeding practices. The missing link of lack of pre service training need to be bridged and strengthened to reduce the load on in-service training.

**Figure 14: Status of subset questions for indicator on health & nutrition care system in 84 countries**

