

programmes. The results indicate that the percentage of infants being breastfed has, during the last ten years, increased nationally from a low of about 40 per cent to nearly 60 per cent.

These Canadian programmes are consistent with the general thrust of the Code and contain some of the measures outlined in the Code. The free distribution of samples, for example, has already been discontinued in some hospitals of Canada, and continued progress is anticipated. Health authorities are also undertaking increased responsibility for the education of mothers and prospective mothers, with regard to breastfeeding.

It is on the basis of this national experience -- and of our belief that the needs of infants everywhere require our concerted and collective efforts -- that we support the aims of the Draft Code and its adoption as it has been developed to date. However, in order to achieve its earliest intended impact, the Code must find broadest possible acceptance amongst World Health Organization members. It must allow governments to give effect to its provisions in accordance with their respective socio-economic and cultural situations. We believe that the Code in the form of a recommendation would achieve these objectives.

We would like to emphasize that the World Health Organization has a crucial role to play in assisting requesting governments with the development of their respective approaches to the implementation of the Code. We must note, however, that because of the particular socio-economic and cultural characteristics of our society -- as also reflected in federal and provincial legislation -- Canadian health authorities may encounter fundamental difficulties in their efforts to give full effect to all the provisions embodied by the Draft Code. Nevertheless, we expect the Code to have a stimulating effect in the further development of programmes in this area as appropriate to our national condition.

Mr. Chairman, despite the various national approaches which will no doubt develop in response to the Code, we wish to emphasize the urgency and importance of a concerted effort on the part of all of us -- whether from