“Making the Code Work” World Breastfeeding Week – August 1-7

“Making the Code Work” is one focus of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action. This focus raises public awareness of “The International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.” This Code is a powerful tool which helps health workers effectively promote and protect breastfeeding.

The Code includes these ten important provisions:

1. No advertising of breastmilk substitutes to the public.
2. No free samples to mothers.
3. No promotion of these products in health care facilities.
4. No company representatives to advise mothers.
5. No gifts or personal samples to health workers.
6. No words or pictures idealizing artificial feeding, including pictures of infants on the products.
7. Information to health workers should be scientific and factual.
8. All information on artificial feeding, including the labels, should explain the benefits of breastfeeding, and the costs and hazards associated with artificial feeding.
9. Unsuitable products, such as sweetened condensed milk, should not be promoted for babies.
10. All products should be of a high quality and take account of the climatic and storage conditions of the country where they are used.

Specific Code Goals:

• Raise public awareness about the International Code, specifically its potential and purpose.
• Remind governments of the Innocenti Declaration (on promoting and protecting breastfeeding) and encourage them to have national laws using the Code as a minimum standard.
• Train public and professional interest groups to monitor the enforcement of the Code.

Written with the help of WABA, World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action. WABA is a global network of organizations and individuals that believes, promotes and supports breastfeeding as the right of all children and mothers. WABA acts on the Innocenti Declaration and works in close liaison with UNICEF.