## Key facts

**No country** in the Western Pacific Region is free from malnutrition.

**Eight countries** in the Region has an exclusive breastfeeding rate greater than 50%.

More than **6.2 million** children under 5 years of age were overweight or obese in the Region in 2014.

The Asia and Pacific region accounted for over **US$ 20 billion** of US$ 36 billion global growth in infant formula sales since 2003.

Marketing of unhealthy foods ranges from **53.7%** to **92%** of food marketing to children in 9 countries in the Region.

## WHO response

Since governments endorsed the International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes in 1981, 19 other World Health Assembly resolutions have further clarified types of marketing and emphasized the need to strengthen monitoring and enforcement of the Code. However, implementation remains a challenge. In fact, only four countries (Fiji, Palau, the Philippines and Viet Nam) in the Region have fully implemented the Code.

**WHO helps countries in the Region to apply the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF),** including through legislating, monitoring and evaluating Code implementation. A study found that the IYCF strategy is effective in mitigating the influence of marketing and thereby improving exclusive breastfeeding rates.

In addition, WHO works with partners such as the International Labor Organization on maternity protection so that mothers can be with their infants to breastfeed, and with UNICEF on a Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative to help new mothers get breastfeeding established after delivery.

The Code and subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions, the Action Plan for Healthy Newborn Infants in the Western Pacific Region (2014-2020), the **WHO Set of recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children**, the Framework for implementing the set of recommendations, the Western Pacific Regional Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (2014-2020) and the Action Plan to Reduce the Double Burden of Malnutrition in the Western Pacific Region (2015-2020) recommend effective national measures to protect breastfeeding and restrict food marketing to children.

The Republic of Korea has taken legal measures to protect children from the harmful impact of food marketing, consistent with the **WHO Set of recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children**.