

Draft closing remarks/ speaking notes

World Breastfeeding week webinar

Programme Director,

As we come to the close of this webinar, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all our presenters, panellists, partners and participants for sharing their expertise, experiences, perspectives and messages of support during today's commemoration of World Breastfeeding Week 2026.

This webinar has provided an important platform to bring together policymakers, researchers, health professionals, community representatives, development partners and breastfeeding advocates around a common purpose: strengthening breastfeeding protection, promotion and support in South Africa. It has also marked an important milestone as we begin preparations for the upcoming review of South Africa's 2013 Infant and Young Child Feeding Policy, creating an opportunity to reflect on our progress and reaffirm our collective commitment to improving nutrition and health outcomes for mothers and children.

As we conclude today, I would like to leave each of us with a clear call to action:

To health workers: Let us continue to provide every pregnant woman and mother with accurate information, practical support and quality counselling throughout the breastfeeding journey.

To managers, employers and labour representatives: Let us strengthen breastfeeding-friendly workplaces that enable women to continue breastfeeding when they return to work.

To our partners, researchers and civil society organisations: Let us continue to generate evidence, share innovations and strengthen collaboration in support of breastfeeding.

As we move towards the September IYCF Policy Consultative Workshop, let us reflect on the lessons from our respective programmes, institutions and communities and actively contribute to shaping a policy environment that better supports mothers, infants and young children. Together, we have an opportunity to strengthen what works and accelerate progress towards improved breastfeeding practices and better nutrition outcomes for all children in South Africa.

Let us leave this webinar not only inspired by the importance of breastfeeding, but committed to taking practical action within our facilities, workplaces, communities and programmes to ensure that every mother receives the support she needs and every child receives the best possible start in life.

I thank you, and I wish you a successful remainder of World Breastfeeding Week 2026.

Happy World Breastfeeding Week!