



## IBFAN Statement at WHA 76 in 2023<sup>1</sup>

### Agenda Items 14/15 – Emergencies

Thank you chair. For 40 years IBFAN has worked with WHO to protect breastfeeding – a resilient practice that provides food, nurturing care and immune support. Breastfeeding is a lifeline in emergencies and prevents violence and malnutrition in all its forms.

IBFAN helped ensure safeguards in the [Codex Guidelines for Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods](#) – products that may be important as a last resort, but should only be used in programmes that support breastfeeding, skin-to-skin contact, wet-nursing, re-lactation and appropriate transition to nutritious family foods.

Worryingly, following the publication of the Guidelines we see an increase in [appeals](#) that promote ultra-processed fortified products as magic bullets with no mention of breastfeeding. Donations of baby feeding products in violation of all recommendations continue, as well as unethical formula experiments on vulnerable babies – all in the guise of prevention of malnutrition.

In the [absence of regulations to stop commercial exploitation](#), such approaches mislead the public, undermine parents' confidence in real food and put children's lives at risk. UN and humanitarian agencies should be using their considerable diplomatic influence to challenge the corporate-led food system that has done so much harm to health and the environment. Governments need courage to address power imbalances and safeguard breastfeeding, the ecosystem and bio-diverse sustainable foods.

The [IFE Operational Guidance](#), sound Conflicts of Interest policies and a [One Health](#) approach are essential safeguards for disaster training of health workers and citizens in normal times, alongside Baby Friendly implementation. Thank you,

Patti Rundall, Baby Milk Action – IBFAN UK, May 23, 2023

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<sup>1</sup> Original <https://www.babymilkaction.org/archives/37798>