**PREVENTING AND MANAGING INAPPROPRIATE DONATIONS**

**BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES AND OTHER PROHIBITED PRODUCTS**

A guide for emergency relief staff, donors, and governments

During emergencies:

**Do not solicit, donate, accept, or distribute donations of breastmilk substitutes (BMS) and other products***

**What’s the risk?**

Donated products are often:
- In violation of the WHO Code.
- Unsafe (expired, the wrong type, unreliable quality etc.).
- Excessive in quantity.
- Labeled in the wrong language.
- Not supplied in a reliable manner.
- Not possible to hygienically use in an emergency context.
- Used by breastfeeding mothers, disrupting their milk supply.
- Lack the instructions, supplies and support that caregivers of formula dependent infants need to feed safely.

**Prevent donations**

Do you know your role?

- Government, health and nutrition cluster coordinators and partners
  - Endorse and disseminate a policy clearly stating that donations will not be accepted.
  - Ensure Violation/Donation Alert and Monitoring System is in place.
  - Systematically share information, including reports of violations, for action (e.g. enforcement) at a national level and global level (e.g. FastCode).
  - Establish a Donation Prevention and Management Taskforce.
  - Develop and widely disseminate a Joint Statement to key stakeholders, including media, communications, logistics, donors and partner agencies.

- Donors
  - Fund lifesaving services and supplies e.g. nutritious food for mothers, skilled breastfeeding support and appropriately managed artificial feeding support services.
  - Never call for donations of these products.

- Child protection and social welfare sector
  - Never include BMS in standard family kits.
  - Coordinate with the nutrition sector to secure appropriate infant feeding support for separated and orphaned children.

- Army, logistics and camp management
  - Adopt policy on donations and distributions.
  - Reject requests for procurement, storage, transportation and distribution of restricted products without official approval.

- Customs
  - Report all donations and uncontrolled distributions of breastmilk substitutes (BMS) and other prohibited products.
  - Ensure rations include safe and appropriate complementary foods.
  - Ensure food aid is compliant with the WHO Code and that prohibited products are never part of a blanket distribution.

- Media
  - Do not call for donations of these products.
  - Disseminate information that encourages helpful aid and discourages harmful aid.

**Detect and manage unprevented donations**

Donations can arrive early in an emergency. Preparedness is critical: it saves money, time and lives.

1. **Detect and report**
   - Activate a Violation/Donation Alert System (e.g. online reporting form).
   - SENSITIZE all stakeholders on why and how to report donations, uncontrolled distributions and other Code violations.
   - Rapidly share incoming alerts with the IYCF-E Coordination Authority/Donation Prevention and Management Taskforce.

2. **Intercept, transport and securely store**
   - Intercept, transport and securely store donations and uncontrolled distributions of breastmilk substitutes (BMS) and other Code violations.
   - Assign a designated agency (ideally the Ministry of Health) to rapidly intercept prohibited products.
   - Implement security measures to ensure stored products are not stolen or re-used.

3. **Sort and handle**
   - Establish a Donation Management Plan to guide decision-making on what to do with intercepted products.
   - Secure resources to implement the plan, including funding, expertise, HR and equipment (e.g. for lifting/destruction).
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   - Handle donations according to the Donation Management Plan.

**Donation Management Plan**

- **Start**
  - Can the product be returned?
  - Is the product considered adequate complementary food?
  - Is the product a BMS that is suitable for use?
  - Can the intervention be justified and funded?

- **Yes**
  - Proceed with caution and encourage a decision-making process that is sensitive to the context.

- **No**
  - Dispose.
  - Consider reusing suitable milk.
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**Re-use**

- Use in preparation of bread, biscuits and cakes that can be distributed.
- Institutional nutrition support, e.g. for the elderly, orphans.
- Prepare a fortified blended food for use as complementary food for infants over six months.
- For school feeding programmes.
- Use for animal feed.
- Other acceptable local solutions that are in line with the OG-IFE.

**Disposing**

- Remove milk products from packaging before disposing of them.
- Baby teas, juices and waters marketed as suitable for infants under six months.
- Other milk products marketed as suitable for infants under six months.}

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*Prohibited donations

Donations and uncontrolled distributions of the following products put infants at risk:
- Breastmilk substitutes, including infant formula, follow-on formula and growing-up milk.
- Other milk products, e.g. dried or liquid cow’s milk, soya milk, evaporated or condensed milk, fermented milk or yoghurt.
- Baby teas, juices and waters marketed as suitable for infants under six months.
- Bottles, teats, breast pumps.
- Any commercial complementary food marketed for use for infants under six months.

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Part of the Infant Feeding in Emergencies Core Group infographic series. Find out more at www.ennonline.net/ife