



International Baby Food Action Network - IBFAN
Red internacional de grupos pro alimentación infantil
Réseau international des groupes d'action pour
l'alimentation infantile

Geneva Infant Feeding Association - GIFA

1998 Recipient of the Right Livelihood Award



**Statement by IBFAN and FIAN International,
136th EB, Agenda item 5, sub-item 5.1A67/6**

On behalf of IBFAN, a global network of 273 organisations working to protect, promote and support breastfeeding and Infant and Young Child Feeding, and FIAN International, we thank WHO for its report on the Regional Committees' deliberations and the revised draft Framework.

We reviewed relevant documents, including Member States' questions and concerns. We thank them for paying close attention to this key element of WHO's Reform. This Framework will determine whether WHO emerges from the Reform strengthened in its unique role as the international health policy, regulations and norms-setting agency or whether its role will be redefined- in the corporate interest- to fit a 'stakeholder' health governance architecture.

If the former outcome is desired, the Framework needs to stop blurring the fundamental distinction between public-interest actors and those whose primary interest is market-led.

The 2014 WHA Decision (WHA 67 (14)) underlined the importance of sorting out the conflict of interest (CoI) safeguards, a request reaffirmed in the deliberations of all Regional Committees. Yet, the revised Framework does not meet this request: its CoI section still represents a misconception of the CoI theory, which then permeates throughout the document. We re-emphasize that CoI is about a conflict '**within**' an individual/institution, not "**between**" actors.

Moreover, in the name of 'inclusiveness' the Framework opens up new channels for corporate and donor influence, including through the revised Official Relations policy which legitimizes accreditation of actors, whose primary aim, by nature, cannot be in "conformity with the spirit... of WHO's constitution" .

For these reasons, we respectfully disagree with those Member States who urge adopting the draft Framework for a trial period. This constitutes a great risk. In order to finalize this Framework, Member States may wish to establish an Open-ended WG, informed by an expert meeting on conflicts of interest and with public participation.

