

# International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN)



# IBFAN

defending breastfeeding

## 142th session of the Executive Board

### **Agenda Item EB 3.8. Preparation for the third High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, to be held in 2018 (EB142/15); Preliminary evaluation of the GCM (EB142/15 Add.1)**

IBFAN has supported WHO's leadership role in the control of NCDs. We attended the 1<sup>st</sup> UN General Assembly on NCDs launching the Conflict of Interest Coalition, demonstrating the concern of 161 NGOs to keep policy setting free from commercial influence.

Table 5 lists contradictory obstacles to the implementation of WHO's *Best Buys*. Section 5 clearly points to industry interference in policymaking while No 3, makes sweeping assumptions that developing countries have no *'policy backbone...and lack the capacity to find common ground between policy-makers and private sector.'* Suggesting partnerships with the private sector as the best way forward, with no evidence of efficacy.

If governments are to be in the drivers seat they need a clear assessment of the national situation based on hard data, with goals and a clear strategy that considers whether and what role private sector should play in its implementation. Finding *'Common ground'* with the private sector - especially on regulatory issues - seems unlikely.

Since bad diets are one of the biggest causes of death and disease, WHO should remind Member States there is no time to waste. Incremental changes, self-regulation and monitoring according to industry's criteria will be simply inadequate.

The power exerted by rich producer nations when global trading standards are set at Codex is evident. Developing countries advocating WHO recommendations are overlooked and WHO is increasingly called on to defend their integration.

Not surprisingly the analysis of WHO's **Global Coordinating Mechanism** *"finds the effectiveness of the activities and outputs.. to be MODEST."* Similarly, after over 10 years, the European Commission's **Platform for Action on Diet Physical Activity and Health** shows no evidence of real effect. Meetings are now reduced from 4 to 2 per year - perhaps a sign of disenchantment with multi-stakeholder initiatives involving corporations - rather than with town planners, small farmers and public health experts.

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