

40 YEARS AGO, THE
KENNEDY HEARINGS
PUT THE BABY FOOD
INDUSTRY UNDER
THE SPOTLIGHT:

*"We can't have that
responsibility, Sir".*

YEAR REPORT

OCT 2016



SEPT 2017

UK and EU

The 2016 UK Referendum vote to leave the European Union continues to present risks and opportunities for infant and young child health. The current UK Law – which stems from EU Regulations that we have worked for decades to strengthen – will stay in place until the *EU Withdrawal Bill* kicks in March 2019. It is not known if it will be updated when new EU regulations, adopted in 2016, come into force in 2020/21. These new rules strengthen controls on health and nutrition claims and *Foods for Special Medical Purposes*. A key safeguard in EU legislation is the *Precautionary Principle* (PP), which is now at the centre of trade debates. Will the UK allow imports of milk from hormone treated cows and products with high sugar levels? We compiled a case study on Romania's efforts to strengthen its baby food legislation.

2017 was the 20th anniversary of the *Baby Feeding Law Group* (BFLG). We remain the secretariat of this unique coalition that has brought the UK's leading professional organisations and mother-support groups together four times a year, specifically to address marketing and sponsorship issues. We produced the BFLG *Look What They're Doing in the UK* report, funded by *First Steps Nutrition Trust* and launched in **April**. This exposes the marketing malpractices of the major baby feeding companies and retailers and has led to changes. Our complaint to the *Advertising Standards Authority* against NUK's claim that its teats are "clinically proven" for "combined feeding" was upheld. Alison Thewliss, MP for Glasgow South, led UK Parliamentary work and hosts the *All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Infant Feeding and Inequalities*.

UK Networking

We spoke in Belfast in **February** and had stalls at conferences run by the *UK Baby Friendly Initiative*, *First Steps Nutrition Trust*, *La Leche League*, the *Breastfeeding Network* and *Coventry University*. Thank you to area contacts and volunteers who helped out. We asked questions at fringe meetings at the Labour and Conservative Party Conferences in **September** and **October**. As members of IBFAN's *World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative* (WBTi) we are part of the WBTi-UK team led by Helen Gray and Clare Meynell.

Conflicts of Interest (COI)

Advocacy for COI safeguards continues to be central. The *Conflict of Interest Coalition*, founded in 2011 and supported by over 160 NGOs and networks, regularly sign up to advocacy letters and met several times in the year. Despite our best efforts, the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH) weakened its sponsorship policy in 2017, in conflict with World Health Assembly recommendations. The policy change prompted a letter from four WHO staff members in the medical journal *The Lancet*. Our Policy Director made many COI presentations during the year, including at the *Committee on Food Security* in Rome in **October** and the 2nd IBFAN World Breastfeeding Conference in South Africa in **December**. Our Campaigns Coordinator presented the film *Tigers*. We helped expose the risks of a new proposal, funded by the *Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation*, for a Global Monitoring Mechanism that would be conducted in partnership with the baby food companies.

Advocacy at the United Nations

Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus was elected Director General of WHO at the *World Health Assembly* (WHA) in **May**. We have drawn attention to WHO's faulty concept of COI (derived from the *Scaling Up Nutrition* initiative) that is used in its COI Tools and draft *General Programme of Work*. Our Policy Director appears in the German documentary *WHO: in the claws of the lobbyists?* that was broadcast in **April**. We are members of UNICEF and WHO's *Global Breastfeeding Collective*, launched in **August**. We campaign for a legally binding treaty to hold corporations accountable for human rights abuses.

Infant feeding in Emergencies

As members of the *Infant Feeding in Emergencies Core Group*, we helped revise the *Operational Guidance for Emergency Relief Staff and Programme Managers* that was launched in **October 2017**. We successfully challenged some emergency appeals that, instead of stressing breastfeeding's resilience and importance for survival, undermined breastfeeding and promoted products.

Baby Milk Action supports IBFAN's principles

- The right of infants and young children everywhere to the highest level of health
- The right of families to enough nutritious food and sufficient and affordable water
- The right of women to informed choices about infant and young child feeding
- The right of women to full support for successful breastfeeding and for sound infant feeding practices
- The right of all people to health services which meet basic needs
- The right of health workers & consumers to health care systems which are free from commercial influence
- The right of people to organise in international solidarity to secure changes which protect and promote basic health, and ethical behaviour of the baby food industry

Finances

Baby Milk Action is funded by grants, consultancy and speaker fees from health and development organisations, including Save the Children, Network for Social Change, IBFAN, Bread for the World, UK Health Forum, First Steps Nutrition Trust and WHO. Donations from members and supporters are also an important source of income.

Contact

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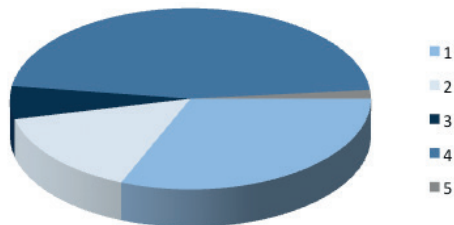
tel - (01223) 464420
 email - info@babymilkaction.org

Baby Milk Action income

October 2016 - September 2017

Total income = £96,677

1. Grants & project income	31%
2. Membership	15%
3. Publications and merchandise	6%
4. Donations	46%
5. Other income	2%



Baby Milk Action expenditure

October 2016 - September 2017

Total expenditure = £87,649

1. Campaigns, projects, publications and merchandise	52%
2. Administration and Membership support	22%
3. Overheads	26%



Net Surplus: £9,028

Based on audited figures.
 More detailed accounts on our website.
 To preserve our ability to speak out we take no money from corporations.

Council of Directors

Fiona Duby
Susan Last
Jane Neesam
Jim Paterson

Company Secretary

Lisa Woodburn

Staff

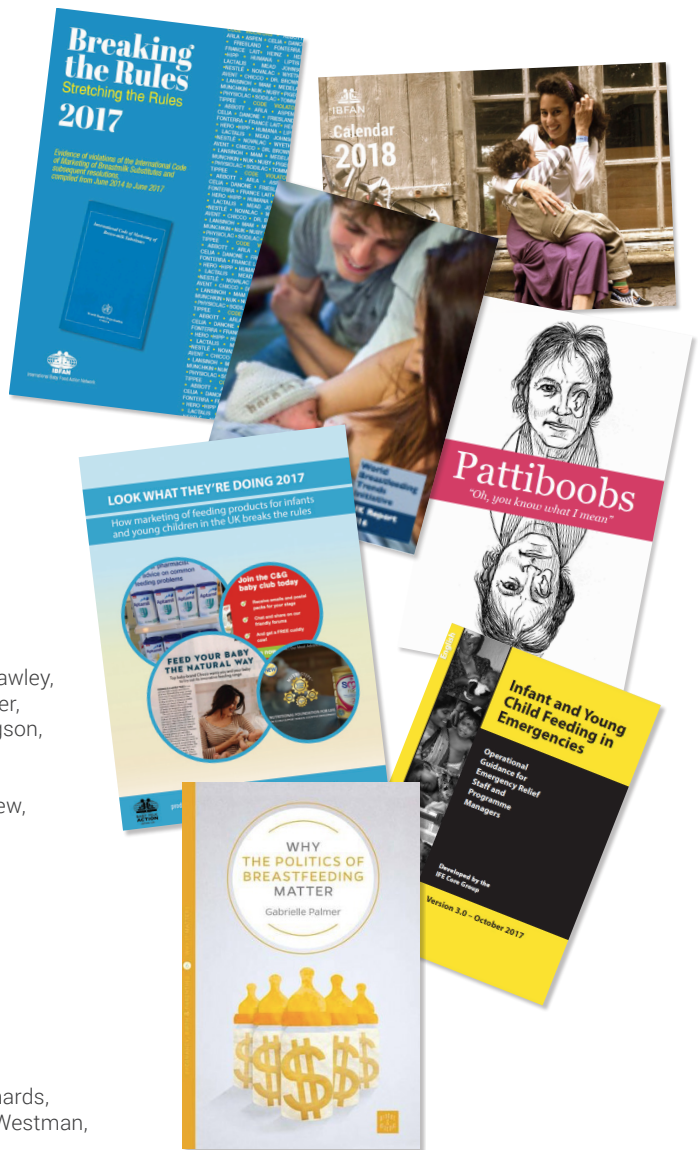
Patti Rundall - Policy Director
Mike Brady - Campaigns and
Networking Coordinator
Jennie Evans - Office Manager
Paul Bott - Book-keeper

Advisors

Prof. Anthony Costello, Dr. Helen Crawley,
Dr. Emmanuel Diamond, Chloe Fisher,
Peter Greaves, Prof. Raymond Hodgson,
Dr. Tim Lobstein, Gabrielle Palmer,
Belinda Phipps, Dr. Peter Poore,
Dr. Andrew Porter, Prof. Mary Renfrew,
Magda Sachs, Dr. Penny Stanway,
Dr. Tony Waterston, Kevin Watkins,
Prof. Peter Willetts, Jean Rowe,
Carol Williams, Dr. A.F. Williams,
Dr Pam Zinkin.

Area contacts

Warm thanks to our Area Contacts:
Adele M McGarry-Watson, Carl Richards,
Colin Dunham, Jane Tapp, Janette Westman,
Jenifer Inman, Jenny Richardson,
Lesley Backhouse, Marianne Cowpe,
Liz Berry, Patricia Wise, Sally Etheridge,
Sarah Saunby, Sharon Breward and Sue Malpass.
Thanks too to Lisa Woodburn, volunteers in
Cambridge and all our supporters who are
essential to our effectiveness.



Above

Examples of items that keep Baby Milk Action and our partners independent.

Front Cover

Oswaldo Ballarin, President of Nestlé Brazil, responding to Senator Edward Kennedy's query about the company's responsibility for the use of breastmilk substitutes in areas of poverty.

See excerpt from the 1998 Hearings:

www.babymilkaction.org/archives/16805