

The New York Times

*Quotation of the Day: U.S. Opposition to Breast-Feeding Resolution Stuns World Health Officials*

July 8, 2018



“What happened was tantamount to blackmail, with the U.S. holding the world hostage and trying to overturn nearly 40 years of consensus on the best way to protect infant and young child health.”

**PATTI RUNDALL**, the policy director of the British advocacy group **Baby Milk Action**.



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# YEAR REPORT

OCT 2017 — SEPT 2018

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## UK, EU and world trade

Following the 2016 UK Referendum vote to leave the European Union, we continue to work to ensure that child health is safeguarded. Although EU baby food marketing legislation does not meet World Health Assembly recommendations, in terms of food safety, the EU's *Precautionary Principle* and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, are important and stronger than many. World Trade Organisation (WTO) rules, in comparison, are essentially the lowest common denominator to do trade in the 21st Century.

A big risk of a 'no deal' Brexit is that the UK will come under pressure to allow the import of low quality formulas and foods with too high levels of sugars or other risky ingredients. For example, the US allows the use of growth hormones in intensive farming - something outlawed in the EU since 1997 – and argues fiercely that global trading standards allow this practice. Since 1995 we have attended the nutrition meetings of the Codex Alimentarius (the body that sets these standards). Our aim is to strengthen the standards on labelling, safety and composition of products fed to babies and bring them into line with WHO recommendations. This is not only to protect breastfeeding, but to ensure that babies who need artificial feeding are protected and that products are as safe as possible.

We work closely with the *First Steps Nutrition Trust* (FSNT) who, in 2018, took over the secretariat of the *Baby Feeding Law Group* (BFLG). Since 1997 this coalition of the UK's leading professional organisations and mother-support groups has met regularly to stop harmful marketing and inappropriate sponsorship. There is now a *BFLG Ireland* and in **May** Julie Coulter, won the *2018 Julie Crawford Award* for health visitors. Alison Thewliss, MP for Glasgow South, continues to lead the *All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Infant Feeding and Inequalities* that in **June** held an inquiry into formula costs.

## UK Monitoring and networking

Thanks to area contacts and volunteers who helped us maintain a presence in local events and coordinated our monitoring team. Our Policy Director attended Party Conferences. Thanks also to the UK team that takes IBFAN's *World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBTi)* forward. We are members of the *Global Breastfeeding Collective*, coordinated by WHO and UNICEF.

## International Advocacy and media

In **April** our Policy Director, Patti Rundall, was invited by the Government of Ecuador to speak on Conflicts of Interest at the *3rd Zero Hunger Conference* in Cuenca, featuring nine Presidents and experts from 35 countries. Ecuador was, at the time, taking the lead on the draft World Health Assembly Resolution on infant and young child feeding. It came as a big shock when, soon after the Conference, the US started to put pressure on Ecuador to end its support for the Resolution. We were able to assist the media, in covering this story. *The New York Times* front page article in **July** (see cover) was quickly denounced by President Trump as "*Fake News*," prompting 600 editorials, hundreds of TV news broadcasts and thousands of social media mentions. ([www.babymilkaction.org/policy](http://www.babymilkaction.org/policy)).

Together with partner NGOs FIAN and SID, we are using case studies to examine the impact of the *Scaling Up Nutrition Initiative (SUN)* from a Human Rights perspective. SUN's promotion of partnerships with the private sector and its faulty Conflicts of Interest policy, has had a big influence on policy makers, including WHO. Patti was featured in two German documentaries, *WHO: in the claws of the lobbyists?* and *Trust WHO*. She was also interviewed on BBC World Service in **December** C4's *Despatches* in **July** and a paper comparing the baby food and tobacco tactics was published in **December**.

With the support of Ecuador, in **January** we successfully advocated for WHO's *General Programme of Work* to contain two references to breastfeeding. We continue to 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*, its translation and the new COI policy of the IFE Core Group. We continue to challenge emergency appeals that promote products or fail to stress breastfeeding's resilience and importance for survival.

## Tigers – the movie

The Indian web-streaming channel, *Zee5.com* bought the rights for *Tigers*, so at last screenings are possible in UK cinemas!

## 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 membership fees, donations, grants, consultancies and speaker fees from partner health and development organisations, including IBFAN, Bread for the World, Jam Today, UK Health Forum, First Steps Nutrition Trust and WHO.

## Mike Brady

We were very sad to lose the skills of **Mike Brady** in **February 2018**. Mike has been our Campaigns and Networking Coordinator for over 20 years, doing the work of at least 5 people for very little financial reward. Like all our members and supporters, we hugely miss his energy, wisdom, calmness and extraordinary talent. His contribution cannot be over-estimated and we wish him and Sonia all the best. Mike is now on our Advisory Board.



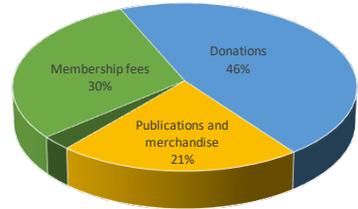
We'd also like to thank **Jennie Evans** who left her post as Office Manager in August. Jennie was our main point of contact for over three years and we wish her well in her new post..

## Baby Milk Action income

### October 2017 - September 2018

Total income = £48,268

1. Grants & project income	3%
2. Membership (£14,281)	30%
3. Publications & sales (£10,318)	21%
4. Donations (£22,376)	46%

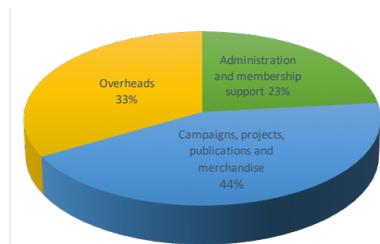


## Baby Milk Action expenditure

### October 2017 - September 2018

Total expenditure = £67,699

1. Campaigns, projects, publications and sales (£29,404)	44%
2. Administration and Membership support (£15,771)	23%
3. Overheads (£22,524)	33%



Deficit: £19,431

**Note:** The large deficit is because a donation from *Jam Today*, for use in 2017/ 2018, was actually received in 2016/2017. Lisa Woodburn, Ingrid Broad and several other individuals also gave substantial donations. To preserve our ability to speak out we take no money from corporations. See the website for more detailed accounts.

## Council of Directors

Fiona Duby  
Susan Last  
Rosie Dodds  
Jim Paterson

## Company Secretary

Lisa Woodburn

## Staff

Patti Rundall - Policy Director  
Mike Brady - Campaigns and  
Networking Coordinator (until February 2018).  
Jennie Evans - Office Manager (until August 2018).  
Paul Bott - Book-keeper

## Advisors

Mike Brady, 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.

## Patrons

Hollie McNish  
Gabrielle Palmer

## Area contacts

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

**Baby Milk Action:** Cambridge, UK  
info@babymilkaction.org



**Above**  
Examples of items that keep  
Baby Milk Action and our  
patrons independent.

**Front Cover:**  
'Quote of the Day' appears  
on Page A3 of the New  
York edition of the New  
York Times, July 9th, 2018.