

Year report 2012 - 2013



October
2012 - 2013
September

YEAR REPORT

Baby Milk Action

Council of Directors

Rachel O'Leary, Co-Chair
Lisa Northover - stood down
Fiona Duby
Hugh Simon

Phyll Buchanan
Sarah Saunby - Co-Chair

Company Secretary

Lisa Woodburn

Staff

Patti Rundall, Mike Brady,
Sarah Hansen (to August),
Verity Croft (from September),
'Paul Bott.

Advisors

Andy Chetley (died October 2012),
Prof. Anthony Costello, Dr Emmanuel
Diamond, Chloe Fisher, Peter Greaves, Prof.
Raymond Hodgson, Sheila Kitzing, Dr Tim
Lobstein, Gabrielle Palmer, Dr. Peter Moore, Dr.
Andrew Porter, Prof. Mary Renfrew,
Magda Sachs, Dr. Penny
Stanway, Dr. Tony
Waterston, Kevin Watkins,
Dr. A.F. Williams,
Dr Pam Zinkin.



Lisa Woodburn and Sarah
Hansen produced the
breastfeeding calendar for the
IBFAN network. This is a major
fundraiser for Baby Milk Action

Office Volunteers

Lisa Woodburn, Alison Powell.

Area contacts

The following served as area contacts during
the year:
We would like to express our appreciation to all
our Area Contacts.

Alien Banks, Liz Berry, Hannah Bird,
Sharon Beward, Marianne Cowpe, Dh.
Dharmavandana, Anne Dowden, Colin Dunham,
Hannah Gregory, Joanna Hindley, Jennifer
Imman, Vicky Islam, Steven Lee, Sue Malpass,
Adele McGarry Watson, Julie McRae, Annette
Ogilvie-Forbes, Ruth Oscrift, Mary Paterason,
Jan Price, Jacqueline Quick, Carl Richards,
Jenny Richardson, Sarah Saunby, Harriet
Smith, Sarah Squires, Jane Tapp, Frankie
Taylor, Bernadette Walker, Janette Westman,
Patricia Wise.

We are not anti-formula - we are anti-irresponsible marketing

Thanks to our supporters who are essential
to our effectiveness. Our Office Manager
and volunteers in Cambridge (special thanks
to Lisa Woodburn), provide materials,
merchandise for stalls and process orders.
Baby Milk Action, 34 Trumpington Street,
Cambridge, CB2 1QY.
Tel: (01223) 464420 Fax: (01223) 464417
Email: info@babymilkaction.org

We have also received speaker fees,
expenses, contract and consultancy fees
from several UN, consumer protection,
mother support and health organisations.

Baby Milk Action has been funded by grants
from the A Team, the Kenneth Miller Trust, S.E.
Franklin Deceased Charity, Network for Social
Change, OXFAM and SCIAF.

Finances

- the right of infants and young children everywhere to the highest level of health,
- 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 and consumers to health care systems which are free from commercial influence,
- the right of people to organise in international solidarity to secure changes

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 and consumers to health care systems which are free from commercial influence,
- the right of people to organise in international solidarity to secure changes

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Corporate Social Responsibility or corporate cover-up?

Many of the campaigns we ask our members to support involve countering corporate sponsorship, public private partnerships and other *Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)* strategies. A purpose of CSR is to improve a company's public image and help it appear responsible and trustworthy - trustworthy enough to be left alone to self-regulate. A consequence of CSR is that public attention and energy are diverted from independent monitoring and the regulation of harmful practices.

CSR is much used by the baby feeding industry and at the 2010 AGM, Nestlé's Chair Peter Brabeck claimed that: '*Tying corporations up in regulatory straightjackets is unnecessary when companies such as Nestlé already have sound principles and core values.*'

Peter Brabeck is also the Chair of the World Economic Forum (WEF). In its *Global Redesign Initiative* WEF proposes that some issues are taken off the agenda of the UN system and are addressed instead by '*plurilateral, often multi-stakeholder, coalitions of the willing and the able.*' WEF envisages a world managed by '*a coalition of multinational corporations, nation states (including through the UN System) and select civil society organisations.*'¹

As the collective influence of corporations has grown, some governments are choosing to accept this market profit-making logic, forgetting their duty to protect public health. In the short term this avoids a struggle before long the costs are sure to be felt.

How did we get here?

Appearing responsible and being seen to be working closely with WHO and the UN have been corporate counter-strategies ever since the adoption of the *International Code* in 1981. Indeed, the Code seems to have been a game changer that took not only the baby feeding industry – but other industries – by surprise.

More so because it remained on WHO's agenda and was transformed into binding legislation at national level.

In 1981 the **International Tobacco Information Center (INFOTAB)**, watching in the wings as events unfolded, concluded that: '*the infant formula experience has put back the multinational cause by 8-10 years.*'² Others commented that the baby feeding industry was badly prepared.

Companies saw the need to develop counter strategies and convince governments that there was no need for more international codes, regulations or conventions. Companies needed to be seen as '*socially responsible*' and willing to self-regulate through voluntary codes.

Fast forward to Pete Brabeck's 2010 statement.

Over the years we have documented and exposed how industries that do harm use CSR as a cover-up and a deceptive form of marketing. Baby Milk Action members and supporters, and increasingly many policy makers, recognise the importance of monitoring what corporations actually do and not accepting what they say at face value. It's high time that the critical role of CSR in preventing essential legislation was recognised.

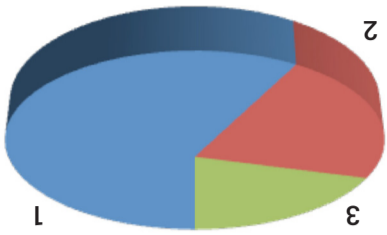
¹ *Corporate influence in the Post-2015 process*, Lou Pingoot, Global Policy Forum, Misereor and Bread for the World., 2014

² Taken from *Tobacco Industry Responses to International Statutory Regulation*, John Paterson, August 2008, Dissertation.

'Today [we have] opposition from forces that are not so friendly....They include front groups, lobbies, promises of self-regulation, lawsuits, and industry-funded research that confuses the evidence and keeps the public in doubt. In the view of WHO, the formulation of health policies must be protected from distortion by commercial or vested interests.'

Dr Margaret Chan, Director General, WHO, June 2013

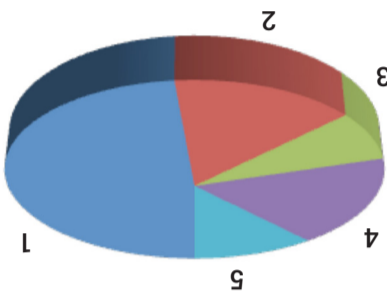
Net Gain: £ 5,276
Reserves: £13,751
Based on draft audited figures and prior year audit adjustment.



1. Projects, campaigns, publications and merchandise 57%
2. Membership support and administration 22%
3. Overheads 21%

Total expenditure = £116,413

Baby Milk Action expenditure October 2012 - September 2013



1. Grants & project income 48%
2. Membership 14%
3. Publications and merchandise 8%
4. Donations 18%
5. Other income 12%

Total income = £121,689

Baby Milk Action income October 2012 - September 2013

Raising awareness

- Members and supporters were essential in raising awareness of the importance of protecting optimal infant and young child health. Area contacts and staff held stalls and workshops at events in the UK including the **Association of Breastfeeding Mothers, Baby Friendly Initiative, La Leche League and People and Planet**
- We coordinate the International Nestlé Boycott, the company responsible for more aggressive baby food promotion than any other. We also campaign against bad practices by other companies such as Danone.
- We promoted *International Nestlé-Free Week* at the end of **October**, a week for those who boycott Nestlé products to tell their friends and colleagues – and for those who don't boycott, to give it a go.
- We produced an analysis of Nestlé's latest *Creating Shared Value* report in time for its shareholder AGM in **April**, which we called '*Nestlé's Creative Storytelling Venture*', as Nestlé's claims are so misleading.
- Nestlé entered the UK baby milk market when it completed its takeover of *Pfizer Nutrition* and the SMA brand in **December**. Its aggressive marketing practices are being unleashed, driving down standards. For example, it invites health workers to events at hotels as many health facilities ban company reps. from targeting staff on their premises. We organised protests to encourage people not to take Nestlé sponsorship.
- Nestlé continued to claim that SMA is the '*best*' formula, even though we won a case at the **Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)** in 2012 proving this is untrue. When the ASA publicised its 50th birthday in **October**, we produced a briefing paper explaining how this voluntary, industry-funded initiative fails to stop companies misleading parents.
- We provided evidence of Nestlé malpractice to the **Methodist Conference**. It was restated at the Conference that, '*Methodist members may, through conscience, wish to maintain a consumer boycott of [Nestlé] products.*'

IBFAN

- We are members of IBFAN's Coordinating Council (IBCoCo) and are responsible for company campaigns and Code advocacy in Europe. Our Policy Director was elected Co-Chair of IBFAN's Global Council in **December**. IBFAN has 270 groups in over 160 countries.
- Our Policy Director and Networking Coordinator made several presentations at IBFAN's first *World Breastfeeding Conference* in Delhi in **December**.
- IBFAN redesigned its website with our input. Along with other IBFAN groups we are changing our logo (above), to reflect the fact that we are IBFAN-UK. We also helped draft several IBFAN briefings and position statements.

Monitoring and reporting

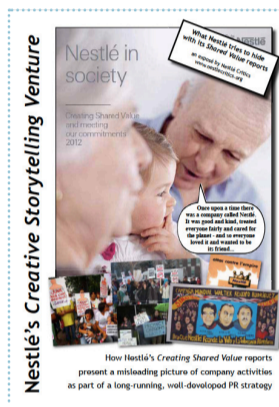
- We continued to promote a campaign of solidarity with the Philippines as a Nestlé-backed bill came before Congress, threatening to weaken its hard-won baby milk marketing regulations. Nestlé's '*Monster Bill*' is not yet dead.
- We launched the report *Look What They're Doing in the UK 2013* in **April**. This presents evidence from the monitoring project we coordinate on behalf of the Baby Feeding Law Group (BFLG). The electronic pdf file had been downloaded from our website over 35,000 times by the end of **September**. We sold or distributed over a thousand printed copies.
- We presented the *Look What They're Doing* report at a meeting between the BFLG and the Department of Health in **July**, renewing our call for action to enforce existing regulations, which prohibit many of the practices we have documented. The report was also sent to the companies found to break the rules. (Following this period, Danone agreed to stop two of its schemes for targeting mothers. However, many more of its practices shamelessly break the rules as explained in the *Department of Health Guidance Notes* on how to interpret the *Infant Formula and Follow-on Formula Regulations*. Danone said it does not accept it should abide by them.)



Baby Milk Action is an independent voice that protects babies and their families. We are a member of the global network IBFAN. We work to stop misleading marketing by the baby feeding industry. **We take no funding from companies.**

We work to protect the right of all families and health workers to accurate, independent information. We protect breastfeeding and babies fed on formula to prevent unnecessary death and suffering. **We are not anti-formula, but we are anti-irresponsible marketing**

Our analysis of Nestlé's *Creating Shared Value* reports shows why it is important to look at what Nestlé actually does, not just what it says it does.



Our briefing paper on the 50th birthday of the Advertising Standards Authority explains how the voluntary system of advertising regulation in the UK fails parents.

The Royal College of Physicians, a member of the **Conflicts of Interest Coalition**, said in **July** that Nestlé had booked an event under a different name (which Nestlé denied). Baby Milk Action's Mike Brady hands out leaflets as people arrive for the *Ins and Outs of Infant feeding* event, calling on them to reject Nestlé sponsorship.



Our Policy Director, Patti Rundall, on CNN TV news in Mexico City in **April** - highlighting the risks of corporate partnerships.



We produced the 2014 IBFAN Calendar.

www.babymilkaction.org
www.ibfan.org
www.babyfeedinglawgroup.org.uk
coicoalition.blogspot.co.uk
www.nestlecritics.org

Code advocacy

- We work to ensure that the safeguards of the *International Code* and Resolutions are included in **UK, EU and United Nations** policies. We are the Secretariat of the **Baby Feeding Law Group** that works to strengthen UK legislation and the EU Directive which are currently under review.
- We represent IBFAN on the **European Commission's controversial Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity and Health**. We take part in order to raise awareness of the risks of voluntary '*multi-stakeholder*' approaches, and the need for the Commission and Member States to take greater control of the process. The Platform gives industry and NGOs access to policy makers and is used as a global model. We call for harmonisation with WHA Resolutions, independent monitoring and an end to corporate sponsorship of education. An evaluation of the Platform after 7 years found no evidence of concrete impact from the voluntary approach.
- Wearing the Consumers International hat, we joined the IBFAN team for WHO's Executive Board in **January** and World Health Assembly in **May**. We have been calling for WHO's Reform Process to establish an overarching conflict of interest policy. We made submissions and attended a consultation on WHO's Targets for *Maternal, Infant and Young Child Nutrition* in **September**. In **July** we organised IBFAN's submission for NGO Official Relations status with WHO.
- We attended the UN Codex Alimentarius Commission meeting in Germany in **November**, blocking the attempts of companies to legitimise promotional claims.
- In **September** we took part in a **European Food Safety Authority** consultation on *Transparency in Risk Assessment*, highlighting where its conflicts of interest rules need to be strengthened. We spoke about monitoring at an IASO meeting in New York in **September**.
- We attended a **European Commission Development** meeting in Brussels in **March** and a UNICEF meeting in Paris in **May**, urging the **Scaling Up Nutrition (SUN)** initiative to address Conflicts of Interest.
- In **April** we spoke at five meetings with Parliamentarians, Senators, NGOs and the media in **Mexico City**. We helped organise a letter from international NGOs to **President Nieto** about the new *Crusade Against Hunger* and the partnerships with companies such as Nestlé and Pepsi. (See below left.)

Networking

- As a founder member of the **Conflict of Interest Coalition** we raise awareness of the need to safeguard health policy setting from commercial interests.
- We are the Secretariat of the 23 Member **UK Baby Feeding Law Group (BFLG)** including the Royal Colleges of Midwives, Nursing and Paediatrics, the Community Practitioners and Health Visitors' Association, NCT and UNISON. We helped set up **Baby Feeding Law Group Ireland** and **IBFAN Portugal**.
- We are a Trustee of Sustain, and member of the Children's Food Bill, the UK Consortium on AIDS and the UK Food Group.
- We provide support to the Lancashire Infant Feeding Information Board (LIFIB) as it evaluates information from baby food companies.

Publishing and marketing

- Members are extremely important for spreading the word about our work and supporting our campaign. About half of our income comes from membership, donations and merchandise sales.
- In **May** we sent our supporters in the UK and 86 countries electronic and hard copies of *Update* newsletter. The website is regularly updated and received over 900,000 visitors in the course of the year. We are also on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.
- Our popular *Infant Formula Explained* DVD was licensed for use by more health facilities in the UK and elsewhere.