

**Statement on the use of Ready-to-Use-Therapeutic  
and Supplementary Foods  
from the participants at the WABA Global  
Breastfeeding Partners Forum  
17-19<sup>th</sup> October 2010, Penang, Malaysia**



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We, the participants<sup>1</sup> from 36 countries of the world, at the *World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action Global Breastfeeding Partners Forum*, aware that ready to use therapeutic foods (RUTFs) may play a role in the treatment of severe malnutrition, especially in emergency situations, are also aware of the dangers of their inappropriate use and particularly the use or misuse of ready to use supplemental foods (RUSFs) for the prevention of severe or moderate malnutrition.

We believe that the market-led commercial solutions to child malnutrition, currently being advocated by many, will lead to the widespread use and dependence on these products. This is inconsistent with the agreed outcomes of the UN Secretary General's *Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health* and is likely to undermine local foods, healthy feeding habits and skills, challenging sustainable livelihoods, development, the environment and local economies, particularly in resource poor countries.

The Strategy states that in 2015 alone:

- 43 million new users would have access to family planning
- 19 million more women would give birth supported by a skilled birth attendant
- 2.2 million additional neonatal infections would be treated
- 21.9 million more infants would be exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life
- 15.2 million more children under one year of age would be fully immunized
- 117million more children under five would receive vitamin A supplements
- 40 million more children would be protected from pneumonia.

We applaud the UN Secretary General's Strategy and call upon the UN and its allied organizations, global agencies and projects and the donor community to focus attention on its agreed outcomes which do not include the use of RUTFs and RUSFs.

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<sup>1</sup> Out of the 166 Participants, the few who abstained as representatives of governments are shown as an asterisk in the list of participants attached.

The 49 countries that face the largest burden of child malnutrition need to focus on strategies that will prevent and reduce the numbers of children with severe and moderate malnutrition each year and finally end it, meeting the MDG goals.

We therefore:

1. Urge all global and national actors to address the underlying social determinants of child malnutrition comprehensively, while taking note of the statement by the UN Secretary General in the Strategy: “...often the solutions are very simple – clean water, exclusive breastfeeding, nutrition, and education on how to prevent poor health are only a few examples...”
2. Call upon all global and national actors to ensure that RUTFs are used **only** where appropriate for the medical treatment of severe malnutrition especially in disaster management; and that RUTFs and RUSFs are **not** used as a preventive measure in stable populations and that these products are prepared from locally-produced foods and not imported.

Participants of the WABA Global Breastfeeding Partners Forum, Penang, Malaysia October 19<sup>th</sup> 2010