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**“Breastfeeding –A Winning Goal for Life”**

**World Breastfeeding Week (1-7)2014**

**Petition**

It’s the 22nd year that India is celebrating the World Breastfeeding Week .The theme for this year’s World Breastfeeding Week asserts the importance of increasing and sustaining the **Protection, Promotion and Support of Breastfeeding** for achieving the **MDGs** and improving child survival and nutrition in the Post 2015 development agenda of sustainable development goals.

**Protecting; Promoting and Supporting Breastfeeding** contributes in achieving the **MDGs** in a substantial way. Early initiation of breastfeeding, exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and adequate complementary feeding are key interventions for improving child survival, potentially saving a large proportion of children under five.

India’s report card on breastfeeding policy and programmes shows that it is not up to the mark as India scores only 69 out of 150 according the International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) report “Are We Doing Enough for Our Babies” and is way behind many countries in South Asia.

At the same time breastfeeding practices are threatened by aggressive promotion of baby foods. India enacted The Infant Milk Substitutes Feeding Bottles, and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act 1992, and Amendment Act 2003 (IMS Act). The Act prohibits all forms of promotion and advertisements of Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles, and Infant Foods. The Act also prohibits providing sponsorship, gifts, fellowship and any pecuniary benefits to health care providers and their associations.

However, baby food companies constantly find new ways to influence pregnant and lactating women to increase sales of their products. They often portray the products to be 'healthy' and more convenient to consume and in the process, undermine breastfeeding practices.

We are sharing this with you to demand immediate action to curb such misleading behavior of the baby food industry by setting institutional mechanism to monitor the compliance of the law in your State/District/Area.

Also promote and implement one to one infant and young child feeding counseling services at health facilities during the pre and post natal period to support women. Guidelines [on “*Enhancing Optimal Infant and Young Child Feeding Practice”* 2013 by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India is the reference to enact and implement these IYCF programmes and policies.](http://www.unicef.org/india/6._Operational_Guide_Enhancing_optimal_infant_and_young_child_feeding_practices_through_the_public_health_system.pdf)

**Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**