



NESTLÉ S.A.

Mr. Friedrich-Rust
Action Against Hunger
Wallstraße 15 a
10179 Berlin

Vevey, May 30, 2018

Dear Mr. Friedrich-Rust,

We acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 22 May 2018 to our CEO and thank you for giving us an opportunity to comment on it and the referenced "Let them choose" report. We share your concerns about the current rates of breastfeeding and nutrition status of children at large.

We believe breastmilk is the best nutritional choice for an infant and that breastfeeding plays a fundamental role in a baby's growth and development during the first 1000 days. Nestlé's purpose is to enhance quality of life and contribute to a healthier future. Supporting the first 1000 days of life, including breastfeeding, is fundamental to this purpose. Our [Maternity Protection Policy](#) introduced in 2015, offers new mothers flexible working time, up to six months maternity leave and access to over 300 breastfeeding rooms across our work facilities worldwide. In addition, we collaborated with several public and private organisations in opening over 4000 breastfeeding rooms in India, Bangladesh and China.

We agree that current breastfeeding rates are still not sufficient. Many reports into this matter acknowledge that it is due to a number of factors which include rising incomes, urbanisation, increased female participation in the labour force, and inadequate policies and legislation to encourage and empower mothers to breastfeed at home or while returning to work. Moreover in many low and medium income countries, some mothers when not breastfeeding are not formula feeding but feeding other accessible substitutes, which may not be nutritionally appropriate or adequate.

The underlying matters referred to in your recommendations are addressed in our [Nestlé Policy on Marketing of breastmilk substitutes](#), which follows the FTSE4Good Index criteria on the marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes (BSM), whose immediate focus is on areas where there is the greatest risk to infants and young children. 152 countries are being prioritized as '**higher risk**,' due to the fact that they have the highest rates of child malnutrition and child mortality. Nestlé respects the sovereignty of governments and abides by the laws of the countries where we operate. We comply with the World Health Organisation (WHO) Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes as implemented by governments around the world in their local regulations. If these countries have adopted regulations, which are less stringent than our policy, Nestlé complies with its policy.



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Nestlé was the first manufacturer of breastmilk substitutes to apply the strict 104 BMS criteria of the FTSE4Good Index in 2011, followed by one of our biggest competitors in 2016. We encourage more companies to do the same and appreciate that the inclusion of more key industry players in FTSE4Good is now recognised by some organisations as being fundamental. Once the inclusion of major players is achieved, the industry will have been transformed, creating a new base line for discussions.

For infants who cannot be breastfed, infant formula is the only suitable breast-milk substitute (BMS) as recognised by the WHO. We market our products responsibly and do not encourage mothers to stop breastfeeding anywhere in the world. Compliance is fundamental to our practices and is incorporated into our governance structures including a compliance report that is presented annually to our Board of Directors. We also have a Global Code Compliance Committee comprising two Executive Board members, one of whom is the chair.

Attached hereto is a statement, which addresses in more detail concerns raised in your letter and which we would like you to post on your website. We would like to engage with you in a dialogue to discuss these matters further, as we have always found this is the most constructive way to move forward.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Christian Frutiger".

Christian Frutiger
Global Head of Public Affairs
Nestlé S.A.



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Response to Action Against Hunger's letter

30 May 2018

We believe breastmilk is the best nutritional choice for an infant and that breastfeeding plays a fundamental role in a baby's growth and development during the first 1000 days.

For infants who cannot be breastfed, infant formula is the only suitable breast-milk substitute (BMS) as recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO). We market our products responsibly and do not encourage mothers to stop breastfeeding anywhere in the world. Our policy follows the FTSE4Good Index criteria on the marketing of BMS, whose immediate focus is on areas where there is the greatest risk of child malnutrition and child mortality to infants and young children.

We comply with the World Health Organisation (WHO) Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes as implemented by governments around the world in their local regulations. If these countries have adopted regulations, which are less stringent than our policy, Nestlé complies with its policy.

The underlying matters referred to in the Action Against Hunger letter are addressed in our [Nestlé Policy on Marketing of breastmilk substitutes](#)

- We do not advertise infant formula for children under twelve months in all 152 countries classified as high-risk countries and for children under six months in the vast majority of 42 countries classified as low-risk countries.
- We do not make donations to hospitals or pharmacies that are not approved by local legislation.
- We do not give samples of infant formula to consumers or healthcare professionals (except for the purposes of clinical validation in accordance with our policy) in high-risk countries.
- We do not make claims that are not scientifically substantiated or not allowed per local legislation.
- We do not use photos or pictures that idealize the use of infant formula.
- We sponsor medical conferences and meetings in accordance with our policy where permitted by local legislation.
- Language used on labels follows the requirements of local legislation.