

PREVENTING AND MANAGING INAPPROPRIATE DONATIONS

BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES AND OTHER PROHIBITED PRODUCTS

A guide for emergency relief staff, donors, and governments

During emergencies:

Do not solicit, donate, accept, or distribute donations of breastmilk substitutes (BMS) and other products*



*Prohibited donations

Donations and uncontrolled distributions of the following products put infants at risk:

- **Breastmilk substitutes**, including infant formula, follow-on formula and growing-up milk.
- **Other milk products**, e.g. dried or liquid cow's milk, soya milk, evaporated or condensed milk, fermented milk or yoghurt.
- **Baby teas, juices and waters** marketed as suitable for infants under six months.
- **Bottles, teats, breast pumps.**
- **Any commercial complementary food** marketed for use for infants under six months.

What's the risk?

Donated products are often:

- In violation of the WHO Code.
- Unsafe (expired, the wrong type, unreliable quality etc.).
- Excessive in quantity.
- Labelled in the wrong language.
- Not supplied in a reliable manner.
- Not possible to hygienically use in an emergency context.
- Used by breastfeeding mothers, disrupting their milk supply.
- Lacking the instructions, supplies and support that caregivers of formula dependent infants need to feed safely.



Donations and uncontrolled distributions directly decrease breastfeeding, increase formula feeding, malnutrition, illness and death.

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Prevent donations

Do you know your role?



Never call for donations of these products.



Be aware of relevant policies.



Report any calls for, offers of or actual donations (including online media) to the designated authority.

Government, health and nutrition cluster coordinators and partners

- Endorse and disseminate a **policy** clearly stating that donations will not be accepted.
- Ensure **Violation/Donation Alert and Monitoring System** is in place.
- Repeatedly **sensitise key actors**, including other sectors and potential donors, on the dangers of donations and blanket distributions.
- Systematically **share information**, including reports of violations, for action (e.g. enforcement) at a national level and global level (e.g. NetCode).
- Establish a **Donation Prevention and Management Taskforce**.
- Develop and widely disseminate a **joint statement** to key stakeholders, including media, communications, logistics, donors and partner agencies.



Food security sector

- Ensure rations include **safe and appropriate complementary foods**.
- Ensure food aid is compliant with the **WHO Code** and that prohibited products are never part of a blanket distribution.



Customs

- Put in place customs and importation **control measures** to implement government policy.
- Keep **clear records** and communicate regularly on confiscated relief items (source, type, quantity).



Donors

- Fund **lifesaving services** and supplies e.g. nutritious food for mothers, skilled breastfeeding support and appropriately managed artificial feeding support services.



Child protection and social welfare sector

- **Never include** BMS in standard family kits.
- **Coordinate** with the nutrition sector to secure appropriate infant feeding support for separated and orphaned children.



Army, logistics and camp management

- **Adopt policy** on donations and distributions.
- **Reject requests** for procurement, storage, transportation and distribution of restricted products without official approval.



Media

- **Do not** call for donations of these products.
- Disseminate information that encourages **helpful aid** and discourages harmful aid.



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Detect and manage unprevented donations

Donations can arrive early in an emergency. Preparedness is critical: it saves money, time and lives.



1. Detect and report

- Activate a **Violation/Donation Alert System** (e.g. online reporting form).
- Sensitise all stakeholders on why and how to report donations, uncontrolled distributions and other Code violations.
- Rapidly share incoming alerts with the IYCF-E Coordination Authority/ Donation Prevention and Management Taskforce.



2. Intercept, transport and securely store

- Activate the Taskforce to handle incoming alerts.
- Assign a designated agency (ideally the Ministry of Health) to rapidly intercept prohibited products.
- Implement security measures to ensure stored products are not stolen or re-used.

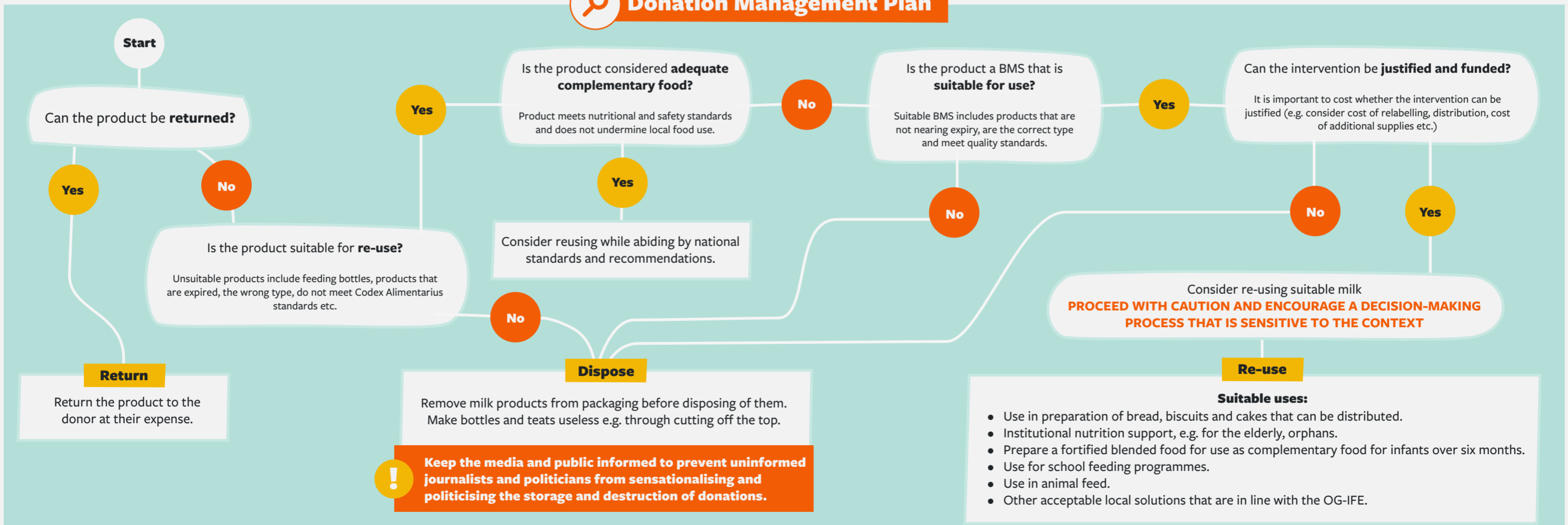


3. Sort and handle

- Establish a **Donation Management Plan** to guide decision-making on what to do with intercepted products.
- Secure resources to implement the plan, including funding, expertise, HR (including sorting and handling teams), storage facilities, transportation and equipment (e.g. for lifting/destruction).
- Handle donations according to the Donation Management Plan.



Donation Management Plan



Keep the media and public informed to prevent uninformed journalists and politicians from sensationalising and politicising the storage and destruction of donations.



Part of the **Infant Feeding in Emergencies Core Group** infographic series. Find out more at www.enonline.net/ife