

Babies Before Business: Challenges Ahead

Marking IBFAN and GIFA's 30th anniversary with the international launch of the global Breastfeeding Initiative for Child Survival



We should like to thank everyone who attended our anniversary event on October 12th, or who was with us in thought or spirit. It was a great pleasure to see so many friends and colleagues and we look forward to working with you in the future.

IBFAN-GIFA marked the 30th anniversary of both GIFA's and IBFAN's founding on October 12 1979 with an international event organised in the International Conference Centre in Geneva. More than 150 participants from international organisations, Geneva authorities, Swiss health professionals, IBFAN Europe region, NGO allies and friends, and many supporters and former colleagues came together from over 25 countries to look back with us at the highlights and achievements of the past 30 years and to plan ahead to face the challenges of the future. We viewed extracts from the film "Formula for Disaster" showing the situation in the Philippines as an illustration of the challenges we are still facing today:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNYDPKQOVUE> and

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIEiTlaIuT4&feature=related>



Dr Elisabeth Helsing of WABA presenting congratulations to IBFAN



Professor Zulfiqar Bhutta, of the Aga Khan University in Karachi, lead author of The Lancet Series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition, delivered the key-note address on “Breastfeeding and child survival: opportunities and challenges”. He provided evidence from studies in Pakistan and worldwide emphasising the importance of scaling up early initiation of breastfeeding and exclusive breastfeeding for six months as examples of interventions for child survival, healthy growth and development.



g b i c s the global breastfeeding
initiative for **child** survival

During the event, we launched the global Breastfeeding Initiative for Child Survival, the gBICS. This is a civil-society driven initiative aiming to accelerate efforts to achieve the health-related MDGs by 2015; it is especially geared to increase progress towards reducing child mortality and improving maternal health to attain MDGs 4 and 5, by protecting, promoting and supporting early, exclusive and continued breastfeeding.

The gBICS video clip can be accessed through IBFAN's website: www.ibfan.org. The appeal to Join Us! was heeded by many participants, and the Round Table discussion moderated by Andrew Chetley, the Executive Director of Healthlink Worldwide, provided the opportunity for representatives of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Emergency Nutrition Network, UNICEF, UNHCR and WHO to share their viewpoints with the audience on how to take action for lasting change.

Will you also "Join us!"?

We look forward to hearing from you

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For additional information, please visit:

<http://www.ibfan.org/art/2009%20October%2012%20event%20Press%20release%20 2 .pdf>
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