

DONATIONS TO HELP INFANTS & YOUNG CHILDREN

WHAT DONORS NEED TO KNOW

Donations of infant formula and related products cause harm in emergencies.

Conditions in an emergency or conflict are very different than in normal times.

What is safe for babies before is not safe during the emergency.

Some mothers can't breastfeed or have been separated from their babies, or even died. Why can't we help?

Please do help! Donate cash to organizations who are supporting families and unaccompanied children so they can purchase what they need.

Sending infant feeding products and equipment long distances into disrupted communities will not fix the immediate problem of families not having access to support and goods. It will, however, create new problems that distract helpers and increase the need for aid.

Where these products are needed, they are best procured in the affected communities or nearby, so that they are familiar to families and can be supplied consistently based on the specific needs of each family.

Why not baby bottles and breastpumps?

Both baby bottles and breastpumps need to be kept scrupulously clean, especially when they are also used alongside infant formula.

It is impossible to maintain the necessary hygiene in a crisis.

Babies who can't be fed directly at the breast are safest being fed by small cup, which can be disposed of or more easily cleaned. Cup feeding may be unfamiliar and need some practice, but is successful even with very small babies.

Expressing milk may be necessary for mothers who are separated from their babies or who are sharing milk with another family or for an older child. Like cup feeding, expressing by hand takes a bit of practice, but does not require any additional equipment, water, power or fuel.

What should I do with donations I already have?

Separate these items and store them in a secure, dry temperature controlled place.

If you can, return donations. If you can't return the donated items or need help, please contact us.



DO NOT REQUEST, ACCEPT OR SEND

Infant Formula (0-12 months): powder, liquid concentrate, ready to feed

Follow-on & Toddler Milks (6-9 months+): powder, ready to serve

Baby Bottles, Nipples and Sippy Cups

Breastpumps: manual, electric

Baby Foods (6 months+): jars, pouches, cereals

Other drinks: Teas, Water, Supplements (probiotics)

Why are these donations a problem?

Donations of infant formula, toddler 'milks', commercial baby foods, baby bottles and breastpumps are specifically prohibited in emergencies under international norms in order to save lives.

This is not because they are never needed, but because using them safely requires support and equipment. Babies are vulnerable in new ways in a crisis and their parents need help to keep them safe.

Untargeted distribution will make babies and young children sick. The caregivers using these items need help to use the products safely. This is true regardless of the economic and social context prior to the conflict or emergency.

Humanitarian responders provide the feeding products a family requires along with supplies and support to use them.

What can I do instead?

Donate and raise funds for organizations that are active in the affected areas so they can procure what they need quickly, while supporting local economies.

Donations of goods of all kinds create unintended difficulties and should be discouraged, especially when shipped long distances.

Encourage organizations and individuals who chose to send donated goods for young families to focus on other practical needs that make life easier for parents and caregivers (ie: diapers, hand soap, blankets).

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L.I.F.E.
Lactation and Infant Feeding in Emergencies Initiative
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