

Inter-Office Memorandum No. 061/2006
Field Office Memorandum No 061/2001

To/à: All Representatives, Chiefs of Mission and Heads of Offices in the Field
All Heads of Sub-Offices, Field Offices and Liaison Officers in the Field
All Directors of Bureaux and Divisions
All Heads of Desks and Desk Officers

From/de: Arnauld Akodjenou, Director Department of Operational Services

Ref./références: ADM-01-01, TSS-INF-06

Date/date: 20 July 2006

Title/titre: **UNHCR Policy on the Acceptance, Distribution, and Use of Milk Products in Refugee Settings**

1. This policy aims to assist and guide in the use of milk products in refugee settings. Indiscriminate distribution and use of milk products in refugee settings poses a significant risk of increased morbidity and mortality to infants and young children through the negative impact on infant feeding practices. Milk products, including DSM, Dried Whole Milk (DWM) and more recently liquid UHT milk, are handled in relief operations, often received or offered as donations. Unsolicited donations and untargeted distribution of infant formula have also featured in recent emergencies. Therapeutic milk, used in the management of severe malnutrition, typically features in refugee settings where UNHCR operates. The present milk policy specifically addresses the handling of these milk products, and applies to both donated milk products and those procured in the course of UNHCR programming.
2. The purpose of this memorandum is to share with colleagues, in the field and at Headquarters, the revised UNHCR policy document related to the acceptance, distribution, and use of milk products in refugee settings. It should be noted that this revised version replaces IOM/88/89-FOM/76/89 on the same subject.
3. The revised policy document takes into consideration new developments, including infant and young child feeding in the context of HIV and AIDS, as well as emphasising related instruments such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes.
4. This revised edition is produced in consultation with the Emergency Nutrition Network, the Infant Feeding in Emergencies Core Group (UNICEF, UNHCR, WHO, WFP, IBFAN-GIFA, CARE, Tdh, ENN) and the Institute of Child Health, London.
5. You are hereby requested to undertake the necessary actions towards its implementation in all programmes supported by UNHCR in coordination with other partners. Please ensure that the attached policy is shared with all relevant partners in the field.

6. For further information, please contact Technical Support Section in DOS by sending an email to HQTS01@unhcr.org. The document is also available on UNHCR's Website under Publications/ Partnership Guidelines/ Resources for Partnerships in Health and Nutrition.