

## **ICDC at One Asia Breastfeeding Partners Forum**

Immediately after ICDC's IBFAN-ASIA training in Jakarta, ICDC's Director, Annelies Allain, was invited to give a presentation at the 10<sup>th</sup> One Asia Breastfeeding Partners Forum, hosted by the Ministry of Health of Brunei Darussalam and organised by IBFAN Asia. The theme of the Forum was *"Complementary Feeding for Infants and Young Children – Give Mom Access to Appropriate Food, No Child Will Go Hungry"*, and it was held at the Ministry's Dewan Al-Afiah from 27 to 29 October. The One Asia Breastfeeding Partners Forum is an annual conference with participation from all Asian countries, with the common goals of strengthening the breastfeeding movement in order to improve nutrition and health of the next generation. Other than the Forum, Annelies also gave a presentation at the Universiti Brunei Darussalam during her stay in Brunei.

The focus on good practices of complementary feeding in the context of global policy and programme directions is necessary as there are millions of children under the age of 5 who are stunted or who have low weight-for-height due to poor feeding or malnutrition. Parents and health workers everywhere need to know how to select nutritious, and preferably indigenous food to provide a healthy diet to infants and young children. WHO recommends that exclusive breastfeeding for the first 6 months and safe and healthy complementary feeding (with continued breastfeeding) above 6 months is critical to meet the nutritional needs and help prevent malnutrition in children.

The lecture Annelies presented on behalf of ICDC :*"The Hottest Products in Baby Food Marketing Today"* shows how industry is circumventing the Code through cross-branding techniques on growing-up milks (toddler milks). By exploiting a gray area in the Code, industry is able to indirectly promote infant formula and follow-up formula within the scope of the Code that share the same brand identity. This growing trend significantly undermines sustained breastfeeding and appropriate complementary food feeding. Growing-up milks are addictive for toddlers who like the high sugar content. Their promotion encourages families to spend money unnecessarily on products that they do not need. Similar tactics are being used for products for pregnant women and lactating mothers. The lecture provided examples from Asian countries, and ways to address them.

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Director of ICDC Annelies Allain holding up the “International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and relevant WHA resolutions” that was compiled by ICDC at another lecture she gave in a Brunei University.



Strengthening the International Code is one of the four key strategies of the Brunei Maternal, Infant and Young Child Taskforce.



Code monitoring promotion banners were highly visible in public places such as this shopping mall in Brunei.



Opening ceremony of the 10<sup>th</sup> One Asia Breastfeeding Partners Forum.