

ISDI Guiding Principles for Multistakeholder Engagement

Brussels, 29 June 2020
Approved by the ISDI Board

Introduction

The United Nations' [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), which created the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), considers that achieving zero hunger (SDG 2) and good health and wellbeing (SDG 3) for all requires a whole society approach and the engagement of all stakeholders (SDG 17).

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has endorsed six further targets – [Global Targets 2025](#) – for improving maternal, infant and young child nutrition. These targets include stunting, anaemia, low birth weight, childhood overweight, breastfeeding and wasting. WHO Member States are committed to monitoring progress towards achieving these targets, which is vital for identifying priority areas for action and catalysing global change.

Given these Goals and Targets, ISDI, its members and manufacturers of special dietary foods¹ recognise and embrace their responsibility to operate in a responsible, ethical and professional manner.

The following principles guide ISDI's work with policy-makers, legislators, civil society organisations, academia, health experts and all interested stakeholders.

Guiding Principles

1: Provide optimal nutrition for people with special dietary requirements

Our members offer a variety of foods that are formulated to satisfy specific dietary requirements due to physical or physiological conditions and/or specific diseases and disorders.

Special dietary foods are foods for infants and young children (0-36 months), foods for special medical purposes (FSMPs) used under medical supervision, foods for people intolerant to gluten, meal replacements for low and very low calorie diets and sports foods.

2: Support science-based innovation and policy-making

Our industry is committed to continuous product improvement and advancing scientific innovation. Special dietary foods are formulated and manufactured according to the latest available science in food safety, and across the entire range of studies in the complex field of nutrition.

¹The Codex Alimentarius Commission defines special dietary foods as Foods for Special Dietary Uses (FSDU)

ISDI supports a science-based approach to innovating and regulating foods for special dietary uses. To better address the nutritional and health requirements of people with special dietary needs, it is necessary to continue to innovate and to draw on a wealth of scientific expertise and the latest research developments.

3: Set high standards on safety and quality of special dietary foods

Safety and quality are always our top priority. Our ingredients and our products are based on rigorous compositional and safety specifications, meeting strict hygiene, safety and quality control standards, as set out in relevant Codex standards and regional or national legislation.

ISDI supports the setting of high standards on safety and quality, and strongly endorses the adoption of internal governance procedures by its members and manufacturers in the industry to ensure compliance with local regulations and legal accountability to relevant competent authorities.

ISDI provides technical expertise to global food safety and quality discussions in its capacity as an official Observer at Codex Alimentarius, the joint food standards programme organisation established by the World Health Organisation and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization.

4: Support internal and external transparent dialogue

As a global trade association representing the special dietary foods industries, ISDI and its members are committed to fostering a constructive, open and evidence-based dialogue with all stakeholders on issues within the association's remit.

This includes food safety and quality of specialised nutrition products developed or manufactured by our members for people with special nutritional needs, as well as all policies and regulations relevant to our sector.

5: Implement regulatory compliance & voluntary self-regulatory initiatives

Our members are committed to full compliance with all relevant global, regional and national regulations and standards. In addition, ISDI supports voluntary self-regulatory initiatives adopted by relevant industry associations subject to the applicable antitrust regulations.

What We Stand For

1: Infant & Young Child Nutrition – good nutrition early in life supports lifelong health and wellbeing

ISDI acknowledges the importance of, and is committed to, the principles and aims of the WHO's 1981 International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes (WHO Code) as implemented through national legislation.

ISDI and its members recognise that breastmilk is the best source of nutrition for healthy infants and support exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months and continued breastfeeding for up to two years and beyond.

Infant formulas and formulas for young children support the growth and development of infants and young children when mothers cannot, or decide not to, breastfeed or where mixed feeding is practised to satisfy the nutritional needs of infants and young children.

The infant and young child nutrition industry has provided, and will continue to provide, high quality, safe and age-appropriate nutrition for pregnant mothers, infants and young children, and to offer education on healthy nutrition.

ISDI and its members promote good nutrition during pregnancy and the first few years of life when it has a critical impact on long-term health outcomes.

ISDI and its members support the right of parents and caregivers to make the appropriate choices for the infants in their care. Healthcare professionals, parents and other caregivers should have access to science-based information to enable them to make informed nutrition choices.

2: Foods for Special Medical Purposes (FSMP) – accompanied nutrition to support patient recovery

ISDI and its members support nutrition screening to enable health care professionals to identify patients who are at risk of disease-related malnutrition and who would benefit from medically-recommended nutrition intervention.

ISDI considers that:

- Once a patient is diagnosed, a comprehensive nutrition assessment should be mandatory and would provide the basis for individualised nutrition care and management plans.
- Quality Improvement Programmes (QIPs), which systematically develop, test and evaluate changes to clinical practice, are essential to help improve patient care and outcomes.
- Appropriate nutrition intervention across the continuum of care, from hospitalised patients to nursing home and rehabilitation centre residents, and in community populations, is essential.
- Nutrition-focused interventions serve as a driver of clinical and economic benefits for health care systems offering both acute and post-acute patient care.