

2026 Nutrition Congress

WORKSHOP ● Friday, 9 October 2026 | 13h00 – 16h15



● First Food Systems, Facts, and Fairness: Managing Conflicts of Interest

- **Organizer/s:** Prof Lisanne du Plessis, Stellenbosch University, Ms Jane Badham, JB Consultancy, Dr Catherine Pereira-Kotze, and Prof Tanya Doherty, South African Medical Research Council (South Africa)
- **Target Audience:** Any attendee of the Nutrition Congress 2026
- **Participant Limit:** Minimum – 20 | Maximum - 30

PROGRAMME CHAIRS & PRESENTERS:

- Prof Lisanne du Plessis, Ms Jane Badham, Dr Catherine Pereira-Kotze and Prof Tanya Doherty

WORKSHOP SUMMARY:

First food systems encompass all the actors, institutions, and influences involved in provisioning food to young children, including breastmilk, commercial milk formula, other non-human milks, and complementary foods, both commercial and home-prepared. These systems operate within broader socio-political, economic, and cultural contexts and are influenced by global health policies, corporate actors, trade dynamics, social norms, and maternal labour conditions. Despite clear and comprehensive global guidance on preventing conflicts of interest, including tailored guidance for the field of maternal, infant and young child nutrition (MIYCN), there is much evidence to document the harms of commercial influence, especially in vulnerable groups such as mothers and infants, who need to be protected from these commercial determinants of health.

In this workshop, attendees will engage with these dynamics through a global health equity lens, probing how diverse systems meet (or fail to meet) the rights and needs of caregivers and children. They will analyse case studies, including examples of best practice and instances where commercial influence has persisted. Attendees will also interrogate the role of global frameworks (such as maternity protection according to the International Labour Organisation and the World Health Organization's International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, South Africa's Regulation 991) and explore the impacts of various forms of conflict of interest (perceived, potential, actual) on professional practice and present examples of ways to counteract these conflicts.

The workshop will conclude with recommendations for how to ensure that MIYCN policy, programming, research and health professional training is safeguarded against commercial influence, considering emerging products, industries and technologies that may threaten the independence of MIYCN from commercial industries in the future.

PROGRAMME LAYOUT:

Time	Topic	Speakers
13h00 - 13h15	Welcome and setting the scene	Mrs Jane Badham
13h15 - 13h40	First Food Systems Conflict of interest Global frameworks applicable to case study group work	Prof Lisanne du Plessis, Dr Katie Pereira-Kotze and Prof Tanya Doherty.
13h40 - 13h45	Find your group and settle.	All
13h45 - 15h00	Case study group discussions	All
15h00 - 15h15	Tea	
15h15 - 16h00	Case study feedback and discussion	All
16h00 - 16h15	Recommendations and wrap-up	Mrs Jane Badham