



World Alliance for
Breastfeeding Action

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Press Statement

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Malaysian Activists Receive International Health Award

The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) is proud to announce that two Malaysian health activists, Sarah Amin and Susan Siew were the recipients of the La Leche League International (LLL) 2007 Award of Achievement, at its global conference “50 Years -Celebrating the Power of Breastfeeding” which concluded on 23 July 2007 in Chicago, USA. The award was for their dedication and commitment to promote, protect and support breastfeeding. Sarah Amin and Susan Siew are Co-Directors of the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) which has its headquarters in Penang.

The La Leche League International Award is given once in three years to outstanding individuals, whose actions have initiated significant change in promoting and protecting breastfeeding. The La Leche League International is a non-profit organisation founded in 1956 in Illinois, USA. It is a worldwide network in over 60 countries providing mother-to-mother support to protect and promote breastfeeding.

Sarah Amin has worked with WABA since its inception in 1991 and is currently the Co-Director of WABA Secretariat in Penang, Malaysia. Trained in development economics and education in Canada, taught for a year and joined the Third World Network in Penang for a short stint. Since 1992, she has been actively involved in WABA’s World Breastfeeding Week campaigns and coordinates the Women and Work project and Governance of WABA network and is actively involved in maternity protection campaigns and is currently a core member of WABA’s international Gender Working Group. Sarah is the author of *Nurturing the Future: Our First Five Years* (WABA, 1996) and co-authored *Breastfeeding; a Reproductive Health and Rights Issue* (WABA, 2005). Her USM post graduate dissertation is entitled “Mobilising Strategies of the Global Breastfeeding Movement: building alliances with the women’s movement”.

Susan Siew is the Co-Director of WABA Secretariat and coordinates the Media and Communications Programme and social mobilization activities of WABA. She compiled *Images of Breastfeeding Worldwide: a visual sourcebook for community action* and organised the WABA Global Forum in Thailand in 1996 and Tanzania in 2002. Earlier, she was involved with numerous international networks such as PAN, IBFAN, HAI and was the Deputy Director of the International Organization of Consumers Union (IOCU), Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. Trained in design

and communications, she has also worked as a graphic designer in Canada and USA with corporate design firms and public interest groups such as the Women's Press, Consumers Union, Seattle Art Museum and the New York Chinatown History Museum. Living in Penang, Susan is involved with local social development initiatives including the Sustainable Penang Initiative and the Malaysian Interfaith Network, promoting non handicapping and harmonious environments.

The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action is a global alliance of individuals, networks and organisations that protects, promotes and supports breastfeeding based on the Innocenti Declaration and the WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy on Infant and Child Feeding. WABA is in consultative status with UNICEF and an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). Its core partners are International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), La Leche League International (LLL), International Lactation Consultant Association (ILCA), Wellstart International and Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM).

WABA initiated the World Breastfeeding Week (1-7 August) in 1992 which is celebrated annually in over 120 countries. WABA was also instrumental in establishing the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, Mother-Friendly Work Place Initiative and campaigning for maternity protection for women workers in the formal and informal sector. WABA's activities are in the field of women and work, gender issues, mother support, HIV-AIDS. It has also initiated the involvement of men and youth in supporting breastfeeding and gender issues. Datuk Anwar Fazal, the co-founder and Chairperson Emeritus of WABA, was awarded the La Leche League International Health Award in 1995 for his work in promoting the welfare of mothers and children world over.

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