

THE WABA SECRETARIAT
WISHES ALL FRIENDS &
PARTNERS A PEACEFUL
& FRUITFUL 2002!

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**WABA Global
Forum 2 update**

- Over 100 people have indicated interest in attending the Forum
- More than 60 percent of the respondents are keen on doing a presentation.
- Topics proposed for presentations range from BFHI, Code, exclusive breastfeeding and mother support, to more humane breastfeeding practices, demedicalisation of the health care system and artistic expressions of breastfeeding.
- Many, including UNICEF, support the pre-forum colloquium on **Breastfeeding & HIV/AIDS**.

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**WBW 2002
Breastfeeding:
Healthy Mothers and
Healthy Babies**

For healthier babies, it is crucial to protect, promote, and support breastfeeding and the well-being of mothers as well. (see insert WBW 2002 Calendar)

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Supporting mothers for successful breastfeeding

Global Initiative for Mother Support (GIMS) for Breastfeeding

In a review of the global progress on breastfeeding in terms of the Innocenti Declaration targets, WABA identified the lack of attention paid to two key areas: • Step 10 of the BFHI on referrals to mother support groups, and • the role of community support and support systems to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. To address these gaps, the WABA Mother Support Task Force has been facilitating a process to develop the Global Initiative for Mother Support (GIMS) for Breastfeeding.

Based on an approach that respects human rights and women's reproductive rights, GIMS for Breastfeeding aims to create the appropriate environment of awareness and support for mothers to initiate and sustain breastfeeding. GIMS defines *mother support* as any support provided to mothers to improve breastfeeding practices, including moral and social support, hands-on assistance, accurate and timely information, and humane care during childbirth.

The idea of the initiative snowballed into a global email discussion with participation by various groups. Facilitated by the Task Force Coordinator, Paulina Smith, GIMS for Breastfeeding has progressed over the one-year period. It has developed a clear mission statement of its vision, goals and scope, introductory pamphlets and an action plan. Discussions on GIMS were carried out at various local and international meetings. Last July, planning meetings were conducted at the La Leche League International Conference in Chicago, and at the Global Breastfeeding Partners Meeting in Brazil. These were met with encouraging responses. To launch the initiative in the region, the GIMS Asia-Pacific Conference is planned for 21-25 April 2002 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which includes a two-day seminar on maternity protection.

Through GIMS, the Mother Support Task Force hopes to work more closely with breastfeeding groups and forge links with other issue movements such as those working on humane childbirth practices, family support, midwifery, and women's health and rights to facilitate a holistic view on mother support.



Active participation at the GIMS for Breastfeeding meeting at the LLLI Conference in Chicago, 2001

For more information on GIMS and to join the email discussion, contact the WABA Secretariat, or the Mother Support Task Force: Paulina Smith <smithpc@att.net.mx>, Rebecca Magalhaes <rmagalhaes@llli.org>, Norjinah Moin <norjinah@hotmail.com>.



HIV/AIDS

Pretoria pasteurization potential treatment for breastmilk?

A study on the heating of cow's milk might provide an answer to treating breastmilk of HIV-positive mothers. Utilising simple accessible household implements, the Pretoria Pasteurisation was tried on cow's milk to achieve a temperature high enough to inactivate HIV and E.Coli, but low enough to conserve IgA and the other benefits that are known to be present in breastmilk. The method was observed in a study by Jeffery BS and Mercer KG, *Pretoria Pasteurisation: A potential method for the reduction of postnatal mother to child transmission of the human immunodeficiency virus* (Journal of Tropical Pediatrics 2000:46:219-223).

Four African country study on breastfeeding in HIV settings

As a result of concerns about declining action to protect, support and promote breastfeeding and young child feeding in Sub-Saharan Africa, Prof. Michael C. Latham, Cornell University, and Mdm. Pauline Kisanga, IBFAN Africa, carried out a month-long fact finding visit in four countries – Botswana, Kenya, Namibia and Uganda.

The outcome report, entitled *Current Status Of Protection, Support And Promotion Of Breastfeeding In Four African Countries*, tried to determine reasons for the decline and made recommendations for the countries. Prepared for UNICEF/ESARO in March 2001, this makes an interesting comparative study as these countries have in some ways similar infant feeding problems yet they are economically, culturally and politically very different from each other.

There was close to unanimous agreement that the decline in support for breastfeeding was related to the HIV/AIDS pandemic sweeping these countries, including publicity based on scientific evidence that mothers could infect their infants through breastfeeding. An important overall conclusion of the review is that there has been a massive spillover effect, in which concern for HIV/AIDS has been transferred into deterioration in actions to support breastfeeding. This is due to the very widely held false view that almost all mothers who are HIV positive will infect their infants through breastfeeding, and the very low recognition of the extremely high risks of formula feeding for poor families.

The study emphasised that stronger Code protections are needed in the age of HIV, yet countries are not acting to put these in place. Also pointed out is the inequity in allocation of resources when women who opt to use formula get it free, yet those who opt to breastfeed are given no resources of equal value, and in some settings may be denied antiretroviral therapy as well.

The authors fear that if the concerns about MTCT are translated into major heavily funded efforts to convince mothers to avoid all breastfeeding, either because they are HIV

positive, or they fear they may be, the results will be disastrous for breastfeeding in Sub-Saharan Africa. A very convincing research and evaluation is needed to show that such policies will do good, not harm.

The study is not easy reading, nor a happy story, but it will ring true to anyone struggling with the realities of the world and the acute panic that has gripped so many health policy makers with whom breastfeeding advocates work.

Adapted from a review by Helen Armstrong. Views expressed in this study are of the authors. For copies, please write to Pauline Kisanga, IBFAN Africa, PO Box 781, Mbabane, Swaziland. Fax: 268-40 40546 Email: pkisanga@realnet.co.sz



Research

\$3.6 billion saved if breastfed

A recent study by USDA's Economic Research Service found that a minimum of US\$3.6 billion could be saved if the prevalence of exclusive breastfeeding increased from current levels to those recommended by the U.S. Surgeon General. In 1990, the U.S. Surgeon General proposed a goal for the Nation to increase the proportion of mothers who breastfeed their babies in the early postpartum period to 75 percent, and 50 percent at 6 months. Currently, the breastfeeding rates are at 64 percent at hospital discharge and 29 percent at 6 months. This \$3.6 billion is based on reduced incidences of only three childhood illnesses and reflects savings in terms of medical expenditures, wages lost by parents attending to an ill child, and the prevention of premature deaths.

Source: www.ers.usda.gov/publication/FoodReview/May2001/FRV2412d.pdf

Experts caution on soy infant formula

Experts dispute a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in August which claimed that the feeding of soy formula for infants is "reassuring".

Dr. Mary Enig, President of the Maryland Nutritionists Association, points out that there are higher rates of reproductive disorders, asthma and allergies in those who had received soy formula as infants. Other gynaecological problems that were not mentioned include higher rates of cervical cancer, polycystic ovarian syndrome, blocked fallopian tube, pelvic inflammatory disease and hormonal disorders. "The research team glossed over negative findings and omitted them from the Abstract and Conclusions, noting only slightly longer duration of menstrual bleeding and greater discomfort with menstruation," she said.

Experts were also critical of the design of the study, in which researchers conducted telephone interviews with 282 adults fed soy formula and 563 adults fed milk formula during controlled feeding studies at the University of Iowa between 1965-1978. Dr. Naomi Baumslag, Professor of Pediatrics at Georgetown University said that data derived from interviews that ask a lot of embarrassing questions cannot be used to draw any meaningful conclusions. "The question we should be asking is why are so many of our babies on soy?" said Dr. Baumslag.

"It can only be because of the advertising efforts of the soy industry, because there is a great deal of scientific evidence that soy formula can be damaging to newborns."

The study, headed by Dr. Brain L. Strom, was funded by the National Institutes of Health and the International Formula Council and carried out under the auspices of the Fomon Infant Nutrition Unit at the University of Iowa, which is supported by major formula manufacturers Ross and Abbot, Nestle and Mead Johnson.

Source: www.westonaprice.org

Deadly mixture of nitrate and formula for Lithuanian baby

Three-week old baby Osvaldas Lamauskas was found dead in his cradle one early morning in Lithuania, November 2001. The cause: acute nitrate poisoning from water in the family's well, used to prepare formula. Chief physician Auksentas Morkevicius from the intensive care unit of the Panevezys district hospital stated that at least several times a year babies are admitted to the hospital with nitrate poisoning, reported Lithuanian daily *Lietuvos rytas*. Babies in these cases were usually 1-2 month old and were all formula fed. Experts stated that nitrate in well water is four times higher than the allowed limit for adults due to contamination from surrounding fields. In all the cases, infants were younger than 3 months old and could be breastfed. Health education and breastfeeding promotion plough slowly in Lithuania, with only 6.6% of babies exclusively breastfed at the age of six months.

Source: *Lietuvos rytas*, Lithuania, 14 November 2001



Women & Work

Maternity protection update



- **C-183 in force in Feb 2002**

ILO Convention 183 on maternity protection will come into force on 7 February 2002, one year after two countries, Slovakia and Italy, ratified it.

- **Brazil includes adopted children**

Maternity protection in Brazil has been approved to be extended to mothers with adopted children.

- **Ten groups received seedgrant**

Ten groups from nine countries received seedgrants ranging from US\$500 to US\$2,000 from the WABA Maternity Protection project to stimulate country level action to act on the new ILO Convention 183 and/or strengthen maternity protection nationally.

- **Maternity Protection Chart Updated!**

WABA has updated its chart on the *Status of Maternity Protection by Country*. In addition to data on maternity, parental and paternity leave, the new chart includes information on breastfeeding breaks. Please see the chart enclosed or visit the WABA website. If you have new information or changes, please inform the WABA Secretariat.



Code Compliance

Nestle sets up institute in Africa

Concern grew over the setting up of the Nestle Nutrition Institute for South and East Africa which was launched in Cape Town last August. Nestle claimed that the institute aims to enhance communication between doctors, nutritionists and health workers, and to improve the nutrition of adults and children. It would also allow them to interact with Nestle staff and scientists worldwide. "Some of the areas of focus will, for example, be how to get money for research projects in communities," said Ferdinand Haschke, Nestle's director of nutrition for southern and eastern Africa.

Haschke also said its long term goal includes particularly nutrition in the HIV vertical transmission programme through infant formula. Nestle's NAN Pelargon, which supposedly is able to kill bacteria from contaminated water, has been made available in the region. Already, governments in Botswana and South Africa are using it in their feeding programmes for children infected with HIV.

Source: www.busrep.co.za

Discussion paper on labeling

The *Discussion Paper on Nutrition Claims and Functional Claims*, prepared by the Directorate General Health and Consumer Protection, European Commission, lays out many of the problems relating to the use of health claims and rightly warns that the food industry uses claims as marketing tools, commented Baby Milk Action. The paper illustrates the complexity facing policy makers when attempting to regulate this area of labelling and marketing.

Baby Milk Action and IBFAN are especially opposed to the use of claims which imply that a certain food or ingredient plays a special beneficial role in diet (nutrition function claims and disease risk reduction claims). They support the current view of the Codex Committee on Food Labelling that health claims should not be permitted as they tend to be misleading, invariably unscientific and designed to promote.

As the discussion paper outlines, manufacturers will use every possible combination of wording to promote products and get round restrictions made on them. Banning all health claims will allow only nutrition statements which correctly inform the public and enable people to make wise decisions about their diet.

Article 9 of the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes requires full nutrition information and warnings. Yet, companies are using 'functional' claims to target nursing mothers, undermining their confidence in the quality of their breastmilk. The baby food market is currently worth \$10.9 billion. If every baby in the world were artificially fed for 6 months then this could easily increase to \$36 billion.

Source: Baby Milk Action. The Commission paper can be obtained at http://europa.eu.int/comm/food/fs/fl/fl_index_en.html

WBW was celebrated across **Canada**, from British Columbia to Newfoundland. Activities included picnics, simultaneous breastfeeding, displays and radio talk shows. Toronto Public Health also put posters about the benefits of breastfeeding throughout the city's transit system.

In **France**, WBW was coordinated by the Coordination Francais pour l'Allaitement Maternel (CoFAM) with collaborating organisations such as Information Pour l'Allaitement and La Leche League. They produced an informative dossier targeting the public and the media. One significant publication is the *Resource Guide for Breastfeeding Mothers* (Edition 2001), which lists all breastfeeding support groups, organisations and departments in

France, their functions and contact details. Also included is a list of breastfeeding publications in French - a handy tool for both families as well as professionals.

Tessa Martyn of Baby Milk Action, **UK**, contributed articles on the theme for several magazines, such as the Royal College of Midwives Journal, which dedicated the cover of its August 2001 issue to WBW.

In **Germany**, the coordinator of WBW, Aktionsgruppe Babynahrung (AGB), translated the action folder and produced a poster, among other things.



Top to bottom: Publications on breastfeeding from France, UK and Germany

More groups celebrated WBW in **India** in 2001. The Indian Medical Association (Singrauli) and Singrauli Obstetric & Gynaecological Society joined effort in their outreach programmes during the week, reaching many in the States of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Training on breastfeeding was conducted for health workers in the coal mines of Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) and surrounding area. For students, an essay competition on the *Role of Breastfeeding in the Development of Children* was organised. A series of talks, audio-visual displays and distribution of educative pamphlets were also done in villages and schools.

Extra, Extra!... Breastfeeding made headlines in newspapers in India



Communicating Breast

Providing information for life... The World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) highlights the importance of accurate and timely information for parents and health workers. We provide facts on breastfeeding to the public in general. Breastfeeding is promoted through various forms of media and communication styles, to send the across br

BPNI Maharashtra State Branch, based in Mumbai, also initiated many WBW programmes. In conjunction with the theme, the branch launched its website <www.breastfeedingindia.org>. It provides information for health workers as well as lay individuals, and updates visitors on their projects and discussions. As part of their Crèche Upgradation project, an interactive workshop for crèche owners and parents was held to discuss experiences on operating a crèche. With the help of mother support group leaders, public awareness drives were also carried out. Furthermore, the BPNI Amravati Branch conducted a series of events from education programmes to quizzes and competitions. These programmes reached thousands of students and women in various institutions.



Pushpatai Kittur, 83, sharing her experiences at a workshop on running a crèche.

Right: Judges had a tough time selecting the best breastfeeding rangoli, a design art using coloured rice



In **Bangladesh**, as many as 26 organisations joined the Bangladesh Breastfeeding Foundation (BBF) in their innovative programmes, carried out from national to community levels. About 800 people led by the Health Secretary rallied from the Children's Park to the National Press Club. Songs and materials developed by BBF were brought to slum areas and gifts were given to a mother in each slum who breastfed exclusively for six months. Health education and discussions in schools, mosques, and among doctors, newly weds and nursing mothers were also organised in addition to art and essay competitions. Finally, BFHI awards were distributed to deserving hospitals.

The **Indonesia** Breastfeeding Promotion Foundation received much governmental support for WBW. With collaboration from the Ministry of Health and the Coalition for Healthy Indonesia, an action plan to revitalise BFHI was officiated at a press conference. They had a

feeding for WBW 2001

WBW) theme *Breastfeeding in the Information Age*, stressed the health workers to make an informed choice, as well as the need to bring advocates around the world amplified efforts, utilising various breastfeeding messages. Here are more stories of their endeavours.



Indonesian Minister for Women Empowerment (3rd from left) visits the factory's counselling centre

Left: A booklet on mother-friendly workplaces distributed during WBW

meeting with the Minister for Women Empowerment, who also attended the one-day seminar on Baby-Friendly Workplaces at a shoe factory. A public seminar on the theme *Menyusui Di Era Informasi* was carried out at a popular shopping mall, while booklets on Baby-Friendly Workplaces were distributed during these events.

WBW in **Korea** became a national event. Besides designating three new Baby Friendly Hospitals, the Korean Committee for UNICEF organised a breastfeeding agreement campaign at Myungdong, a busy shopping district in Seoul. 5,500 people signed up agreeing to breastfeed. Agreements were also sent through the Internet and post. The 7-day campaign saw the participation of 7,500 people. In another event, top-ranked actress Shi-Ra Chae was designated the Ambassador for Breastfeeding for her active role in promoting breastfeeding. Chae herself is breastfeeding and refuses to appear in breastmilk substitutes advertisements. The Committee also collaborated with national daily *Hankyoreh* to carry weekly special reports on breastfeeding from August through December.



"Yes, I pledge to breastfeed!"... thousands of signatures were collected.

La Leche League **Guatemala** (LLL-G) held its WBW Conference for the fifth consecutive year. The conference was entitled *Breastfeeding: Is it for you?* LLL-G took the opportunity to honour its founders, Mimi Wilson and Dina de Nathusius. Kids at the conference were not left out of the fun. A crèche was prepared, equipped with breastfeeding colouring books and clay model figures, under the care of an attendant. Besides the conference, LLL-G also organised a Breastfeeding Walk in Chimaltenango. More than 150 people paraded through houses and the market, attracting crowds to listen to the breastfeeding messages broadcasted. In another event, a WBW painting contest attracted the participation of over 440 children.

WBW in **Samoa** was officiated by the Minister of Health at a press conference held at Tupua Tamasese Meaole Hospital. In line with this year's theme, the Department of Health Breastfeeding Committee used a variety of media to publicise breastfeeding during the week. These included TV and radio spots, talk shows, and displays. The department also circulate information packages to the network of media in Samoa. The Ministry of Women's weekly radio programme also featured breastfeeding during the week. The week was concluded with a small survey in Apia town carried out by the Nutrition Section of the department to assess the impact of their breastfeeding promotion programme.



Nurse Rosa Samuelu (left) discussing breastfeeding booth at a market in Samoa

In **Cayman Islands**, action folders, posters and give-aways were distributed to health centres and private clinics for displays which benefited many visitors. The Government Information Services (GIS) provided an article on this year's theme in a national newspaper. Other media also carried articles and interviews on WBW. In their monthly meeting during the week, the Mother-to-Mother support group held a certificate ceremony for the oldest breastfeeding child and those who were exclusively breastfed for six months. Besides that, the group also launched their website <www.caymoms.org>.

In **Netherlands Antilles**, a congress for healthcare professionals entitled *Breastfeeding & Healthcare: Knot or Turning Point?* was organised by the Public Health Services in Curaçao, with the cooperation of other departments such as perinatal care and environmental hygiene. The government of the island, recognising the importance of breastfeeding, also helped to finance the event. Participants benefited from the 27 presentations and 8 workshops with heightened awareness on breastfeeding.



Advocacy & Representation

Call for Endorsement

Working towards a toxic free future

In addressing the issue on the contamination of breastmilk, WABA has been working with a coalition of over 350 environmental health and justice groups, the International POPs Elimination Network (IPEN), since 1999. This collaboration seeks to understand the issue from both the environmental health and justice and breastfeeding perspectives, share experiences and develop communication strategies to educate the general public, health workers, policy makers and the media.

A joint statement emerged as a result of this collaboration. The statement, *Working towards a toxic free future*, envisions a toxic free environment with generations of healthy children. It is based on the recognition that breastfeeding promotion should take place alongside efforts to eliminate toxic chemicals from the environment. This statement went through a series of consultations via email discussions and at some key meetings. It is now endorsed by some leading individuals and organisations such as IBFAN Penang, LLLI, Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA), ECO-Accord, Russia, Associacao de Combate aos Pops (ACPO), Brazil, Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF), Netherlands, and Consumers International Regional Office for Asia and Pacific.

The contamination of breastmilk is one symptom of the environmental contamination of our communities. Responsibility for this problem belongs to the industrial sources of contamination, not to breastfeeding women. Therefore, educational and advocacy efforts to promote a toxic free future should recognise and encourage collective action aimed at promoting breastfeeding, reducing chemical contamination and developing the strongest possible pollution prevention laws.

See the statement enclosed. The statement is also available on these websites: WABA <www.waba.org.br> • IPEN <www.ipen.org>

USAID's milk policy an improvement

WABA was invited to join USAID, the United States bilateral development agency, in a meeting in September last year on their new policy for distributing non-fat dry milk (NFDM) in developing countries. WABA Steering Committee member Michael Latham and Research Task Force Coordinator Ted Greiner commented on the policy, stating among others, their general opposition to industrialised countries' agricultural policies that lead to surplus and distribution in ways that sometimes aim to generate markets and dependency in recipient countries.

Following the meeting, USAID made appropriate changes to the NFDM policy to safeguard against its misuses. The changes were welcomed as a great improvement over previous approaches of distributing surplus milk powder in ways that resulted in its being used for infant feeding. The new policy requires, among others, compliance

with the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and all subsequent relevant WHA resolutions. USAID also agreed to share WABA's concerns on the indiscriminate distribution of milk powder with the US Department of Agriculture authorities in charge of other US Government food aid programmes and other bilateral donors of food aid.

For a copy of USAID's *Policy on the use of Non-Fat Dry Milk for Monetization* and WABA's comment, contact the WABA Secretariat.

WABA supports the Global Movement for Children!

The Movement is a collective global force devoted to creating a world where every child has the right to dignity, security and self-fulfilment. Find out more on the Global Movement for Children and Say Yes for Children campaign at <www.gmfc.org>.



UNGASS on Children: new dates

The UN General Assembly has formally rescheduled the UN Special Session on Children for 8-10 May 2002 in New York. It was originally planned for 19-21 September 2001. For news update on the Special Session developments, please visit www.unicef.org/specialsession/.

Education a clear winner as 30 million say yes to children

Over 38 million pledges have been made since the Global Movement for Children was launched in April. The movement began with a campaign that urged individuals to 'Say Yes' for children by pledging support for ten principles that protect the rights and well-being of children. Pledgers were also asked to vote on the three actions they considered most urgent. The results will be publicised at the Special Session for Children in May 2002, as a way of encouraging governments to act on any pledges they made. Of the ten principles, 'Educate Every Child' was a clear winner with 14.7 percent of the votes casted globally. 'Fight HIV/AIDS' and 'Stop Harming and Exploiting Children' came second and third, with 12 and 11 percent respectively.

Source: www.advocacynet.org

NGOs trusted to 'do what is right'

NGOs have earned a far greater level of trust than the Group of Eight governments, media and transnational corporations. These are the findings of a survey carried out last year among 500 well-educated, media attentive people from Australia, France, the UK and the US. NGOs are trusted nearly 2:1 to 'do what is right' compared to governments, the media and corporations. Two-thirds of respondents said that corporations only care about profits while over half said that NGOs represent values they believe in. NGOs ranked significantly higher as a source of credible information than media outlets. Two thirds thought NGO influence had increased significantly over the past decade.

Source: www.edelman.com, ACC/SCN Number 22, July 2001

Calendar of Events 2002

Jan 14-21	■ Executive Board of WHO, 109 th Session, Geneva, Switzerland
Feb 27-Mar 1	■ WABA Steering Committee Meeting, Penang, Malaysia
Mar 3-9	■ IBCoCo, New Delhi, India
Mar 8	■ International Women's Day
Mar 8-12	■ Codex Committee on Milk & Milk Products, Wellington, New Zealand
Mar 11-15	■ ACC/SCN 29 th Session, Berlin, Germany
Apr 21-23	■ GIMS Asia-Pacific Conference, <i>Linking & Nurturing Mother Support</i> , Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
Apr 24-25	■ Strengthening Maternity Protection Seminar, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
May 1	■ International Workers' Day
May 8-10	■ Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Children, New York, USA
May 21-25	■ WHA, Geneva, Switzerland
June 7-22	■ 6 th Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC6) on POPs, Geneva, Switzerland
June 26-28	■ Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission, 49 th Session, Rome, Italy
July 25-28	■ ILCA Conference, Boca Raton, Florida, USA
Aug 1-7	■ World Breastfeeding Week 2002 <i>Breastfeeding: Healthy Mothers and Healthy Babies</i>
Sept 2-11	■ Rio+10, South Africa
Sept 20-21	■ WABA Pre-Forum Colloquium on Breastfeeding & HIV/AIDS, Arusha, Tanzania
Sept 23-27	■ WABA Global Forum 2, <i>Nurturing the Future: Challenges to Breastfeeding in the 21st Century</i> , Arusha, Tanzania



News from the Secretariat Penang, Malaysia

SECRETARIAT NEWS, PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & OUTREACH

Oct • Sarah Amin participated in the WHO Regional Consultation on Infant and Young Child Feeding in Asia and the Pacific, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia • Susan Siew presented the issue and development of a joint statement on breastmilk and contaminants at the IBFAN Asia-Pacific Planning Meeting, Penang • Meeting with Elaine Petitot-Cote and Ines Fernandez on Women & Work projects

Nov • Susan Siew and Sarah Amin met with local hosts and partners on WABA Global Forum 2 in Tanzania • Ines Fernandez joins the secretariat to assist with Women & Work projects • Ted Greiner joins the secretariat to work on Forum 2 programme • Vi Vien K. assisted with the resource centre, website and Women & Work projects • Liew Mun Tip attended workshop on counselling related to HIV, Penang

Dec • William Chow joins the secretariat team to assist with Forum 2 and media & communication • Development of WBW 2002 calendar announcement • Reports to funders • Finalising joint statement on breastmilk and contaminants • Meeting with Lakshmi Menon on Forum 2 publications • Revision and reprinting of WABA brochure

VISITORS

Oct • Amara Peeris, Sarvodaya Women's Movement, Sri Lanka • Nonkululeko Mdluli, IBFAN Africa, Swaziland • Elaine Petitot-Cote, GIFA, Switzerland **Nov** • Nancy MacKeith & Jim Bewsher, Interagency Group on Breastfeeding Monitoring (IGBM), UK



Network News

Alliance for a Corporate-Free UN

The Alliance for a Corporate-Free UN was formed to counter undue corporate influence in the United Nations (UN) following the set up of the UN Global Compact with world business leaders. The alliance is a global network of human rights, environment and development groups consisting of such organisations as CorpWatch, IBFAN and Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO). It also supports UN initiatives to hold corporations accountable on issues of human rights, labour rights and the environment.

The Global Compact was launched on 26 July 2000, with co-operation of some 50 major corporations and labour, human rights, environmental and development organisations. The idea was proposed by United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who challenged world business leaders to help build the social and environmental pillars, in his address to the World Economic Forum in 1999.

The members of the alliance believe in a UN which:

- holds commercial rules subservient to human rights, labour and environmental principles,
- avoids excessive and undue corporate influence,
- holds corporations accountable in a legal framework,
- maintains integrity of international social and environmental agreements,
- receives adequate funding from governments.

Source: www.corpwatch.org; www.unglobalcompact.org

Global Women's Strike!

Come the next International Women's Day on 8 March 2002, women around the world will once again gather for the 3rd Global Women's Strike to demand for a world which values all women's work and lives. Initiated in 2000, the strike encourages participation of concerned men and children as well. The strike is called and coordinated by the International Wages for Housework Campaign in over 65 countries from Japan to Hawaii, and Albania to South Africa.

Women's roles and work are often undervalued by most societies resulting in them being overworked, lowly paid and divided. The strike believes that women's vital role of birthing and caring is a right and must be recognised and respected. Among the demands of the strike are payment for all caring work, pay equity for women and men, paid maternity leave and breastfeeding breaks.



For more information on the strike, contact the International Wages for Housework Campaign, Crossroads Women's Centre, 230a Kentish Town Road, London NW5 2AB Tel: 020 7482 2496 Fax: 020 7209 4761 Email: womenstrike8m@server101.com Website: <http://womenstrike8m.server101.com>

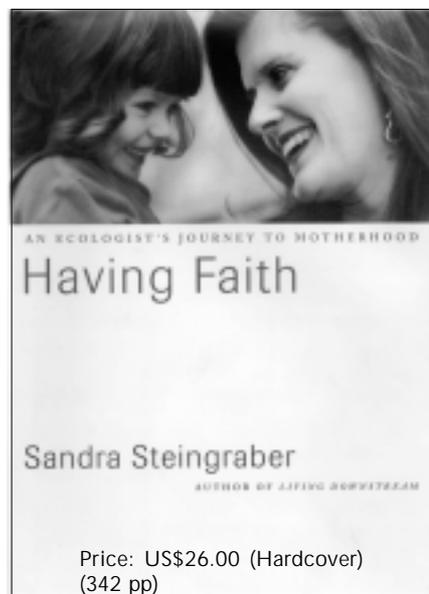
Having Faith

by Sandra Steingraber

At age thirty-eight, Sandra Steingraber became pregnant with her first child. As an ecologist, she was keenly aware that she herself was becoming a habitat for another human being. In this book, with a scientist's eye and a poet's lyricism, she chronicles her pregnancy and the period following it, taking readers from conception through each month of gestation, through the birth of her daughter Faith, through learning to breastfeed and, eventually, through weaning.

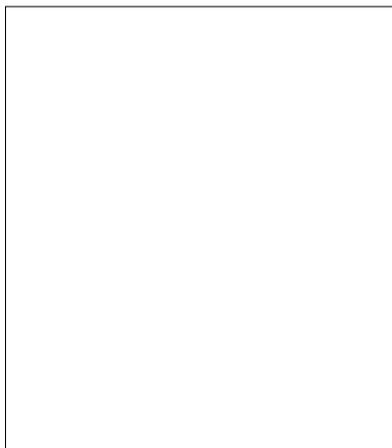
The author described the complicated and fascinating ways a mother's body changes to support the growth and nourishment of a child. Readers also learn about the myriad environmental threats to pregnancy, contaminants in breastmilk, and, to paraphrase Steingraber, the one simple truth that protecting the ecosystem inside a mother's body requires protecting the one outside it.

Sandra Steingraber, Ph.D., is a biologist, poet, and environmental activist. She is on the faculty at Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, and is the author of *Living Downstream: An Ecologist Looks at Cancer and the Environment* (1997). Called 'the New Rachel Carson' in a 1999 Sierra magazine story, she will receive the Rachel Carson Leadership Award from Chatham College, Carson's alma mater, this year. Steingraber recently gave birth to her second child.



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Posters to benefit breast cancer research fund



560mmx715mm
black and white

Celebrate breastfeeding and benefit the breast cancer fund by getting this poster! Proceeds from the sale of the posters will be channelled to the Breast Cancer Research Fund. The poster costs US\$20 each, and US\$15 for order above 10 posters, excluding shipping charges of US\$5.

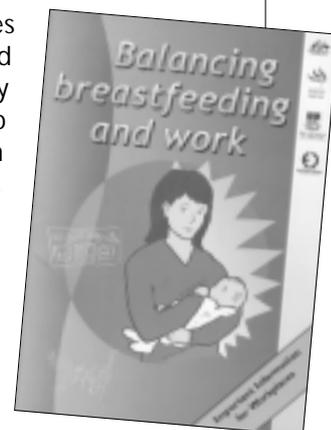
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Balancing breastfeeding and work

Published by the Commonwealth of Australia

Through its National Breastfeeding Strategy, the Australian government is committed to encourage breastfeeding awareness, with the aim of increasing Australia's breastfeeding rate. One of its multi-faceted approaches includes producing and distributing an information kit on breastfeeding and work.

This 33-page booklet provides information for employers and employees on how and why women should be encouraged to continue breastfeeding upon returning to work. It also helps readers negotiate appropriate agreements to support working women who wish to breastfeed. Information on how to successfully balance breastfeeding and work can also be photocopied for employees.



For more information on the kit and other resources produced under the National Breastfeeding Strategy, please contact the Department of Health and Aged Care: Manager, Legislative Services, AusInfo, GPO Box 1920, Canberra ACT 2601, Australia. Website: www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/brfeed



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