



WABA Annual Summary Report for 2005

World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action

May 2006

Nurturing the Future : Social Mobilisation For Better Infant Health

WABA's 2005 Annual Report covers the following eight programme areas:

- * Social Mobilisation/World Breastfeeding Week
- * Advocacy: Outreach and Representation
- * Information and Networking
- * Development and Governance
- * HIV and Infant Feeding
- * Maternity Protection/Women & Work
- * Gender
- * Mother, Father & Community-Based Support

Major Achievements in 2005

- Engaging and working closely with its Core Partners, WABA helped to facilitate one of the most significant events for the breastfeeding movement in 2005 – the **15th anniversary of the Innocenti Declaration**. The two-day event held in Florence, Italy, 21 – 22 Nov. 2005, highlighted the achievements as well as the challenges of the breastfeeding movement over the past 15 years. It culminated in the adoption of a **new Innocenti Declaration** which calls on Member States, international partners, professional groups and communities to fulfil their obligations and responsibilities articulated in the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (GSIYCF) and to create an environment that enables and supports mothers and families to make informed choices about optimal and infant feeding. The new Declaration provides ample opportunity to revitalise global interest and action both around the GSIYCF as well as the new and larger challenges of working women in the informal sector, gender inequality and poverty, issues which WABA helped to incorporate in the document.
- Our **advocacy work expanded in 2005** with WABA making a presence in over 30 global, regional and national events, including the UN Standing Committee on Nutrition (SCN), two international AIDS conferences, three major women's conferences, the People's Health Assembly 2, events of the humane birthing movement, Save the Children and of WABA's Core Partners, as well as national WBW celebrations, among others. Initial groundwork has also started on **youth outreach**.
- The annual World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) 2005 campaign was organised globally on the theme Breastfeeding and Family Foods: Loving and Healthy - Feeding other foods while breastfeeding is continued - an important component of the GSIYCF following 6 months of exclusive breastfeeding. Fifty-eight countries reported activities during the Week, 47% more than in 2004. For the first time in WABA's history, we received letters of support from the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), PAHO and the International Pediatric Association, in addition to UNICEF and WHO.
- A **new WBW seedgrant project** was introduced in 2005. It generated great interest among the network and has led to a number of significant national initiatives. Also for the first time, **a total of 32 language translations and adaptations of the WBW 2005 action folder** were produced by WABA and network partners; of which 20 resulted from the WBW seedgrants.
- **Better coordination with WABA's Regional Focal Points and Core Partners** has increased synergy among partners and enhanced the outcomes in all programme areas.
- A joint **Symposium on HIV and Breastfeeding** organised by WABA and LLLI in July 2005 resulted in concrete actions and key messages to support breastfeeding in the context of HIV/AIDS. It was also the first time that **gender issues** were raised, which has led to expanding WABA's analysis and discussions on HIV and infant feeding to include a gender perspective.
- 2005 was a phenomenal year for the **gender programme**, with three gender training sessions, three new publications, advocacy at three international/regional women's conferences and networking with over a hundred representatives of women's organisations.
- The **maternity protection programme** made some inroads with new trade union contacts, while maintaining its pace with the seedgrants project which has helped to initiate action on supporting working women in 10 countries.
- Networking around **mother and father support** has been enhanced mostly through the **electronic newsletter, increasing its circulation from 8000 to 10,000 contacts**. Work on men's involvement is also gradually growing, albeit with some delays.

SOCIAL MOBILISATION: WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK

1. The Golden Bow – a WABA-UNICEF Initiative continued to be extremely popular in 2005 and a much sought after product. Compared to 2004 (10,000 bows), more than 23,000 bows were ordered and distributed to country level WBW celebrants.

2. The distribution of World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) materials, such as the English, Spanish and French action folders, have **increased** by 80%, 39% and 18% respectively from 2004. The number of recipients of WBW materials have also increased for English and French speakers by 59% and 73% each.

3. Through the new seedgrants project, WABA has linked with another **6 new groups** now organising WBW. In total, 18 groups from 17 countries received WBW seedgrants valued between \$500 to \$1000 each.

4. The number of hits on WBW 2005 via Google totals 2.4 million. If we were to take a very conservative figure of 0.1% of the hits as actual celebrations, we would have a total minimum of **2400 activities** taking place worldwide

5. WABA's website is now in the top 20, with a placing of 16 out of 20 million searches on breastfeeding.

6. The WBW web-section is the main draw of the WABA website. It receives an average of 3651 visitors monthly. A total of 40,166 visitors visited the section in 2005.

ADVOCACY: OUTREACH & REPRESENTATION

7. Collaboration with the Coalition for Maternity Services (CIMS) – WABA's key liaison with the humane birthing movement – in 2005 took the form of dialogue/input into the development of the *Mother-Baby Friendly Childbirth Initiative* (MBFCI) and the survey, as well as doing a feasibility study on venues in Malaysia for a **Global Mother-Baby Friendly Summit** scheduled for 2008.

8. On behalf of the Core Partners, UNICEF and WHO, WABA facilitated the production of two key products for the Innocenti + 15 event:

- a) the **Key Messages** document and
- b) the **new Innocenti Declaration**.

We also contributed substantially to the joint report entitled "*1990-2005 Celebrating the Innocenti Declaration: past achievements, present challenges and the way forward for infant and young child feeding*" produced for the 15th Anniversary.

9. Advocacy with UNICEF during an NGO consultation on UNICEF's draft Mid-Term Strategic Plan, 2006-2009, together with the UN Breastfeeding Advocacy Team (UNBAT) was critical in ensuring that IYCF remained on UNICEF's agenda. In conjunction with this, UNBAT, WABA and its core partners also helped to secure the position of the legal adviser (on The Code) at UNICEF Headquarters for another year to December 2006. The position was to be terminated in December 2005.

INFORMATION AND NETWORKING

10. There is more than a doubling of the total number of communications compared to 2004 (8,685 for 2005; 3,259 for 2004), indicating **increased inter-activity with the network** - sharing information and responding to information request, etc.

11. Three issues of WABALINK were produced with a circulation of 639 in 2005. The WABALINK survey responses, though few, indicate generally positive feedback.

12. With the re-organisation and computerisation improvements in the Resource Centre (RC) system since 2004, the activities have also increased. In 2005, the RC had 110 acquisitions mainly in terms of books and e-books and sent out 19 major mailings of selected information packages. It is now finalising a mailing list database, also known as the Contact Management System (CMS), for more effective networking.

13. New information and monitoring systems, especially the Correspondence Log, were finalised and fully operational in 2005.

DEVELOPMENT AND GOVERNANCE

14. The fourth Global Breastfeeding Partners Meeting (GBPM IV) was held for the first time in Penang, preceding the 2005 WABA Steering Committee meeting in September, and resulted in a set of recommendations agreed to by all the Partners.

15. Four existing Regional Focal Points (RFPs) were strengthened with a new grant and commitment to collaborative guidelines; while a **new RFP for East Asia** – the Citizens' Alliance for Consumer Protection of Korea - was appointed.

16. WABA has once again ensured consultations with the General Assembly particularly with respect to the Innocenti + 15 events, the revision of WABA's Working Principles -

mainly concerning the Country Contact Points - the SC election and official appointments. The Secretariat also ensured the **renewal** of all the five Regional Focal Points and a group of the International Advisory Council members, and **appointed new coordinators** for the HIV and Infant Feeding (IF), Research and Health Care Practices Task Forces.

17. Since October 2005, the **Secretariat has been strengthened** with the appointment of two co-directors: Susan Siew and Sarah Amin, and a deputy director, Liew Mun Tip. A management team of five was also formed.

HIV AND INFANT FEEDING (IF)

18. WABA ensured a **presence at two key international HIV events**:

- a) Seventh ICAAP International: Conference on AIDS in Asia Pacific, Japan, 1-5 July
- b) 3rd International AIDS Society Conference, Brazil, 24-28 July

At both of these events, WABA representatives networked with researchers and advocates from predominantly HIV and AIDS groups, and **distributed HIV and IF literature**. These materials were also shared with participants at eight other non-IV conferences in 2005

19. WABA commissioned IBFAN Asia Pacific to conduct a **situation analysis in 5 South Asian and South East Asian countries** (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia and Nepal). The aim was to facilitate discussion among relevant stakeholders, to find out about the situation of HIV and IF in the country and how it is being addressed in the national PMTCT programmes. The roundtable discussions had opened up communication between breastfeeding advocates, Ministries of Health and HIV groups.

20. WABA has been collaborating with the International Lactation Consultants Association (ILCA) in writing a **scientific review on HIV and infant feeding** for the *Journal of Human Lactation*.

21. The HIV and IF issue is increasingly a **new entry point to dialogue** with women's health and sexual and reproductive rights groups. This was visible in all three women's events where WABA representatives participated and needs urgent follow-up.

MATERNITY PROTECTION

22. **Eleven groups from 10 countries have participated in the Seedgrants project** with the aim of improving maternity protection (MP) and/or advocating for a mother/parent-friendly workplace (MPFW). The projects reflect a diversity of

activities, new partners from non-breastfeeding groups and new countries. Although the projects were predominantly focused on the formal sector, seven had a partial focus on the informal sector and one (Youth in Costa Rica) was fully targeting the informal sector.

23. Two new countries (Macedonia and Egypt/Middle East) have begun to **foster national alliances** on MP, with Costa Rica continuing from the previous year, and with a new focus involving the youth sector.

24. **New contacts were made with trade unions (TU) in Asia**, particularly in India, through the liaison work of new Women and Work Task Force (TF) member, Carmen Solinap, Chair of the Women's Committee of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines. Initial meetings have laid the ground work for a planned MP training workshop for TUs in New Delhi in 2006, and country level networking for BPNI (Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India) with local workers groups.

25. **Active networking with TUs, women's health, occupational health and safety, and workers groups, and researchers** was fostered at the *4th International Congress on Women, Work and Health* (WWH, New Delhi, Sept. 2005). It resulted in the important inclusion of breastfeeding, crèches and maternity protection in the final recommendation.

26. **Outreach and collaboration with the child care community** was once again ensured through the active participation of the Women and Work TF at the *World Forum on Early Child Care and Education* (WoFo, Montreal, May 2005). The issue of breastfeeding and its importance in early child care was highlighted at a workshop presentation to 80 and one-to-one networking. WABA has been invited to the next WoFo in 2007, and to contribute articles to their newsletter.

GENDER

27. A total of 74 participants from three continents (Africa, Latin America and North America) have received **training orientation on gender sensitisation and mainstreaming**. Two of the three trainings were organised by the WABA Secretariat in collaboration with IBFAN Africa, also a WABA Regional Focal Point (RFP) and La Leche League International (LLLI), while the third was organised by IBFAN Latin America (also headed by the WABA Gender WG coordinator). These events went beyond our expectation, as only one training was planned and budgeted for. All three trainings/orientations were also in response to requests by key network partners (IBFAN and LLLI) – a clear sign of increasing interest in gender issues.

28. A new feature in the Latin American training was the **inclusion of youth**, who made up half the participants. They have been a dynamic group and are already engaging in follow-up activities taking on breastfeeding, gender and sexual and reproductive health issues in their work.

29. The trainings also helped to gender sensitise **19 men**, all from Africa and Latin America.

30. Small meetings of the **Men's Working Group** (WG), also known as the **GIFS** (Global Initiative for Father Support) WG, took place during the gender trainings and at a workshop for fathers organised at the LLLI Conference, in July. Both meetings have helped to further promote the role of men in supporting breastfeeding and child care and expand the list of contacts for men's involvement.

31. **Three major publications** were produced in 2005 with the intent of educating the WABA network and outreach partners, mainly women's and workers' organisations, on the issue of breastfeeding and gender. The books focus on women's reproductive health and women's work. The titles are:

- a) *Breastfeeding: a Reproductive Health and Rights Issue*;
- b) *Against all Odds: Gendered Challenges to Breastfeeding*, and
- c) *Grinding Realities: Women and Breastfeeding in the Informal Sector*.

The third book is a result of a literature review on women's work in the informal sector. It provides breastfeeding advocates with an understanding of the informal sector and makes suggestions for doing gender sensitive breastfeeding promotion in such a context.

32. Outreach and collaboration was sought with the women's movement, and the women's health

movement, through advocacy and networking at three major international and regional conferences.

- a) *10th International Women's Health Meeting* (IWHM), New Delhi, September 2005 (over 800 participants)
- b) *10th AWID International Forum*, Bangkok, October, 2005 (over 1800 participants); and
- c) *3rd Asia-Pacific Conference on Reproductive and Sexual Health*, Kuala Lumpur, November 2005 (about 1200 participants)

33. At all these events, breastfeeding and related issues (HIV/IF, women's work, nutrition, the Code, etc.) were highlighted mainly through visual displays, exhibits and banners, and through mime performance. Over a hundred contacts were made in all three events with at least one third who are potentially responsive/useful contacts.

MOTHER, FATHER & COMMUNITY-BASED SUPPORT NETWORKS

34. The **quarterly e-newsletter on mother support** has increased its readership from 8000 to about 10,000 and is now available in a fourth language, Portuguese, in addition to English, French and Spanish. The newsletter has not only helped to link diverse mother support groups worldwide, but has also become a channel for increasing awareness on **father support**. Each issue has included stories/news on father support activities, as well as a regular column on unique mother support experiences (eg. support in tsunami affected areas, couples' group) from countries around the world.

35. Four groups (from Pakistan, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Paraguay) received **seedgrants in 2005 to start up father support groups and to raise awareness on men's role** in supporting women in breastfeeding and childcare. The 2004 report reflect very interesting developments and show signs that involving men can enhance breastfeeding practice and result in improved women's and children's welfare.

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The World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) is a global network of individuals and organisations concerned with the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding worldwide based on the Innocenti Declaration, the Ten Links for Nurturing the Future and the WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding. Its core partners IBFAN, LLLI, ILCA, Wellstart International, ABM and LINKAGES. 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).