Celebrating the 23rd year of World Breastfeeding Week (WBW)

by World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA)
At the first meeting of WABA in 1991, founder Anwar Fazal (pictured right) proposed that WABA have one unique unifying social mobilisation event that can build solidarity and action. He suggested holding a World Breastfeeding Day. After discussions with Janet Nelson and her team at UNICEF it was agreed that a full week would be more practical and effective. World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) was born!
First celebrated in 1992, WBW is now celebrated every 1-7 August to commemorate Innocenti, GSIYCF, contemporary and important emerging issues related to breastfeeding.

Overall coordination of WBW is done at the WABA Secretariat in Penang, Malaysia - including theme and slogan selection; identifying key-writers and review team; preparation and distribution of WBW materials e.g. poster, action folder (in several languages) etc.

These advocacy materials aim to stimulate action among local groups, governments, UN and other agencies and organisations for their own WBW activities in their area/country.
23 Years of WBW campaigns

Celebrated in over 170 countries

Endorsed by WHO, UNICEF & other UN agencies

Unites breastfeeding advocates, governments & UN to act on the Innocenti Declaration targets & more

A people’s event with a diversity of activities and actors
A look back via Action Folders
World Breastfeeding Week - 1996 to 1999

A look back via Action Folders
World Breastfeeding Week - 2000 to 2003

A look back via Action Folders
World Breastfeeding Week - 2004 to 2007

A look back via Action Folders
World Breastfeeding Week
- 2008 to 2011

A look back via Action Folders
World Breastfeeding Week - 2012

WABA was the only international network to significantly commemorate 10 years of WHO/UNICEF's Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding.
World Breastfeeding Week - 2013

- 178 countries celebrated WBW
- 1,248,202 participants reported activism
- Included: 'The Big Latch ON' Global event; 'Quintessence Breastfeeding Challenge' Global event, Doctors Without Borders/Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) and International Medical Corps
World Breastfeeding Week – 2014

- 176 countries celebrated WBW
- 1,315,893 participants reported activism
- Air Malta officially welcomed breastfeeding on board its flights & launched a policy to coincide with WBW 2014!
World Breastfeeding Week – 2015

- BREASTFEEDING AND WORK: LET’S MAKE IT WORK!

- Aiming to mobilise concerted global action to support women to combine breastfeeding and work.

- Whether a woman is working in the formal, non-formal or home setting, it is necessary that she is empowered in claiming her and her baby’s right to breastfeed.
World Breastfeeding Week - 2015
WBW 2015 Goals

1. **Galvanise** multi-dimensional support from all sectors to enable women everywhere to work and breastfeed safely and adequately.

2. **Promote** actions by employers to become Family/Parent/Baby and Mother-Friendly, and to actively facilitate and support employed women to continue breastfeeding their children.

3. **Inform** people about the latest in global Maternity Protection entitlements, and raise awareness of the need to strengthen related national legislation and implementation.

4. **Strengthen**, facilitate and showcase supportive practices that enable women working in the informal sector to breastfeed.

5. **Engage** with target groups e.g. TUs, Workers Rights Orgs, HR agencies, Women’s, Occupational Health and Youth groups, to protect the breastfeeding rights of women in the workplace.
Concerted global action to support women to combine breastfeeding and work, whether in the formal sector, non-formal sector, or at home

Ratification and implementation of maternity protection laws and regulations by governments, in line with the ILO Maternity Protection Convention

Inclusion of breastfeeding target indicators in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

** Upholding of Peer Counselling /Mother Support as a key intervention in the Informal Sector.**
WBW 2015 – Highlights!

- WBW is part of UNICEF’s Breastfeeding Advocacy Initiative
- First time a Joint Letter of Support from UNICEF & WHO!
- UNICEF WBW2015 page carried photo essay, animated video & other resources; blog posts features WBW topics
- WHO created a WBW page feature Info-graphics. Dr Flavia Bustreo, WHO’s Assistant Director-General, Family, Women’s and Children’s Health actively shared on WBW & breastfeeding on Twitter
- PAHO issued a Press Release and Technical brief on Breastfeeding
- ILO’s Director General issued a Statement for WBW.
- WABA receives a Letter of Support from Greek Government!
Australian Breastfeeding Association launches its Friendly Workplace Program

Women in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) call for an extension to the current the 45-day maternity leave period

Numerous WBW celebrations in Brazil & other LAC - promoted via the Facebook page: Semana Mundial da Amamentação Brasi

Cayman Islands Breastfeeding Support Group runs a Facebook competition to find the most breastfeeding-friendly workplace

Singapore's NTUC U Family presented inaugural awards to companies with breastfeeding-friendly policies and facilities
WBY 2015 – People and Groups Take Action!

300 mothers breastfeed together at launch of awareness video in KL, Malaysia

Poster competition conducted by AIIMS Bhopal at government school, India

Adapted logo from South Africa
WBW 2015 – Government’s Respond!

- **Belize**'s Minister of Immigration, Labour, Local Government and Rural Development speaks on the ILO Convention 183 at workshop to promote breastfeeding in the workplace.

- **Trinidad and Tobago**'s Ministry of Health urges all employers to consider adoption of mother-friendly workplace practices to increase maternity leave from 60 to 98 days.

- **Iran**'s policies for supporting new mothers at work, especially new law to extend delivery leave to 9 months, hailed by UNICEF!

- **Sharjah** Baby Friendly Campaign (UAE) hosts series of educational seminars to raise awareness around breastfeeding in the workplace.

- **Uganda**'s State minister for Primary Healthcare asked employers to create breastfeeding corners for mothers to support proper early childhood development.
The Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) urges stakeholders to lobby for the prioritization of the passage of the law that proposes to increase maternity leave from 60 to 98 days.

New Zealand Breastfeeding Authority (NZBA) calls for stronger workplace policies for nursing mothers - including calls urging all politicians to support Labour MP Sue Moroney’s private member’s bill to extend paid parental leave to 26 weeks.

In Jersey (UK) from Sept 1 for the first time women will have a right to maternity leave of between 8 and 18 weeks including two weeks paid leave. Fathers, adopters and civil partners will be entitled to take up to two weeks unpaid parental leave.
8 month maternity leave set to get government nod

TANIA AMEER

NEW DELHI: Union Women and Child Development Minister Maneka Sanjay Gandhi's demand to extend maternity leave from existing three months to eight months is expected to be cleared by a committee of Secretaries soon.

"The Cabinet Secretariat has asked the Union Women and Child Development Ministry to invite comments of various concerned Ministries, after that it will be sent to a committee of Secretaries," sources in the Ministry told Millennium Post.

Union Women and Child Development Ministry’s eight-month proposal for maternity leave as explained by Maneka, clearly suggests that one month leave is mandatory before delivery and seven months post delivery – the time required to breastfeed the child.

Explaining the concept, the Minister told Millennium Post, "Eight months of maternity leave is a necessity because in one month the woman goes into the stage where she has to prepare for the baby’s needs which include taking care of his/her clothes, food, and other essentials. Also, the ideal minimum duration for breastfeeding a baby is seven months. All the best doctors and gynaecologists have suggested that seven months are required for breastfeeding a child. Only after this period can one go ahead and give the child home cooked food. That sums up the significance of the eight-month timeline."

She had termed the move made by Union Ministry of Labour to extend maternity leave from three to six months as “meaningless” and stressed the importance of “eight months for this leave being a necessity.”
Latest Developments

September Update: Saudi Arabia

The law will now include more options and 3 days paternity leave.

New labor law amendments come into force in 2016

10-week paid maternity leave from next year

ARAB NEWS

JEDDAH: New changes to the country’s labor laws coming into force next year include 10 weeks fully paid maternity leave for women, beginning a maximum of four weeks before the likely date of birth.

The expected date of delivery has to be determined by a certified medical practitioner or facility, a local publication reported recently. Women would also be allowed to extend their maternity leave for an extra month without pay.

If a woman gives birth to a sick child or one with special needs that requires constant monitoring, then she would have the right to have an extra one month fully paid, with the possibility of a further one-month extension without pay.

The amendments include 15 days’ fully paid leave for non-Muslim women who are widowed. A woman worker whose husband dies may not work for another employer during this 15-day period. The employer reserves the right to request documentation in these cases.

The Ministry of Labor said these amendments also take into account the needs of men. A man is given three days paternity leave. In addition, a man who loses his wife or family member, or is marrying, is entitled to five days off with pay.

Penalties for those failing to comply include a fine of up to SR100,000, closure of the establishment for up to 30 days, or permanent closure. Penalties would increase for repeated offenses, the ministry stated.
President Barack Obama argued for guaranteed paid maternity leave in the US, joking that if men had to carry around a baby for nine months they'd just stop working altogether!

Serendipitous Developments
Active members of the WABA WBW Facebook page informed us that many countries are celebrating after August - October in Canada; November in Cambodia, Greece and the UAE!
For more information, please visit:

www.worldbreastfeedingweek.org

A one stop centre for information on the theme, materials such as the Action Folder, Insert in Support of Woking Women, Poster and other resources for celebrants to download! Translations are available in Spanish, French, Greek, Portuguese, Arabic, Chinese, and more.

Thank you