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WABA International Labour Day Message 1 May 2024



World Alliance for
Breastfeeding Action

Closing the gap in breastfeeding support: a social justice issue



Despite an abundant body of **scientific evidence** regarding the short and long-term benefits of breastfeeding, many women around the world cease breastfeeding earlier than intended. Inadequate maternity/parental leave and lack of breastfeeding support at the workplace remain major contributing factors. Vast inequalities exist in maternity/parental leaves provisions across regions and countries, formal and informal sectors and the availability of breastfeeding support at the workplace. To ensure progress towards **global breastfeeding goals**, there is a need to ensure actions to improve breastfeeding rates take into account the deficits and inequalities that exist in the current breastfeeding support systems.

Optimal breastfeeding can save 823000 children and 20000 mothers each year.

Currently, only 48% of infants are exclusively breastfed globally and the Global Breastfeeding Collective has set a



The ILO is calling for **commitment to social justice** to ensure that economic growth is also accompanied by improved living standards and better working conditions.

Improving maternity/parental protection and breastfeeding support at the workplace is a means to achieve social justice. National policies and programmes should emphasise the need for workers working in both the formal and informal sectors to have access to paid maternity, paternity and parental leave as **per ILO recommendations**. Workers should be provided a minimum of 18 weeks and preferably up to six months of paid maternity leave. With only **43 countries** having ratified the ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), there is still a huge gap to close to ensure that all workers rights are protected.



WABA | WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2024

Adequate paid maternity/parental leave, parent-friendly **workplace** policies, facilities for breastfeeding/breastmilk expression, paid breastfeeding breaks and flexible working arrangements to support breastfeeding are essential. On this labour day, WABA calls upon governments, employers, trade unions, civil society organisations and communities to commit to

reducing the inequalities in breastfeeding support for working parents. Join our **World Breastfeeding Week 2024 (WBW2024) campaign** in demanding actions to close the gaps and ensure breastfeeding support for all.

#LabourDay #WABA #breastfeeding #ClosingTheGap #BreastfeedingSupportForAll
#MaternityProtection #ParentalSocialProtection #EmpoweringParentsCampaign #WBW2024
#ILO #MayDay



World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) is a global network of individuals and organisations dedicated to the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding worldwide based on the Innocenti Declarations, the Ten Links for Nurturing the Future and the WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy for Infant and Young 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). WABA coordinates the annual World Breastfeeding Week campaign.

www.waba.org.my

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Our mailing address is:

World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA)
P.O.BOX 1200
George Town, Penang 10850
Malaysia

[Add us to your address book](#)

Email: waba@waba.org.my

Website: www.waba.org.my

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