



WABA | WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2019



<http://worldbreastfeedingweek.org>



THE GLOBAL GOALS
For Sustainable Development



INTRODUCTION

The [World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action](#) (WABA) was formed on 14 February, 1991. WABA is a global network of individuals and organisations dedicated to the protection, promotion and support breastfeeding worldwide.

WABA coordinates the global [World Breastfeeding Week](#) (WBW) campaign that aims to inform, anchor, engage and galvanise action on breastfeeding and related issues.

Since 2016, we have aligned our WBW campaign to United Nation's [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs). We call this the WBW-SDGs Campaign.

WBW-SDGs CAMPAIGN

WABA clustered the UN SDGs into [4 Thematic Areas](#) that relate to each other and to breastfeeding. The 4 Thematic Areas will be celebrated in cycles until 2029.

2030 will be about taking stock of our progress, overcoming challenges and planning for work beyond the SDGs.

[WBW2016](#) made links between each SDG and breastfeeding. [WBW2017](#) emphasised the importance of working together across all the SDGs. [WBW2018](#) cemented breastfeeding as the foundation of life.

The countdown to the World Breastfeeding Week 2019 (#WBW2019) has now begun!



#WBW2019



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The #WBW2019 slogan “Empower Parents, Enable Breastfeeding” was chosen to be inclusive of all types of parents in today’s world. Focusing on supporting both parents to be empowered is vital in order to realise their breastfeeding goals. Empowerment is a process that requires evidence-based unbiased information and support to create the enabling environment where mothers can breastfeed optimally. Breastfeeding is in the mother’s domain and when fathers, partners, families, workplaces, and communities support her, breastfeeding improves.

We can all support this process, as breastfeeding is a team effort. To enable breastfeeding we all need to protect, promote and support it.



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OBJECTIVES OF #WBW2019



Inform

people about the links between gender-equitable parental social protection and breastfeeding



Anchor

parent-friendly values and gender-equitable social norms at all levels to support breastfeeding



Engage

with individuals and organisations for greater impact



Galvanise

action on gender-equitable parental social protection to advance breastfeeding



FOCUS OF #WBW2019



PARENTAL SOCIAL PROTECTION POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

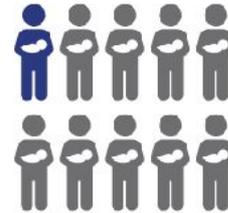
Empowering parents by providing social protection can enable and create demand for breastfeeding-friendly policies and programmes that would help both women and their partners to balance care with other work.



FACTS



50 to 60% of families in low-income countries have no access to income support⁷.



Only about 10% of countries in the Americas, East Asia and the Pacific, the Middle East and North Africa provide childcare benefits⁷.



Increasing paid leave and innovative strategies to break down cultural barriers, can have a big impact on the duration of paternity leave a father takes⁸.



When men take paternity leave, their infants are more likely to be breastfed at 2, 4 and 6 months⁹.



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PARENT-FRIENDLY WORKPLACES IN BOTH FORMAL AND INFORMAL SECTORS

FORMAL SECTOR

Paid parental leave benefits children, families, employers, and economies.

INFORMAL SECTOR

Workers in the informal economy face many barriers to breastfeeding such as living far from work, long working hours without breaks, and dangerous work environments.



FORMAL SECTOR

FACTS



Globally, a mother's **return to paid work** after childbirth is one of the leading reasons for early supplementation with artificial formula and early cessation of breastfeeding¹⁰.



Many of the **world's leading companies** are adopting more equitable, **generous parental leave** and other family-friendly policies for reputational and cost-saving benefits¹¹.



In developing countries with struggling economies, private companies can become more supportive by engaging in **national maternity protection** programmes¹².

INFORMAL SECTOR

FACTS



More than half (**61.2%**) of the global workforce make their living in the **informal economy** as self-employed (own-account), migrant, domestic, agricultural, casual or temporary workers¹³.



In Africa, almost 90% of **employed women work in the informal economy**, in Asia and the Pacific the figure is 64.1% and in the Arab States it is 61.8%¹⁴.



There are **low-cost ways** of supporting pregnant women and new mothers **in informal employment**, such as rearranging tasks, adjusting work hours and supporting breastfeeding and informal childcare¹⁵.



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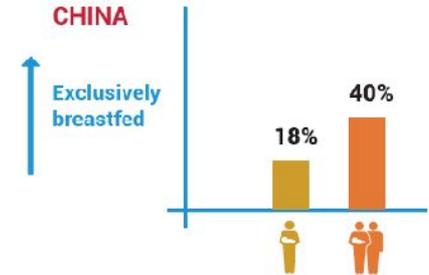
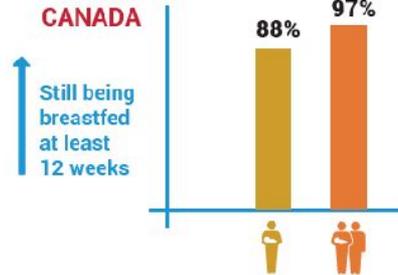
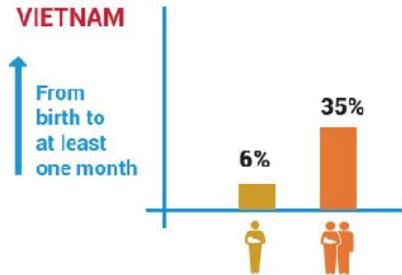


PARENT-FRIENDLY VALUES AND GENDER-EQUITABLE SOCIAL NORMS

When fathers/partners support breastfeeding and have responsive relationships with their infants, there is an improvement in breastfeeding practices and parental relationships.



FACTS



In **Vietnam**, an intervention taught fathers to work with mothers as a **parenting team** to improve **breastfeeding outcomes**. 35% of infants in the intervention group were exclusively breastfed for one month compared to 6% of those whose fathers were not involved¹⁶.

In **Canada**, a co-parenting intervention taught **couples** to work cooperatively to meet jointly-determined parenting outcomes. As a result, 97% of the infants **continued to be breastfed** for at least 12 weeks, compared to the control group (88%)¹⁷.

In **China**, an intervention in which **fathers** were taught to be involved with decision-making about breastfeeding and supporting breastfeeding practices resulted in 40% of the infants being **exclusively breastfed**, compared to the control group (18%)¹⁸.



Let us all create the supportive environment that empowers parents and enables breastfeeding.

As a policy- or decision-maker, advocate or parent, there are some ways you can help do that:





1. Implement global guidance and national policies on family-friendly workplaces
2. Develop a public-funded maternity and parental leave funding model
3. Promote tools for engaging fathers that could be adapted and used globally
4. Provide parental leave that enables mothers to exclusively breastfeed for six months
5. Adopt non-transferable parental leave for all parents, including fathers/partners
6. Develop and implement action plans to include informal workers in maternity protection policies
7. Ratify and implement the ILO C183 - Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 and R191 as the minimum standards.
8. Explore how breastfeeding can be protected in other relevant ILO Conventions and Recommendations
9. Ensure that the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and relevant WHA resolutions are fully implemented and monitored



1. Create a warm chain of support for breastfeeding
2. Showcase successful policy models that promote gender-equitable parenting
3. Work with governments to review and improve national laws that cover maternity and parental social protection that include workers in the informal economy and other vulnerable groups
4. Engage with trade unions and employers to implement breastfeeding-friendly workplaces and support facilities
5. Use the media and community platforms to raise awareness on breastfeeding
6. Collaborate with researchers to gather evidence on the impact of maternity and parental protection on breastfeeding and disseminate it
7. Advocate for breastfeeding support at the workplace
8. Increase access to culture-specific programmes that assist mothers, fathers/partners and families to work together as a breastfeeding team





1. Seek information on optimal breastfeeding during the antenatal period
2. Ensure that the father/partner and family are informed about breastfeeding goals
3. Find out what kind of practical help may be needed along the way

4. Join a peer support group

5. Negotiate with the partner on ways to allocate and manage leave and working arrangements to enable exclusive breastfeeding

6. Use the time during maternity leave or parental leave to establish breastfeeding and plan for return to work

7. Ask employers and trade unions for breastfeeding support at the workplace

8. Work with colleagues and trade unions to advocate for rights at the workplace



Let us work together to
empower parents and enable breastfeeding,
now and for the future!



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