



**World Alliance for  
Breastfeeding Action**

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## WABA WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2015

### *Breastfeeding and Work: Let's Make It Work!*

August 1-7, 2015 –The [World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action](#) (WABA) celebrates [WBW2015](#) by calling for concerted global action to support women to combine breastfeeding and work, in line with the WBW2015 theme: 'Breastfeeding and Work: Let's Make It Work!' Whether a woman is working in the formal, non-formal or home setting, she needs to feel sufficiently empowered to claim the right to breastfeed on behalf of both herself and her baby.

Much has been achieved since WABA's 1993 campaign on [Mother-Friendly Workplace Initiative](#). The adoption of both the revised [International Labour Organisation](#) (ILO) [Convention 183](#) and [Recommendation 191](#) on [Maternity Protection](#) (MP) in 2000, led to stronger maternity entitlements and more country initiatives improving national laws and practices. But we are not quite there yet.

The [Innocenti Declaration](#) of 1990 set out four operational targets on the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding. Twenty five years later many of those targets remain to be fully achieved, in particular the fourth target – *“to enact imaginative legislation protecting the breastfeeding rights of working women and establish means for its enforcement”*.

The year 2019 marks both the ILO's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the first centenary of [international labour standards on maternity protection](#). ILO Director-General [Guy Ryder](#) has set out the challenge of supporting maternity protection and work family policies thus: *“...despite some progress, globally more than 800 million women workers, or 41%, still don't have adequate maternity protection, and take-up rates among men of parental leave are low. Could we not design maternity protection and work-family policies that are more inclusive, and supportive of gender equality?”* World Breastfeeding Week marks the start of a closer examination and wider discussion about just that.

World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated every year from August 1-7 in over 176 countries. Each year, WABA selects the theme of WBW in consultation with its partners, in order to raise awareness on the chosen theme and to call for action from the global community. The World Breastfeeding Week [website](#) carries information in a number of languages and on previous themes.



#### **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. Trade Unions, Workers Rights Organisations, Human Rights agencies, Women's, Occupational Health, and Youth Youth groups, to protect the breastfeeding rights of women in the workplace.

This year's theme "Breastfeeding and Work, Let's Make It Work!" acknowledges that women face many challenges in combining productive and reproductive work. Supporting this right of all women requires diverse strategies and engaging different partners and forging common agendas.

It is important that breastfeeding is included in post-2015 development agenda, through the adoption of [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs). Jay Sharma, WABA Executive Director suggests that "*Women's participation in the workforce is critical to sustainable development and the SDGs should include an 'exclusive breastfeeding target indicator' as a proxy indicator for maternal and infant health and maternity protection at national level.*"

WABA calls for:

- 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)

WABA looks forward to [collaborating](#) with celebrants around the world to achieve this year's goals and to make World Breastfeeding Week 2015 a success. To date, we have received 131 [pledges](#) from 30 countries.

***Breastfeeding and Work - It is up to all of us to make it work!***

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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. WABA action is based on the Innocenti Declaration, the Ten Links for Nurturing the Future and the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding. WABA is in consultative status with UNICEF & an NGO in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC).*