



WABA | WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2022



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# PRESS RELEASE

#WBW2022 #WABA #breastfeeding #SDGs #worldbreastfeedingweek2022  
#buildingbackbetter #stepupforbreastfeeding #educateandsupport #WarmChain

It takes a village to raise a child. Parents face a multitude of challenges in providing the best care for their child, during the antenatal, labour and delivery, as well as postnatal periods. Ongoing care for the child is also vital in ensuring both mothers and babies are properly supported. Supporting breastfeeding involves many actors at different levels. Women need support from the health service, workplace and community to optimally breastfeed, progressing from one level to the other. This is called the Warm Chain of Support for Breastfeeding.

Every year, the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) coordinates the World Breastfeeding Week (WBW) - a global campaign that aims to inform, anchor, engage and galvanise action on breastfeeding and related issues. Although progress has been achieved, the work to protect, promote and support breastfeeding became more of a challenge in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical conflicts, which widened and deepened inequalities, tipping more people into food insecurity. In addition, limitations to the health system's capacity led to deterioration of breastfeeding support, and targeted outreach by the breastmilk substitutes (BMS) industry continues to negatively influence parents' infant feeding decisions.

Against this background, the focus of World Breastfeeding Week this year (#WBW2022) is on education and support, so that we can all step up for breastfeeding! Governments, healthcare actors, community actors and society at large must advocate to normalise breastfeeding and create breastfeeding-friendly environments. The #WBW2022 campaign reminds us that we all have a role to play in the education and transformation of existing systems, underpinned by evidence-based national policies to create breastfeeding-friendly health facilities, supportive communities and workplaces. Let's step up for breastfeeding!

## OBJECTIVES OF #WBW2022



### Inform

people about their role in strengthening the warm chain of support for breastfeeding



### Anchor

breastfeeding as part of good nutrition, food security and reduction of inequalities



### Engage

with individuals and organisations along the warm chain of support for breastfeeding



### Galvanise

action on strengthening capacity of actors and systems for transformational change

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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.

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# There is an urgent need for education to increase the capacity of all the actors who work along the Warm Chain of Support for Breastfeeding.

## WBW2022 focuses on stepping up this capacity.

The #WBW2022 campaign explores challenges and support needed for breastfeeding during pregnancy and before birth (antenatal stage), labour and delivery, first six weeks after birth (postnatal care), ongoing care and in special circumstances and emergencies. The materials also discuss the important roles played by two categories of actors – healthcare and community – in stepping up for breastfeeding through education and support.

Healthcare actors including counsellors, lactation consultants, midwives and doctors play an essential role in the support of breastfeeding and for this they need a consistent and appropriate evidence-based education. This also includes Code training and awareness of cultural beliefs and practices. Community actors such as employers, environmentalists, partners, the media and young people play an important role in supporting national and international advocacy and programmes to protect, promote and support breastfeeding. By working collaboratively, all actors can close the gaps in breastfeeding support. This collaborative action works to strengthen the Warm Chain of support for breastfeeding:

Use the resources available on our website, Action Folder, Poster, and Social Media Kit to spread awareness of #WBW2022. Pledge to participate in the #WBW2022 celebrations by sending us details of your virtual/physical activities. View events and activities planned for #WBW2022 on our Pledge Map. Find out what our partners have planned this #WBW2022. Together, we need to step up for breastfeeding through education and support!

**For more information on the campaign, please contact Chuah Pei Ching at [wbw@waba.org.my](mailto:wbw@waba.org.my).**

**To PREPARE for breastfeeding,** parents need education and anticipatory breastfeeding counselling from both healthcare and the community.



**Healthcare actors can work together with community actors** to ensure that parents receive consistent antenatal information.

**To INITIATE breastfeeding,** mothers need mother-friendly care during labour and delivery and skin-to-skin contact with skilled guidance immediately afterward.



**Pre-service and in-service education** need to ensure that healthcare actors have the relevant competencies.

**To ESTABLISH breastfeeding postnatally,** breastfeeding counselling must be available in the maternity facility and after discharge.



**Close communication is needed** between different actors in the health system and the community to ensure continuity and consistency in breastfeeding counselling at this critical time.

**To STEP UP for breastfeeding** and achieve the global breastfeeding target, the capacity of all actors in the Warm Chain needs to be strengthened.



**Governments and decision-makers need to invest** in education and support for breastfeeding to create an enabling environment for families with babies.

**To PROTECT breastfeeding,** all Warm Chain actors need to be free from the commercial influence of breastmilk substitutes and feeding bottle manufacturers and distributors.



**They must be educated** about their responsibilities under the Code to ensure that parents make unbiased informed decisions.

**To MAINTAIN breastfeeding,** parents need breastfeeding counselling contacts for at least the first year, and if possible longer.



**Healthcare and community actors** along the Warm Chain need to arrange these contacts between their respective services with appropriate referrals when needed.