THE BREASTFEEDING MOVEMENT
CELEBRATES.....
and plans for the future

IBFAN one of the core and key partners of WABA celebrates 25 years of action in Costa Rica. It was a memorable and inspiring day filled with music, dance, powerpoint presentations and great stories.

The pioneers shared the growth of IBFAN, beginning with Anwar Fazal who shared the “prehistory” together with Michael Latham and Leah Marguiles.

WABA launched the Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding (GSIYCF) poster (which is included with this issue of WABALink).

Anwar Fazal announced the idea of “The Boycott Book” - the story and lessons of the world’s most longest and successful consumer boycott which will be available electronically as a “work in progress” and developed through a participatory process.

Riding high on the energy and excitement of the IBFAN celebrations, the WABA Global Partners Meeting III was held. It brought together WABA’s core partners, namely IBFAN, LLLI, ILCA, WELLSTART, ABM and LINKAGES to:

- Share and exchange ideas on three important issues, namely HIV and Infant Feeding, Maternity Protection and GSIYCF
- Plan and discuss ways to collaborate and advance the goals of the GSIYCF
- Foster greater understanding, interest and cooperation in the interest of protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding worldwide.

In Memoriam....Mary Kroeger

It is with great sadness that WABA announces the passing of Mary Kroeger, the former Coordinator of WABA’s Health Care Practices Task Force on 16th December 2004.

A nurse midwife of 25 years, Mary practiced nurse-midwifery in the USA and also lived and worked long-term overseas. She was also the author of a textbook: Impact of Birthing Practices on Breastfeeding: Protecting the Mother and Baby Continuum (Jones and Bartlett, 2004). May her soul rest in peace.
China is to punish 97 government officials over the sale of fake milk powder that caused the deaths of at least 13 babies, the state media says. The officials are accused of "not discovering or fully investigating the problem," the China Daily quoted the Ministry of Supervision as saying.

Thirteen babies from Fuyang city in Anhui died after unknowing parents bought the milk powder which has almost no nutritional value from rural markets.

Nearly 200 infants suffered malnourishment, leading to a medical complication called "big head" disease by local residents.

Investigators uncovered more than 100 factories making bogus formula, consisting mostly of starch and water.

Source: BBC News, Nov 8, 2004

Irish Mums get paid time off for Breastfeeding

Ireland’s mothers are entitled to paid time off to breastfeed their babies at work. New maternity protection laws that have just come into effect, introduce such breaks for mothers returning to work after maternity leave.

"Breastfeeding mothers will be entitled, under the legislation to paid time off for the purposes of breastfeeding in the workplace, where facilities are provided by the employer”.

Source: AFP, New Straits Times, Malaysia- Oct 23, 2004

Calling all Women who Work and Breastfeed!!!

Please Share Your Story and Photo for an Inspirational Book

In collaboration with WABA and IBFAN and the international community, La Leche League International is putting together a book where women can tell their stories about how they find ways to bring income into the family while breastfeeding (or ways to breastfeed while bringing in an income). We are looking for stories from women in all parts of the globe, doing all kinds of work, and at all income levels. For more information please visit www.waba.org.my. Entries must be submitted before 16 January 2005

Source: AFP, The Star, Malaysia, December 3, 2004

Babies must be fed breastmilk only - Journal de Brasilia....HEALTH DEPARTMENT CONFERS 'FRIENDS OF BREASTFEEDING TITLE' - Diario do Nordeste..... Up to six months, give only the breast - O Dia ............... Breastfeeding equals more health and love - A Noticia......Campaign aims to end myths about breastfeeding - Diario de Cuiaba......Tocantins mobilized for WBW - Folhar Popular.....WHO Campaign for Breastfeeding - Hoja em Dia......CAMPAIGN SUPPORTS EXCLUSIVE BREASFEEDING FOR BABY'S FIRST MONTHS - Correio de Bahia

In Korea

An exhibition of breastfeeding posters from all over the world was held for 10 days at the City Hall subway station in Seoul. More than 43 works from 17 countries were displayed. To encourage participation, viewers could vote on their favourite poster by attaching stickers to them. The exhibition will be making its rounds to other big cities in Korea like Daegu and Ulsan. The exhibition was organised by the Korean Committee for UNICEF.

Korea also appoints a Goodwill Ambassador for Breastfeeding, every year to promote the importance of breastfeeding to the general public. The Goodwill Ambassador is normally a celebrity or athlete who has successfully breastfed his/her child.

Dads to learn about babies

A Japanese city council require male employees to take a total of six weeks paid leave before their babies first birthdays and then explain what they learned in a bid to end perceptions that childcare is only a woman’s job, officials said.

No male municipal worker in Ota has ever taken leave after having a child, an official said. The requirement will start on Jan 1.

Source: AFP, The Star, Malaysia, December 3, 2004

In Swaziland, a pregnant woman working in a garment factory, felt that she was in labour and asked for permission to leave for the hospital to deliver her sixth child. She was told by her employer to wait another two hours for lunch break before she could go to the hospital. As a result, she gave birth by the roadside, in a standing position.

Instead of making up for the mistake, the company accused her of disgracing it by giving birth by the roadside and she now faces disciplinary action at work.

While waiting by the roadside for transport to the hospital, her labour got intense and she gave birth on the spot. The baby was hurt on the forehead as she landed hard on the concrete slab. Both mother and child were admitted to the Raleigh Fitkin Memorial Hospital.

Source: Times of Swaziland, November 22, 2004
Breastfeeding May Lower Childhood Leukemia Risk

The results of a new metaanalysis suggests that breastfeeding for even a few months may lower the acute risk of lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL).

A review of 14 studies, conducted since 1988 indicated that infants who were breastfed for 6 months or longer had a 24% reduced risk of ALL. Breastfeeding was also linked with a 15% lower risk of acute myeloblastic leukemia (AML). Breastfeeding for 6 months or less was also protective for both cancers, but to a lesser extent.

The new findings, based on international studies including more than 8000 children with ALL or AML offer a "strong suggestion" that breastfeeding is protective, Dr Marilyn Kwan of the University of California, Berkeley told Reuters Health.

Breastfeeding lowers the risk of common childhood infections which may explain the connection between breastfeeding and the lower leukemia risk, Dr. Kwan noted.

The finding that breastfeeding was also related to a lower risk of AML was "not anticipated on biological grounds", Dr Kwan and her colleagues reported the finding in the November/December issue of Public Health Reports.

Source: Reuters Health Information, Nov 11, 2004

Breastfeeding Reduces Risk of Allergic Asthma

The first symptoms of allergy in young babies are eczema and/or gastrointestinal allergies that appear within months of birth and the disease subsequently progresses later to the respiratory mucousa. Thus there is a relentless progression of disease from the skin to the gut to the respiratory mucousa by the seventh year, particularly if there is a high exposure to aeroallergens.

This progression is called the "Allergic March". In the young infant, it is usually the cow’s milk given to the baby that causes vomiting, diarrhoea, and colic. Later skin symptoms such as eczema appear with continued cow’s milk diet and the introduction of other foods in the diet.

The initial diet of a baby plays a critical role in the development of allergies and asthma. Breastmilk contains many factors that promote the healthy development of the baby. Moreover breastmilk contains many potent factors that reduce the risk for allergy. A very exciting observation more than 25 studies conducted in different parts of the world, show that the intervention with breastmilk for just four months prevented the development of allergies for over five years. Thus the protection against the development of allergies was far beyond the intervention period.

Source: M. Yadav, The Star, Nov 17, 2004

Breastfeeding Lowers Arthritis Risk

Women who breastfeed are less likely to develop rheumatoid arthritis than women who don’t, according to a new report.

"Lower risk of rheumatoid arthritis is a likely additional health benefit of breastfeeding, in addition to lowering the risk of ovarian cancer and breast cancer," Dr. Elizabeth Wood Karlson from Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, said. - Reuters

Source: The Star, Nov 17, 2004
Are you listed in the WABA-UNICEF Directory of Experts?

WABA in partnership with UNICEF has compiled a Directory of Experts in the field of breastfeeding and appropriate feeding issue. If you wish to be listed in the Directory, please download the questionnaires from the WABA website <www.waba.org.my/expform.doc> and send to the WABA Secretariat.

The WABA Secretariat would like to wish all friends and partners:

May 2005 bring peace, joy and happiness.