

4. A Roadmap of Actions and Achievements



Probably the most meaningful way of charting WABA's journey is through the annual World Breastfeeding Week (WBW), and related activities that build on WBW themes. WBW is celebrated every year from 1st to 7th August in over 170 countries (with some countries celebrating either earlier or later). At the first WABA meeting, Anwar Fazal proposed that WABA have one unique unifying social mobilisation event that can build solidarity and action. He suggested holding a World Breastfeeding Day, but the team at UNICEF New York felt that a full week would be more effective and thus it became a week. What started as an idea to commemorate the Innocenti Declaration in 1991 has turned into an annual campaign which WABA has successfully coordinated and organised annually for the past 24 years. Yet showcasing WABA's WBW journey in itself does not sufficiently capture the organisation's remarkable steps forward, or insightful and courageous ventures. One needs to explore some of the major advocacy efforts and strides made over this period.

Additionally, we draw on the stories and accounts of remarkable people who have walked through WABA's doors and who made an impact. Some stayed for short but meaningful periods, while others continued to offer significant leadership and programmatic action on key issues for decades. Without these individuals, WABA would not have been so rich, dynamic and soulful. Therefore, the voices and experiences of these WABA stalwarts are woven in this book in the form of quotes or anecdotes.



WABA Steering Committee Meeting with UNICEF and IBFAN friends. Janet Nelson is on far right, standing.