

sectors of Zambian society, the awareness it created led to changes in clinical practices. Maternity routines started to change when more and more healthcare staff became aware of and questioned the maternity routines.

Recently I had the opportunity to ask Dr Margaret Maimbolwa, Zambian nurse-midwife, PhD and Head of Post-Basic nursing and midwifery training in Zambia: What has WABA meant to Zambia? This was her reply: “WABA was instrumental to an evaluation process by using WHO/UNICEF ten steps to successful breastfeeding, and BFHI tools from evidence based knowledge and systematic observations of clinical maternity practices. The findings of this process helped Zambian health care practitioners to be aware that separation of mothers and their newborns was not conducive to the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding. Referring to previous Zambian studies, separation of mothers and infants caused cold, injury and mortality in the newborn, insufficient milk production, and undermining of maternal confidence. Today, routines have changed and mothers and newborns stay together after birth”. ”

– Anna Berit Ransjo Arvidson, former WABA Health Care Practices Task Force coordinator

The first WBW saw an amazing participation of 70 countries in just one year, many of which focused on reforming their hospitals to become baby-friendly. With parallel moral and financial support from UNICEF national offices and from the global headquarters, the initial momentum for BFHI was noticeable, and many countries started an upward march towards BFHI.

“ The LLLI, as the regional partner for North America, invited me to speak in front of the Lincoln Memorial for World Breastfeeding Week during the first WBW March on Washington. In the early 1990s, Americans still fully associated speaking from these steps with Dr Martin Luther King Jr’s moving “I have a dream” speech of the August 1963 March on Washington.

So, being invited to speak at the Lincoln Memorial was an amazing – and extremely daunting – opportunity. Luckily, the world of breastfeeding action is very supportive and hundreds of folks came out to march to the Lincoln Memorial on the Mall that day in the early 1990s. These marchers cared for and carried the speakers to their best moments. I believe I was invited because I had served as the Technical Secretariat for the Innocenti Meeting that led to the Declaration of 1990, which also served as *raison d’etre* for the founding of WABA. The meeting of NGO’s that followed Innocenti, which led to the birth of WABA on Valentine’s Day (February 14, 1991), was not open to those of us from academia, but we were ecstatic to hear of it. And the invitation to speak at the very first World Breastfeeding Week March in Washington was an experience I will never forget. I was able to remind all present that