



*With no place to leave her baby, this mother in India works while breastfeeding her baby.*

WABA has addressed this issue head on by dedicating several advocacy and social mobilisation campaigns on women's rights to breastfeed, starting with its 1993 WBW campaign on the Mother-Friendly Workplace Initiative.

### Mother-Friendly Workplace Initiative (WBW 1993)

The Mother-Friendly Workplace Initiative (MFWI) was launched in 1993 as the second WBW campaign to follow-up on the BFHI. It sought to ensure that breastfeeding practices initiated in the hospitals are sustained after the mother leaves the hospital and returns home, and thereafter to the workplace. It aimed at educating the public in general and women in particular regarding their rights as working women who intend to breastfeed; and to ensure that national legislations are in place and implemented. This theme gave an important global impetus to Target 3 of the *Innocenti Declaration* that calls on national governments to "(enact) imaginative legislation protecting the breastfeeding rights of working women and (establish) means for enforcement".

In just one year, the number of countries participating in WBW had grown to more than 100.



*A workplace that is supportive of breastfeeding.*

Worldwide the MFWI rallied working women, unions and worker groups, health care workers, environmental and community action groups, women's groups, even employers as well as policy-makers to take on relevant action to promote and support breastfeeding at the workplace. Three essential requirements were highlighted in the MFWI to ensure that every mother can successfully combine breastfeeding and work, regardless of whether she is formally employed or not. These requirements are:

**Time:** paid maternity leave, flexible working hours and breastfeeding breaks.

**Space/Proximity:** infant/child care at or near the workplace, private facilities for expressing and storing breastmilk, clean and non-hazardous work environment.

**Support:** maternity benefits, job security, positive attitude towards breastfeeding in public, network of supportive women in unions and workers' group.