



One special moment for me was the ILO review of the Maternity Protection Legislation, when I was a member of the WABA team who worked hard to get better maternity leave provisions and other benefits for working mothers. We were received by the president of the ILO who gave us all his support. The ILO Convention 183 was an important WABA-IBFAN achievement!

– Marina Rea, Health Care Practices Task Force Coordinator

For me, the issue of working women and breastfeeding has been one of the main reasons I continue to work with WABA. The challenge of successfully combining work and breastfeeding is one of the biggest barriers. From a personal level, living in a country (Sweden) that has a generous parental leave policy made me realise the importance of working towards universal maternity and parental leave. During the period of the ILO Campaign, WABA and its partners managed to work concertedly to improve the minimum ILO standard for maternity leave, from 12 weeks to 14 weeks and to retain the right to paid breastfeeding breaks in the new convention. This work required massive investment in terms of capacity-building, networking and outreach, and advocacy at national, regional and global levels, over the span of a couple of years. I remember how we worked within the WABA Women and Work Task Force at the national level in Zambia and Swaziland, moving efforts to reach a consensus to extend maternity leave at the sub-regional level (SADC), then finally at the international level in Geneva after extensive deliberations. WABA has always been about working together with a range of partners, some on a particular issue and others more long-term. We achieved sustainable results that way. Parallel to this work, I started to conduct research in Tanzania and later in India on this topic. Much of the inspiration for this research stemmed from the work I was doing concurrently with WABA.



– Amal Omer-Salim, Co-Executive Director, previously Women and Work Task Force and Research Task Force coordinator

The successful collaboration of the NGOs culminated in the ILO Convention 183 and Recommendation No. 191 on Maternity Protection (MP). This Convention is significant as it recognises breastfeeding as a working woman's right. Without this three-year campaign it is certain that the world would have lost the breastfeeding