

## 8. Breastfeeding Support

**“B**reastfeeding a baby is a community concern, a celebratory occasion. Everyone has a role to make it successful. A breastfeeding friendly environment needs supportive people in every corner.”

– Nageya Sadiq, Sudanese breastfeeding advocate



A dream in 1992 at the birth of WABA, “to connect community based mother support groups around the world to share ideas, stories, lessons learned, in order to learn from other mothers’ expertise and provide the support needed for new mothers to breastfeed exclusively for 6 months and continue breastfeeding for two years.”

A dream “to provide the education and support needed for new parents to understand the day to day realities of breastfeeding and help each mother breastfeed for as long as she chooses”.

A dream “to help accomplish the tenth step of Baby-Friendly Hospitals by enhancing and supporting community support groups to increase the duration of breastfeeding in spite of all the cultural and economic barriers that mothers face.”

25 years later WABA provides the crucial network and framework to help accomplish these dreams for thousands of mother support groups, who with very little financial resources are a beacon of light in communities for new mothers who felt isolated, uncertain about the needs of their newborns and wanted desperately to breastfeed their babies.

– Beth Styer, Former LLLI Board member and former WABA Chairperson



The first few WBW themes shone the spotlight specifically on the various Innocenti targets. By 1996, it was timely for WABA to shift its advocacy attention to a broader aspect of breastfeeding support. These were not recognised as part of the 1990 *Innocenti Declaration* targets but were central to breastfeeding success, as was later seen in the decades that followed. This was support for breastfeeding from the community.