

WABA thus launched the Global Initiative for Mother Support (GIMS) the same year. This Initiative helped to broaden the mother-to-mother support concept, while promoting positive mother-to-mother support practices globally. The GIMS was led by WABA's Mother Support Task Force, which was already an active force in actualising this work. Two years later, the GIMS Asia-Pacific Network was launched in Kuala Lumpur at the Conference on *Linking and Nurturing Mother Support and Strengthening Maternity Protection* in April 2002, co-organised by WABA MSTF coordinator Siti Norjina Moin of PPPIM, Malaysia, and the WABA Secretariat. This event further expanded the breadth and scope of mother support, and brought the wider regional community on board.



WABA's Mother Support E-Newsletter has been the main activity of the GIMS since December 2003. After years of developing and investing in the newsletter as a core activity of the Mother Support Task Force (MSTF), today, the newsletter is published in four languages (English, Spanish, French and Portuguese), while a number of other translations (i.e. Arabic and Chinese) are made possible by volunteers. Working as part of the newsletter team for the past 14 years, many times I feel as though I am participating in a virtual breastfeeding support group, "listening" to the stories and experiences shared by mothers, breastfeeding supporters, fathers, grandparents, children, and advocates. The stories speak of strength, passion and love that cross borders in promoting, protecting and supporting breastfeeding.

When LLL Paraguay first received an email from then coordinator of the MSTF Rebecca Magalhães, about producing a newsletter, Pili Peña and I found ourselves learning the ropes in producing a Global Breastfeeding Support Newsletter. This was possible thanks to our mentor, Rebecca, and the support of the WABA Secretariat and its directors in ensuring that the online newsletter would be a success. The newsletter continues to receive WABA's support. I am also indebted to a large team of contributors and translators worldwide.

Working on this newsletter has indeed been a privilege and a continued learning experience for me. Every story or news shared indicates time, love, passion and the dedication of people who protect and promote breastfeeding. Many provide support under difficult conditions. The prime motivating factor is caring for the health and well-being of another human being. The meaning of support has often been explored in the many issues of the newsletter. The newsletter provides a space and voice to those who might not otherwise be able to share their story, and be supported in the work they do. They are acknowledged and honoured through these stories. The publishing of these stories in the different languages of the newsletter shows that despite the challenges mothers face in breastfeeding their babies, they are able to overcome them to breastfeed successfully. This is only possible when support and information are readily available. The problems