

WABA's communication has been its impact on widespread networking and advocacy both at international and national levels. Over the past 25 years many national breastfeeding groups and individual participants have found WABA's regular information service significant in national networking and local advocacy work. Below several perspectives from over the years shared by members from Brazil, Sweden and North America.



*In the 90s, I started working with mother support groups in the very poor slums of Recife, Northeast of Brazil. These people lived in deep poverty and breastfeeding was extremely important to all mothers and babies, it could be the difference between life and death. Our NGO, Origem had very strong grassroots engagement, but we always wanted to network and reach out to other groups that, like us, promoted, supported and defended breastfeeding all over the world. In 1993, during a national breastfeeding meeting, some people who had been in a WABA meeting in Costa Rica invited us to represent the Alliance in our country. WABA Brazil was then created. In a time when the internet was not easily available to everyone, we used faxes, letters and phone calls to put together people and groups from all 27 Brazilian states. It was an extremely successful initiative. WABA Brazil coordinated the World Breastfeeding Week and started with only two or three cities. In three years we had events celebrating the WBW in more than 3,000 cities. At this time, I started working closely with the WABA Secretariat.*



*In 1996, during the WABA Global Forum, Cecilia Muxi (Uruguay) and I got a grant from SIDA to make the Forum available online. This was one of the first times NGOs had the opportunity to share, in real time, photos, texts and messages from the speakers, who could then interact with people all over the world, who left messages in our Guestbook. At this Forum, I was invited to coordinate the WBW at an international level, which I had the honour and pleasure to do over the next three years. It was an exciting time, when we would design the WBW materials in Brazil and send them to be printed in Malaysia from where it would be distributed. The construction of these materials was done collaboratively, written and revised by WABA supporters from different countries. At that time we also had regional meetings (Europe, Latin America, North America, Asia) to plan the WBW activities.*

*During the 90s, besides the WBW, I was involved in many other WABA initiatives, like the 'Breastfeeding, Women and Work Seminar' in the Philippines, where I was responsible for preparing the online report. I was also elected to the WABA Steering Committee where I could present the Latin American perspective and make contributions. In 2003, I left the steering committee as life took me into activism around other issues related to women's rights. But WABA has a very special place in my heart. I have a special love*