

Maternity Protection at Work

Activities since 2001

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MP and the Maternity Protection Coalition

- **IBFAN-GIFA**

Convenor of Maternity Protection Working Group

- **What is the Maternity Protection Coalition (MPC)?**

Breastfeeding networks and advocates: IBFAN, ILCA, LINKAGES, WABA

Technical support: IMCH and UNICEF

Other members: LLLI is interested in joining

- **Who are our allies?**

Trade Unions: PSI, EI, IFCTU

International Organisations: ILO, WHO

NGOs: women's groups, health groups, etc.

MP and the MPCoalition: a « breastfeeding perspective »

- 1) *Educate breastfeeding advocates*: developing a comprehensive maternity protection policy based on 7 main points (wide scope, long leave, benefits (cash + health benefits), health protection, non-discrimination and job protection, paid breastfeeding breaks, breastfeeding facilities)
- 2) *Educate our allies*: developing a specific “breastfeeding perspective” to maternity protection at work (breastfeeding benefits for all concerned – babies, mothers, families, employers, community, state; breastfeeding breaks; breastfeeding facilities and crèches; best practice employers...)

MP and the MPCoalition: Working together *1999 – 2000 (past)*

- **Working together 1999 – 2000: campaigning for C183**
Campaign in 1999 and 2000: adoption of ILO Convention 183 (advocacy, lobbying, drafting)
 - creating the MPCoalition
 - making allies (Trade unions, ILO, country delegations)
 - influencing drafting process: only BF facilities not included in C183

MP and the MPCoalition: Working together *since 2001*

- **1) Meetings, training sessions**
 - *Strategic meetings*: Geneva, Penang, Uppsala, Arusha
 - *Training and workshops*: Accra, Maputo (SADC), Penang, Riga, Kuala Lumpur, Arusha, New Delhi, Lima...
 - *Conferences*: Geneva, New Delhi
 - *ILO Conferences*: 2001, 2002, 2003
 - *Trade union campaigns*: each year on March 8 and throughout year. Maternity protection remains one of their priorities until 2004
 - *Local national campaigns*

MP and the MPCoalition: Working together *since 2001*

- **2) Campaigning at different levels** (depends on context and strategy adopted). All levels are equal in importance, all should be evaluated
 - ***International level: ratification of C183:***
 - . 4 countries have ratified (Slovakia, Italy, Bulgaria, Romania).
 - . Several countries have good laws and could ratify but it is not often high on agenda.
 - . Trade unions are often afraid to open the “can of worms” and lose their present benefits.
 - ***Regional level: European example:***
 - . *EU Dir 92/85/EEC* on safety and health of pregnant workers, mothers who just gave birth and mothers who are lactating; *EU Dir 96/34/EC* , framework agreement on parental leave:
 - . *Binding, minimum standards* for all European countries, including 10 new EU countries
 - . Very general provisions, no mention of BF breaks or facilities.

MP and the MPCoalition: *Working together since 2001*

- *Regional example: Africa: SADC*

. 14 country members; trade agreement, various sectors. Common legislation/agreements for:

Labour legislation (includes maternity protection)

Occupational health policies

. Aim for highest level of jurisdiction (Directives, Conventions, Recommendations)

. Call in allies immediately (trade unions)

. Training in Accra (April 2002) and Maputo (September 2002) by IBFAN Africa

MP and the MPCoalition: Working together *since 2001*

- ***National legislation*** (campaign for better legislation if results are more realistic)

In Europe: Belgium, (2002) law on breastfeeding breaks.

UK (2003) maternity leave extended to 6 months

Canton of Geneva (2002) maternity insurance, 16 weeks.

- ***Collective bargaining agreements***: at national level, or at industry level, or narrower scope. In many cases negotiated for 3 or 4 years.

- ***Company level***: agreement negotiated with one employer. There are many examples of good practices (Singapore, Sweden, USA)

All levels of campaigning should be evaluated. The local/national context will determine which level is more strategic at a given time

MP and the MPCoalition: Working together *since 2001*

- **3) Preparation of material**
 - ***Campaign/Action kit***: 1st draft in Arusha; finalised in April 2003; distributed in September-October 2003; launch in Warsaw and New Delhi
 - ***Resource Tool***: background document on same issues more in-depth, and new chapters (informal economy, health of working women, alternative financing schemes, basic information on training, crèches as an alternative, good practices amongst employers, how do women cope): publication in 2004
 - ***Training module***: 3rd dimension of the project. Still to be discussed. So far a meeting held in Arusha in 2002.

MP and the MPCoalition: Working together *from 2003 (future)*

- 1) Distribution of *Campaign Action Kit*, and development of training at conferences, workshops
- 2) Finalisation of *Resource Tool* and possible development of *Training module*
- 3) Closer relations with trade unions (PSI) and ILO: joint projects?
- 4) Closer collaboration with IBFAN groups and RCOs campaigning at national and regional level.