



International Baby Food Action Network - IBFAN
Red internacional de grupos pro alimentación infantil
Réseau international des groupes d'action pour
l'alimentation infantile

Geneva Infant Feeding Association - GIFA

1998 Recipient of the Right Livelihood Award



IBFAN-GIFA Recommendations to CEDAW regarding Maternal Health and Work-related issues,

Egypt

Session 45, January 2010

Members of the CEDAW Committee

Geneva, 11 January 2010

Dear Members of the CEDAW Committee,

For the very first time we would like to send your Committee a brief report concerning information related to CEDAW articles 11 and 12 in **Egypt**.

1) Data (from UNICEF Breastfeeding indicators, State of the World Children, 2003)

Exclusive breastfeeding:	Before 6 months:	30%
Timely complementary feeding:	6-9 months:	72%
Continued breastfeeding rate	20-23 months:	31%

These rates are not very high. There seems to be a lack of information to parents - mothers in particular - concerning optimal infant and young child feeding, and poor compliance of the International Code of Breast-milk Substitutes. Egypt is currently developing a strategy entitled the National Movement towards making Egypt Mother and Baby Friendly (2010-2015).

2) Data on Maternal mortality rate (from UNICEF Breastfeeding indicators, State of the World Children, 2008)

2003-2008 reported	84
Adjusted	130
Lifetime risk of maternal death: 1 in:	230

There is room for much improvement: if the trend continues as it has been in the past years, Egypt will not meet MDG5 by 2015.

3) Maternity Protection at work (Source: IBFAN-GIFA report, sent to CRC in Sept 2004, session 37)

The Maternity Protection law entitles women working in the public sector to a period of 3 months paid leave (100% of salary) weeks as well as to breastfeeding breaks. Women in the private sector have no leave. Moreover, the largest proportion of women is employed in the informal sector and is not protected by legislation. They do not receive any cash benefits after giving birth and therefore can take only a very short period of time off.

4) IBFAN-GIFA's recommendations:

- **Implement policies and regulations on breastfeeding promotion, protection and support;**

- **Provide reproductive health care and medication, including antenatal and post natal care as well as qualified assistance during delivery; Provide free access to these services for all women;**
- **Provide paid maternity leave for women working in all sectors of the economy, including the private sector and the informal economy. Maternity protection should follow the provisions of ILO C183, 2000 as a minimum standard.**

We thank you for your assistance and understanding, and hope that it will be possible to bring up these issues during the country review.

Yours sincerely,

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