

Regional Conference on Breastfeeding Education and Training of Trainers in Central America, Cuba and Dominican Republic





Overview

Breastfeeding is a vital first step towards ensuring a healthy future for children. Beyond its critical role in health and well-being, breastfeeding is also a cornerstone of global development efforts aimed at fostering healthier, more inclusive, and prosperous societies.

The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (**UNITAR**), through its Global Breastfeeding Education Initiative (**BFEI**), is dedicated to advancing optimal breastfeeding practices. Through its five (5) pillars the BFEI offers learning and training opportunities, which aims to improve breastfeeding initiation and duration rates, raise awareness about its importance among health professionals, mothers, and caregivers, and provide practical support for breastfeeding mothers at home, in healthcare settings, workplaces, and within the broader community.

The five (5) pillars of the BFEI are:

1. E-Learning courses – Magic Drop Course in 14 languages
2. Learning platform – Webinar, microlearnings, library of free courses
3. *Conferences & Training of Trainers – face to face delivery of Magic drop with specific focus of in country priorities, e.g. Sub-Saharan Africa (HIV & protocol for Breastfeeding), Central America (C-Section & impact on breastfeeding rates)*
4. Stakeholder Engagement – sharing BFEI with key stakeholder
5. Global Dashboard – a global view of beneficiaries trained

Despite the well-known benefits of breastfeeding, data from the United Nations Children's Fund (**UNICEF**) reveals that in the Latin American and Caribbean region, only 37% of children are exclusively

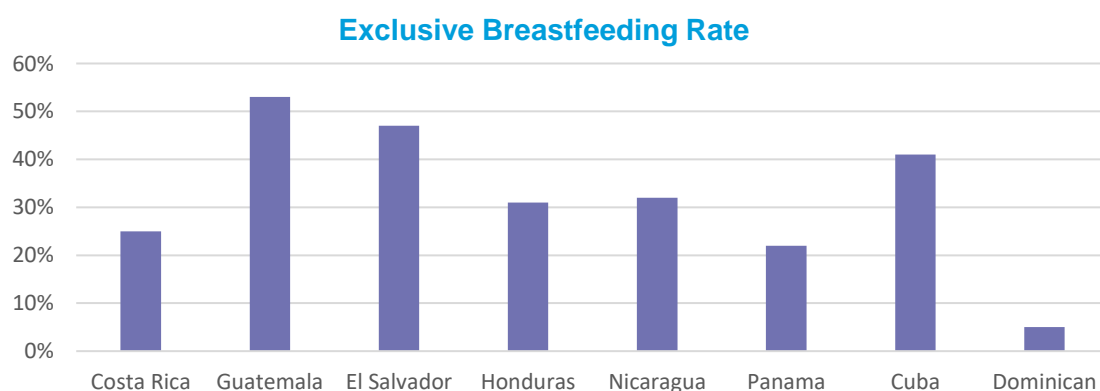
breastfed for the first six months of life. The World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF emphasize the urgent need to improve access to expert breastfeeding support to extend its duration and promote exclusive breastfeeding, which benefits babies, families, and economies alike. Their analysis suggests that increasing exclusive breastfeeding rates could save the lives of 820,000 children annually.

Therefore, under pillar five, the Spanish-speaking region of Central America, including Cuba and the Dominican Republic, was selected for the next Training of Trainers (ToT) and the inaugural Regional Conference on breastfeeding education in El Salvador. Eight countries were invited to participate: Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama, which have a regional average of 32% of children exclusively breastfed for the first six months of life.

Table 1: **Statistics on breastfeeding rates in the Conference Countries**

Country	Exclusive Rate	Initiation Rate	1 year-rate	24-month rate
Costa Rica	25%	53%	50%	37%
Guatemala	53%	63%	85%	57%
El Salvador	47%	42%	74%	57%
Honduras	31%	51%	69%	37%
Nicaragua	32%	54%	70%	42%
Panama	22%	55%	53%	34%
Cuba	41%	64%	35%	19%
Dominican	5%	38%	31%	14%

Chart 2: **Exclusive Breastfeeding Rate in the Conference Countries**



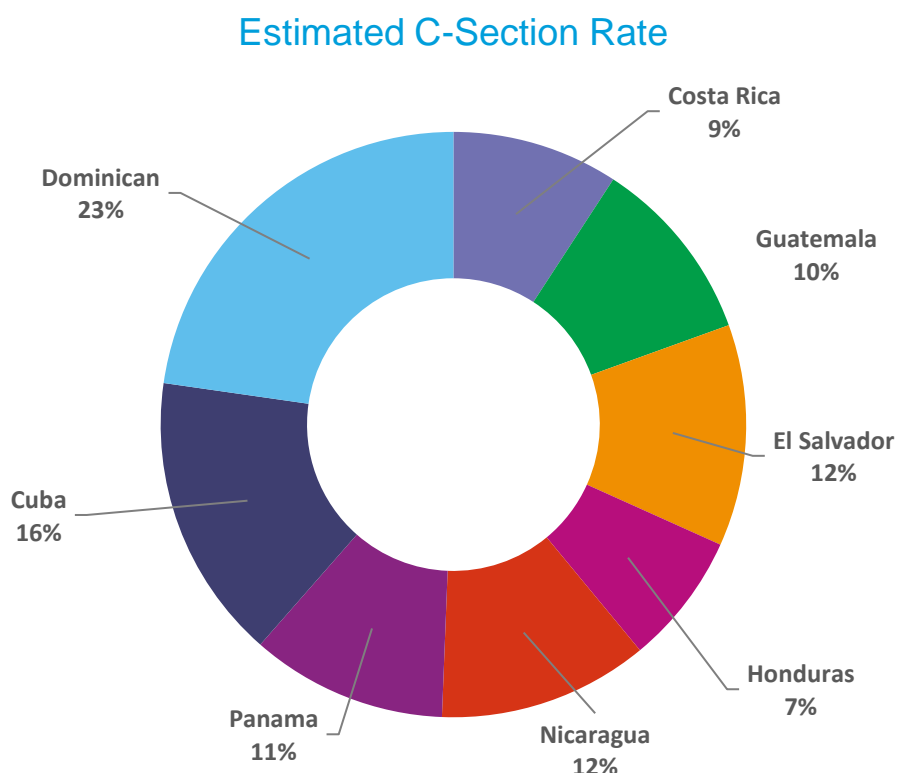
Challenges faced by the region

Whilst all the countries support and recommends exclusive breastfeeding until 6 months and continuing up until 2 years, the region experiences the following challenges:

1. High Rates of Caesarean Sections (C-Sections):

C-sections lead to lower initiation rates and decrease the likelihood of breastfeeding due to longer separation of mother and baby and increased recovery time for the mother.

Chart 2: **Estimated Caesarean Section by Countries**



WHO recommends countries' not exceed 10-15% c-section rate for optimal maternal and neonatal outcomes.

2. Aesthetic and Personal Concerns:

- Some women fear losing breast elasticity, affecting their decision to breastfeed.
- In Nicaragua, mothers who perceive their infants as large are less likely to exclusively breastfeed for 6 months.

3. Legal and Workplace Challenges:

- **Marketing of Breast-Milk Substitutes:**

- The mentioned eight countries have adopted measures to regulate the marketing of breastmilk substitute, ensuring they are consistent with the WHO Code.
- However, only El Salvador has enacted into law under the recently passed Love Converted into Food for the Promotion, Protection and Support of Breastfeeding with strong legal support for mothers and in particular working mothers.

- **Maternity Leave:**

- Most of the countries meet the minimum maternity leave requirements stipulated by the International Labour Organization (ILO) however ILO C183¹ on Maternity Protection it is not ratified.
- Only 14 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean guarantee 14 weeks of paid maternity leave, and only six provide 18 weeks.

- **Nursing Breaks and Facilities:**

- Many countries lack legislative provisions for nursing breaks and facilities, making it difficult for mothers to continue breastfeeding upon returning to work.

Panama is the only country among those listed that has ratified C183, ensuring its maternity leave policies fully comply with the convention. Other countries, like **El Salvador**, **Costa Rica** and **Cuba** also provide strong maternity protections even without formal ratification.

Chart 3: **Maternity Leave in the Conference Countries**



¹ Convention C183 - Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) (ilo.org)

4. Social and Cultural Factors:

- **Stigma and Lack of Awareness:**

- Within the region there is a social stigma attached to breastfeeding in public, which discourages mothers from breastfeeding outside their homes. In most places in Central America women will breastfeed in public but will often cover their breast. The implementation of lactation rooms seeks to increase breastfeeding opportunities outside of the home.

Breastfeeding rates and practices vary significantly across Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama, with numerous challenges impacting these rates. High C-section rates, insufficient legal protections, and workplace environments unfriendly to breastfeeding mothers pose significant barriers. Enhancing support systems, legal measures, and public awareness can help improve breastfeeding practices in the region.



Regional Conference on Breastfeeding Education

The Best Start for Life

UNITAR, in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of El Salvador, through the Office of the First Lady, UNITAR was honoured to host the inaugural Regional Conference on Breastfeeding Education and Training of Trainers for Central America, Cuba and the Dominican Republic, held in San Salvador, El Salvador 18 & 19 July 2024. The Regional Conference under the theme “The Best Start to Life” took place on day one, through the **Office of the First Lady Her Excellency Mrs. Gabriela Rodríguez de Bukele**, with 350 participants including the international delegations and experts ranging from 13 countries. Held at the National Library, it facilitated regional collaboration, the exchange of best

practices, and the development of unified strategies to improve breastfeeding rates. Promoting breastfeeding education is closely aligned with Sustainable Development Goals 2 and 3, which focuses on eliminating hunger, improving nutrition, and enhancing health and well-being.

The day brought together government officials, health professionals, and representatives from the Association of Nurses, Midwives and Paediatrics, and Lactation Consultants, the private sector, academia, and the United Nations to work on the following objectives:

- Promote the exchange of knowledge and best breastfeeding practices through learning and training to improve breastfeeding initiation and duration rates in the Region.
- Communicate the importance of breastfeeding to health professionals, mothers/caregivers/partners.
- To provide practical tools to support breastfeeding mothers at home, in health centres, in the workplace and in society.

During the opening ceremony, 350 people attended where a joint declaration entitled “*Breastfeeding is a Shared Responsibility*” was presented to reaffirm the commitment to promote and protect exclusive breastfeeding. The delegations from Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama sought to align efforts, amplify the dissemination and transfer of knowledge, and identify creative approaches to promote the benefits of breastfeeding in the region to share best practices, protect and promote breastfeeding, and establish breastfeeding rooms.



- *Estrella Merlos Deputy Director & BFEI Head, UNITAR, reading the statement of Joint Commitment to the Promotion of Breastfeeding Education*



- Regional Ministry of Health Representatives with First Lady H.E Gabriela Rodriguez de Bukele and Assistant Secretary General UN and UNITAR Executive Director Mr. Nikhil Seth

Following the opening ceremony, the 118 training participants were invited to continue the remaining segments of the agenda with the featured address given by Mr. Riaz Lodhi, (United Nations Resident Coordinator in El Salvador and Belize (ag.) and Representative of the World Food Program). This was a concise situational overview of breastfeeding rates and policies of Central America, Cuba and the Dominican Republic. At the end Mr. Lodhi made a call for a regional approach towards increasing breastfeeding rates through support, protection and education.

Mrs. Elisa Gamero, Health and Nutrition Projects Coordinator, Office of the First Lady of the Republic of El Salvador, and Director Ad Honorem from “*Nacer con Cariño, El Nido*” Maternity Centre shared the host country’s breastfeeding initiatives and protocols. Participants got a better understanding of the breastfeeding legislation, policies and programs that exist with in El Salvador. The challenges encountered along the way were discussed, with solutions proposed to address them.

This presentation seamlessly transitioned into the high-level Panel Discussion. Each representative shared their experiences, strategies and factors influencing breastfeeding practices within their country and identified common themes, disparities and best practices. This knowledge sharing allowed for participants to get a further understanding of the regional challenges and triumphs expertly chaired by Dr Giovanni Escalante, Representative of WHO El Salvador, who asked the difficult questions to address barriers and promote optimal breastfeeding outcomes.

These sessions were attended by Her Excellency Mrs. Gabriela Rodríguez de Bukele who actively demonstrated her support. When a project, in this case breastfeeding, is supported at the highest political level such as at the office of the First Lady, it ensures that the issue receives the necessary attention, resources, and policy support and enhances public awareness ultimately leading to better health outcomes for mothers and children and, by extension, society. Her Excellency Mrs. Gabriela Rodríguez de Bukele then joined the international participants for an official photo.

In her words: *“It is gratifying to know that with spaces like the Regional Breastfeeding Forum ‘The Best Start for Life’, we are forming, together as a region, a community of protectors of Breastfeeding and that we will continue to grow. We owe it to the present and future generations of our countries. From this space of science and knowledge, we want to share our experiences and learnings. Get to know this new El Salvador and allow us to invite those who have not yet joined to work with us. We are convinced that by promoting, protecting, and supporting Breastfeeding, we will ensure the best start for a country that enjoys good health and well-being”* - Her Excellency **Mrs. Gabriela Rodriguez de Bukele**, First Lady of El Salvador



- Her Excellency Mrs. Gabriela Rodríguez de Bukele with the Experts, Participants from Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Representatives from Danone.

In the afternoon sessions, the experts shared five (5) informative presentations taking participants from topics such as the evolution of breastfeeding practices, benefits and barriers to breastfeeding, the role of breastfeeding in promoting disaster and climate change resilience, the role of microbiota in human milk, respectful birth practices and early initiation of breastfeeding through to an interactive Panel Discussion exploring breastfeeding and returning to work options:

- Session 1: The evolution of breastfeeding practices:** In this session, Vicki Blackman explored the historical, cultural and social factors that have influenced the evolution of breastfeeding practices over time, with a focus on understanding how past practices have shaped contemporary attitudes and behaviours toward breastfeeding. This provided an opportunity to enhance how current efforts in supporting evidence-based initiatives and policies, community engagement, and education can shape future practices, including lactation rooms on the moon.
- Session 2: Benefits and barriers to breastfeeding:** Dr Alberto Heart, led the participants into a very engaging session which outlined the numerous benefits for both infants and mothers which breastfeeding offers, whilst he gave a realistic view of certain barriers that could affect the initiation, duration and success of breastfeeding. The session ended by encouraging participants to advocate for breastfeeding support for mothers and challenged them to design interventions to overcome barriers leading to improving breastfeeding rates.

- iii. **Session 3: The role of breastfeeding in promoting disaster and climate change resilience:** Whilst this was not a common area of discussion, Dr Ali Asgary expertly brought a unique perspective to the crucial role breastfeeding plays in enhancing resilience to disasters and climate change by providing a reliable and sustainable source of nutrition for infants. This was a very timely presentation as the Conference was held during the 2024 hurricane season for Central America and the Caribbean. Dr Asgary emphasised that breastfeeding as a natural method of feeding is environmentally friendly, thus reducing waste and one's carbon footprint.
- iv. **Session 4: The role of microbiota in human milk:** Dr Gabriel Vinderola took a potentially complex topic and skilfully explained the how microbiota plays a crucial role in infant health and development. He examined through graphs, graphics and charts how the microbiota in human breast milk influences the infant's gut microbiome and immune system. Dr Vinderola underscored how breastfeeding supports optimal microbial colonization and enhances infant health and nutrition.
- v. **Session 5: Respectful birth practices and early initiation of breastfeeding:** In yet another insightful session, Midwife Beti Flores, presented the art and science surrounding respectful birth practices. She focused on promoting dignified birth practices that emphasize keeping mother and baby together after birth, encouraging skin-to-skin contact, and supporting early breastfeeding initiation. Practical strategies for ensuring respectful, compassionate care during childbirth was presented both from researched and professional experience which highlighted the importance of these practices for successful breastfeeding and infant health.
- vi. **Panel 2: Breastfeeding and initiatives that support return to work:** Ending the day, this panel was expertly moderated by Mrs. Victoria Colamarco, Representative of UNICEF El Salvador. As the participants gained insight into the some of the challenges faced by working mothers in maintaining breastfeeding practices after returning to work. The experiences and policies from El Salvador, Dominican Republic and Mexico were shared to provide practical guidance and support for both mothers and employers. In El Salvador, the legislative creation and implementation of lactation rooms, at least 1-hour paid break to either breastfeed or expressing milk, sends a strong message of support. In Dominican Republic where mother milk is collected from her home to be delivered to the milk bank evoked strong support from the participants as it was believed that this created a facilitating environment for mothers. In Mexico Chuchu rooms were created at the Mérida International Airport for the benefit of passengers and women who work in the terminal. Each policy demonstrated at governmental and private sector levels the benefits of creating a supportive environment that enables breastfeeding mothers to maintain their breastfeeding goals and achieve optimal maternal and infant health outcomes, while meeting the goals of employers.

Recommendations

Participants identified several recommendations for future conferences. Key takeaways are as follows:

1. Countries of the regional can use El Salvador's legal framework as a guide towards developing national laws and policies to support, protect and promote breastfeeding.
2. Conduct a regional conference annually.
3. Develop a regional breastfeeding campaign to educate communities.
4. Breastfeeding education should be integrated into health curriculums for professionals to build their capacity in supporting mothers.
5. Advocate for improved access to lactation support by developing breastfeeding support clinics, hotlines and peer support groups.

Cultural Night

The day ended with a Cultural Night hosted by the Government of El Salvador. Participants were treated to a very festive atmosphere from the moment they left the National Library and took the short walk over to the National Theatre. The streets were adorned with enlarged photos of infants being breastfed as both participants and the public were serenaded by the national orchestra.





Training of Trainers Workshop

The Magic Drop: Supporting Mothers along the Journey

Following the Regional Conference, the Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop took place at the Presidential Palace, on day two, gathering over 100 health care professions from various institutions and associations capable of replicating and disseminating breastfeeding education throughout the region, thereby enhancing skills and expertise in breastfeeding practices.

Learning Objectives

At the end of the Training of Trainers, participants should have been able to:

1. Understand the science behind breastfeeding.
2. Describe the impact of breast milk and breastfeeding on the health of the mother and infant.
3. Understand the main structural and individual challenges women face regarding the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding.

The ToT sought to equip participants with the necessary skills to:

1. Develop practical tools to support breastfeeding mothers at home, health centres, in the workplace and in society.
2. Communicate the importance of breastfeeding to health professionals, mothers and to caregivers/partners.
3. Support breastfeeding mothers at home, at the health centre, at work and in the community.

Methodology

Using the Magic Drop course, each module was explained by a regional expert, three regional specific topics and practical demonstrations, followed by the City Share Management Method. The “*City Share Management Methodology*” of UNITER, allowed participants to appreciate the expertise of their peers and reflect on their own practices to apply it to their own contexts.

Summary of the Day

The day began with opening remarks and welcome from the Mrs. Elisa Gamero, Health and Nutrition Projects Coordinator, Office of the First Lady, the Minister of Health of El Salvador the Honourable Dr Francisco Alabí, followed by His Excellency Mr. Nikhil Seth, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

Mr Seth reaffirms UNITER’s commitment to contributing towards increasing breastfeeding rates. He recognised that Latin America and the Caribbean have made significant progress in increasing breastfeeding rates, with a regional average of 37% achieved through awareness campaigns, national training of breastfeeding promoters, implementation of the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, and workplace policies. He invited the participants to use the ToT and the Magic Drop training towards supporting their respective countries’ national policy and breastfeeding programmes.

His remarks were followed by the below seven (7) sessions of the day:

Session 1: Fundamentals of breastfeeding: This session was conducted by Dr Vinderola and Mrs Blackman. Dr Vinderola explained the impact and role of microbiota on breastmilk and how eating habits influence of the health of the infant for life. He provided scientific knowledge about the composition of breastmilk and the constant changes that occur in its composition to meet the needs of the infant. Mrs Blackman continued by outlining the role and use of the Magic Drop training and how it can be practically implemented into the healthcare facilities to support, protect and promote breastfeeding.

Session 2: Establishing breastfeeding: This Session was conducted by Dr Heart and Mrs Blackman. Using Module 2 of "The Magic Drop", they detailed the concept of feeding on demand and taught proper latching techniques. This module provides participants with positive breastfeeding practices and their advantages. It also provided information on how partners, friends, family members and others in the community can support the practice of breastfeeding.

Session 3: Maintaining breastfeeding in the community: This session saw the joint presentation of Midwife Flores and Professor Asgary as they led the participants through Module 3 of "The Magic Drop." Midwife Flores focused on the challenges women may face during breastfeeding and provided information on how to address those challenges. This dynamic presentation saw her attach a doll to herself for the entire presentation allowing participants to visualise a day in the life of a mother, along with addressing policies which support a mother breastfeeding and returning to work and emphasised the importance of workplaces creating a breastfeeding-friendly environment.

Dr Asgary focused on breastfeeding as a key factor in enhancing resilience to disasters and climate change by providing a reliable and sustainable source of nutrition for infants. This presentation was well received by participants as it highlighted a very practical but under-recognised role of breastfeeding and how the participants can support mothers during disasters.

Session 4: Practical demonstration: This session was conducted by Midwives Flores and Blackman and Dr Asgary. Each table was given dolls and artificial breast to conduct return demonstrations and



practice placements amongst their colleagues. Participants were further given tabletop exercises by Dr Asgary which were simulations designed to help participants discuss and evaluate their preparedness for potential emergency situations, and how to support mothers during their breastfeeding journey.

Session 5: Breastfeeding and skin-to-skin contact: This session was conducted by Dr Juan Morales, Director of the Comprehensive Maternal Perinatal and Childhood Directorate, from the Ministry of Health of El Salvador. Early initiation is a practical way to support breastfeeding and contribute to early breastfeeding success. This was seen as a regional priority which the ToT aimed to focus on. Dr Morales shared his personal journey and evolution as a medical doctor towards adopting skin-to-skin contact as a step towards breastfeeding support. He aptly shared the psychology and physiology surrounding the close physical contact and hormonal response which occurs during skin-to-skin contact stressing that this helps to facilitate breastfeeding and establishes a strong bond between mother and baby.

Session 6: Breastfeeding and the kangaroo method: Dr Morales, continued with the following session on kangaroo care explaining how the process worked. The kangaroo method is a specific type of skin-to-skin contact that involves continuous and prolonged contact between a newborn and its

parents, usually the mother, but also the father or other caregivers, especially following caesarean sections. Dr Morales cautioned participants that a new policy has the potential to fail unless it has the personal buy-in and support of staff.

Session 7: Peer Discussion: This session was conducted by Ms Claudia Juarez with support from Mrs Blackman, with details below:

The training of trainers (ToT) workshop on breastfeeding concluded with a session dedicated to the implementation of the *City Share methodology*, which facilitates the exchange of knowledge and experiences among participants. The session was divided into four main stages: Self-Assessment, Peer Assistance, Knowledge Assets and Knowledge Fair.

1. Self-Assessment Stage

During this stage, participants conducted a self-assessment of their breastfeeding knowledge and practices. A self-assessment matrix was used that allowed participants to identify areas in which they felt confident and those in which they perceived a need for improvement. This stage was crucial for each trainer to have a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, and to establish a baseline or starting point.

The areas included in the self-assessment matrix were as follows:

1. Composition of breast milk
2. Maternal nutrition
3. Benefits of breastfeeding
4. Milk transfer
5. Breastfeeding positions
6. Social determinants of breastfeeding
7. Language and communication barriers
8. Physical and psychological conditions
9. Health and community education
10. Recommendations



2. Self-Assessment Results:

A detailed assessment of breastfeeding knowledge among the participants was carried out, with generally positive results. All participants demonstrated a high level of knowledge in basic aspects related to breastfeeding. However, areas of uncertainty were identified, particularly in areas five (5) and

eight (8). These areas correspond to appropriate breastfeeding positions and physical and psychological conditions that may influence breastfeeding. Specifically, some participants expressed doubts and a lack of clarity regarding the most effective and comfortable positions for breastfeeding, which **could affect the experience for both mother and baby**. In addition, understanding how physical conditions, such as pain or fatigue, and psychological conditions, such as stress or anxiety, may impact breastfeeding was not as robust as other topics.

On the other hand, area three (3), which addresses the benefits of breastfeeding, showed a high degree of understanding among the participants. This suggests that there is a clear and widespread recognition of the advantages that breastfeeding offers, for both the baby's health and the mother's well-being. This solid knowledge of the benefits could serve as an important basis for strengthening areas where uncertainty was observed.

In this phase, the following flip chart template was used so that participants could share stories and based on this, help was offered to participants who reported problems in certain areas. The template used was as follows:

Time to tell stories	
Title	
Experience of:	
Captured by:	
Context:	Subject, when, where, who, why, what, when, where, who, why
Sequence of events:	
Lessons learned, tips:	

Participants had the opportunity to actively share and discuss the various ideas and strategies they have implemented in their respective countries for the promotion and support of breastfeeding. This exchange of experiences resulted in an enriching dialogue, where each participant was able to contribute their unique perspective, based on the cultural and social context of their country, allowing everyone to learn and reflect on practices that have proven to be successful in different settings.

One of the highlights of this stage was the discussion on the implementation of public policies aimed at protecting and promoting breastfeeding in the workplace.

Participants shared both their achievements and challenges, which generated a collaborative learning environment. Aspects addressed in this discussion included three key areas:

a. Adequacy of spaces in workplaces for breastfeeding rooms:

Participants discussed the importance of having adequate spaces in workplaces where breastfeeding mothers can express and store breastmilk comfortably and safely. Experiences were shared on how some countries have managed to implement regulations requiring the creation of these lactation rooms in companies and public agencies. However, challenges were also mentioned, such as the lack of resources or the resistance of some employers to allocate space and time for this purpose.

b. Insufficient neonatal care units:

Some countries reported having a low number of neonatal care units, so access to information and assistance is often limited.

c. Approach and implementation of awareness campaigns:

Another key theme was the creation and implementation of awareness campaigns aimed at both employers and employees to foster an organizational culture that supports breastfeeding. Participants shared their interest in implementing and designing strategies to convey the importance of educating about the rights of breastfeeding mothers and the benefits of breastfeeding not only for the health of the baby and the mother, but also for the well-being of the community at large. These campaigns, in many cases, have been implemented through traditional informational materials.

d. Community education:

Finally, the crucial role of community education in promoting breastfeeding was addressed. Participants shared experiences on how they have engaged local communities in education programs that promote breastfeeding, highlighting the importance of creating a supportive social environment for breastfeeding mothers. They discussed the need for these initiatives to reach all levels of the community, including community leaders, health professionals, and families, to ensure a comprehensive approach that supports breastfeeding from multiple fronts.

In summary, this stage of the process not only facilitated a dynamic exchange of experiences among participants, but also reinforced the importance of international collaboration in the implementation of effective policies and practices for breastfeeding support. The richness of the experiences shared allowed the trainers to acquire new perspectives and tools to strengthen their own strategies in their respective contexts.

3. Knowledge Assets Stage

At this stage, each participant showcased their strengths in specific areas of breastfeeding. This allowed highlighting areas where each country or representative has in-depth knowledge and has the ability to act as a resource for the others.

4. Knowledge Fair

The session concluded with a Knowledge Fair, where participants offered help on specific topics and requested support in areas where they needed to reinforce their knowledge. This format allowed for a direct and practical exchange, aligned with the real needs of each participant.

Among the demands and concerns raised by the participants, several highly relevant themes emerged that reflect the need for a more comprehensive and equitable approach to breastfeeding promotion and support. The main demands highlighted include:



a. Implementation of policies for the extension of parental leave:

One of the recurring themes was the need to promote policies that extend parental leave, not only for mothers, but also for fathers. Participants expressed that extended parental leave is essential to encourage greater involvement of fathers in the early stages of a baby's life, which in turn can ease the burden on mothers and create a more balanced and supportive family environment. Examples of countries that have adopted more inclusive parental leave policies were discussed, allowing fathers not only to be present in the baby's first days of life, but also to share the responsibilities of care and emotional support, which contributes to better child development and a more supportive breastfeeding environment.

b. Guidance on milk processing for breast milk banks:

Another key demand was the need to guide mothers and health professionals on the proper processing of breastmilk destined for milk banks. Participants expressed interest in receiving more training and resources to ensure that donated milk meets quality and safety standards, thus guaranteeing its efficacy and safety for the newborns who depend on it. Topics such as the proper expression, storage, and transport of breastmilk, as well as the pasteurization and quality control processes that must be implemented in milk banks were addressed. This knowledge is fundamental to increase confidence in the use of donated milk and to promote the donation of breastmilk as a practice of solidarity and of great value in public health.

c. Empowerment of women in the exercise of their rights during breastfeeding:

Empowering women to fully exercise their rights during the breastfeeding stage was another central theme. Participants emphasized the importance of providing women with the tools and support necessary for them to know and assert their rights, both in the workplace and socially. This includes the right to breastfeed in public, to have adequate time and space at work for breastfeeding, and to receive emotional and practical support in their communities and families. The need for awareness and education campaigns that not only inform women about their rights, but also sensitize society in general about the importance of respecting and supporting these rights, was discussed. In addition, the importance of creating support networks among women was discussed, allowing them to share experiences and strengthen their capacity to face the challenges that may arise during breastfeeding.

Taken together, these demands reflect a desire to move toward a more holistic approach to breastfeeding promotion that considers both the needs of mothers and fathers and the infrastructure and social support necessary for them to exercise their rights and responsibilities fully and equitably.



Evaluation Level 1 Survey

Due to time constraints participants were asked to complete a level one survey sent via email following the training. See Annex 3.

Results

Of the 99 trainers, 80 were females and 19 males who reported working at health centres, hospitals, private practices, maternity wards, non-governmental organisations and educational institutions. Of the 99 emails sent, 39 submitted responses. Key takeaways were as follows:

Overall thoughts

1. When asked whether information presented in the Regional Breastfeeding Conference and ToT Workshop (e.g. knowledge, concepts, awareness, skills, etc.) was new to them, 54% said strongly agree, 26% agreed, 7% neutral and 3% not applicable and the remaining 10% disagreed.
2. The content was relevant to their job; 97.4% strongly agreed with 2.6% neither agreed nor disagreed.
3. 95% said they were likely to use the information acquired from the ToT and 97.4% found the information was useful.
4. When asked if they had the chance to use and/or transfer the knowledge/skills acquired from the Conference and the ToT Workshop, 90% said yes whilst 10% said no.
5. When asked for specific feedback on how the course information was used, many responses were surrounding training colleagues. Some of the following responses were submitted:
 - a. *"I gave already 14 conferences after that event, and in all I use some knowledge taken from there"*
 - b. *"Training for Health Promoters, Nutritionists, staff and social service, doctors, nurses, Paediatricians"*
 - c. *"Healthy workers in national network of human milk banks"*
 - d. *"The microbiota and its importance, the obese pregnant woman and the minority carriage of bifidobacteria. The importance of resuming breastfeeding as the food of the future"*
 - e. *"During World Breastfeeding Week, I gave several opening remarks where I named part of the knowledge acquired, and I also participated in discussions on the topic of breastfeeding. I also shared the course website and time on WhatsApp with health professionals and mothers and family members so that they can take the course online."*
6. Respondents indicated they have trained, so far, 1250 persons at the time of reporting.

Recommendations

Participants identified several recommendations for future training. Key takeaways are as follows:

1. **Strengthen Local Capacity:** Participants were encouraged to establish local and regional support networks to share knowledge with healthcare professionals and community workers, ensuring that the knowledge gained from the Magic Drop course is consistently applied.
2. **Ongoing Education and Refresher Courses:** Each participant was encouraged to replicate the training for their colleagues and utilise the information within their sphere of practice.
3. **Monitor and Evaluate Impact:** Participants were notified that following the training, UNITAR will be assessing the effectiveness of the training. This included follow-up surveys, interviews, impact stories or practical evaluations to measure changes in breastfeeding rates or practices in the community.
4. **Community Engagement:** Participants were encouraged to actively engage with local mothers, family members, and cultural influencers to build a supportive environment for breastfeeding. Adapting to each country perspective with culturally tailored strategies can improve breastfeeding acceptance and continuation.
5. **Integration with Healthcare Systems:** Advocate for integrating breastfeeding education into maternal and child health services at healthcare facilities to ensure consistent support from pregnancy throughout the breastfeeding period.
6. **Advocacy for Policy Support:** Promote advocacy initiatives at local and national levels to reinforce breastfeeding policies, such as maternity leave, breastfeeding-friendly workplaces, and public breastfeeding rights.
7. **Culturally Relevant Messaging:** Some participants expressed some cultural barriers when conducting breastfeeding education. They were encouraged to adapt the information received to align with local cultural beliefs and practices around breastfeeding, ensuring that the information is easily understood and accepted.
8. **Support for Vulnerable Groups:** Develop targeted strategies to support marginalized or vulnerable populations, such as low-income or rural mothers, who may face additional barriers to breastfeeding.

By implementing these recommendations, the impact of the Training of Trainers can be amplified, contributing to a stronger breastfeeding culture and healthier outcomes for mothers and infants in the region.



Conclusions of ToT

The ToT concluded with closing remarks by and issuing of certificates of completion by Mrs. Elisa Gamero, Health and Nutrition Projects Coordinator, Office of the First Lady, the Minister of Health of El Salvador the Honourable Dr Francisco Alabí, and Mrs Vicki Blackman.



Lessons Learned & the Way Forward

UNITAR, and, as such, the Breastfeeding Education Initiative (BFEI), served as facilitator and co-host of the event. We adapted to the country dynamics, with use of development and promotion terms verses sustainable development goals (SDGs) and private partnership given without reference to our donor by name.

While recognising the critical and unique role that UN agencies play in advancing global health and development, we also see the value of strategic partnerships with the private sector to complement and accelerate these efforts. These collaborations, as we have seen through the partnership with Danone, can harness additional resources, innovation, and expertise, aligning with the ethical frameworks, core principles of the UN system, UNITAR and Danone's Guiding Principles. By ensuring transparency, accountability, and mutual respect, we can foster synergies that benefit all stakeholders, especially the communities we aim to serve, towards the advancement of supporting, protecting and promoting breastfeeding education.

Crucial within the next steps towards future Conference and Training of Trainers are:

I. Post-Event Support

- **Action Plan Development:** After the conference and training, develop a regional action plan for continued breastfeeding promotion and support, ensuring implementation.
- **Follow-Up:** Schedule follow-up sessions with trained trainers to assess progress and provide ongoing support.

II. Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Impact Assessment:** Implement a framework to measure the impact of the training sessions and conference outcomes. Use surveys, interviews, and breastfeeding data to monitor progress.
- **Impact Stories:** Development Impact stories with trainers that demonstrate the positive effects the training has had on their practice, clinics or community. These stories would highlight real life examples of how certain actions or interventions have made a tangible difference, helping to illustrate the direct impact of the Breastfeeding Education Initiative.

Annex

1. Agenda
2. Participants list
3. Survey
4. Press releases links
5. Official Conference photos
6. Presentations link
7. Government of El Salvador Planning Committee Members
8. UNITAR & Danone Planning Committee Members

Regional Conference on Breastfeeding Education and Training of Trainer

18/07/2024 - 19/07/2024

San Salvador, El Salvador

Agenda

Regional Breastfeeding Education Conference

Thursday, July 18, 2024

Place: National Library of El Salvador (BINAES)

08:00 - 08:30	<p>Arrival and registration of participants Place: National Library of El Salvador (BINAES) 4 Calle Ote., San Salvador</p>
08:30 - 09:25	<p>Official opening and welcome</p> <p>Welcome Remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Honorable Ms. Alexandra Hill Tinoco, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of El Salvador • The Honorable Mr. Francisco Alabí, Minister of Health, Republic of El Salvador <p>Inaugural Remarks: The importance of breastfeeding for sustainable development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Her Excellency Mrs. Gabriela Rodríguez de Bukele, First Lady of the Republic of El Salvador • Her Excellency Mrs. Raquel Patricia Arbaje Soneh, First Lady of the Dominican Republic • H.E. Mr. Nikhil Seth, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)

09:25 - 09:30	<p>Statement of Joint Commitment to the Promotion of Breastfeeding Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading of Statement - Lic. Estrella Merlos, Deputy Director, UNITAR, Switzerland
09:30 - 10:00	<i>Official photo</i>
10:00 - 10:15	Coffee Break
10:15 - 10:45	<p>Opening speech A Regional Overview: Central America, Cuba and the Dominican Republic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Riaz Lodhi, United Nations Resident Coordinator in El Salvador and Belize (ag.) And representative of the World Food Program
10:45 - 11:15	<p>Breastfeeding initiatives and protocols in El Salvador</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Elisa Gamero, Health and Nutrition Projects Coordinator, Office of the First Lady of the Republic of El Salvador, and Director Ad Honorem from “<i>Nacer con Cariño, El Nido</i>” Maternity Centre
11:15 -13:00	<p>Panel 1: National breastfeeding initiatives</p> <p>The panel will share experiences, strategies and factors influencing breastfeeding practices within the region and identify common themes, disparities and best practices. Through this knowledge sharing, collaboration will be fostered to address barriers and promote optimal breastfeeding outcomes.</p> <p>Moderator: H.E Dr. Giovanni Escalante, Representative WHO El Salvador</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honorable Dra. Carla Marina Paredes Reyes, Minister of Health of Honduras • Dr. Tamy Santana, In charge of the Maternal and Child Program of the Dominican Republic • Dr. Karol María Ruiz Varela, President of the National Breastfeeding Commission of Costa Rica. • Dr. Enrique Lau Cortés, General Director of the Social Security Fund of Panama • Dr. María Auxiliadora Gadea, Coordinator of Comprehensive Child Care, Ministry of Health of Nicaragua • Dr. Catherine Chibás Pérez, National Director of the Maternal and Child Program Cuba • Dr. Francisco Chew Bed, Hospital Pediatric Care Unit Representative, Guatemala
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 14:20	<p>Session 1: The evolution of breastfeeding practices</p> <p>This session will explore the historical, cultural and social factors that have influenced the evolution of breastfeeding practices over time, with a focus on understanding how past practices have shaped contemporary attitudes and behaviors toward breastfeeding. Through this exploration, participants will gain knowledge about the diverse perspectives and changing norms around breastfeeding, enabling a deeper understanding of its importance in diverse contexts and informing efforts to support evidence-based initiatives and policies, community support and education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Vicki Blackman, Midwife; Public Health Specialist, UNITAR

14:20 – 14:50	<p>Session 2: Benefits and barriers to breastfeeding</p> <p>Breastfeeding offers numerous benefits for both infants and mothers, but it also presents certain barriers that can affect the initiation, duration and success of breastfeeding. This session will provide a comprehensive overview of the benefits and challenges associated with breastfeeding. By understanding these benefits and barriers, participants will be prepared to promote and protect breastfeeding, support breastfeeding mothers, and develop specific interventions to overcome challenges and improve breastfeeding rates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Alberto Heart, Pediatrician Neonatologist, Panama City Clinic
14:50 – 15:20	<p>Session 3: The role of breastfeeding in promoting disaster and climate change resilience</p> <p>Breastfeeding plays a crucial role in enhancing resilience to disasters and climate change by providing a reliable and sustainable source of nutrition for infants. During emergencies, such as hurricanes, flooding and extreme heat and drought when food supplies and clean water may be scarce, breastfeeding ensures that infants receive essential nutrients and antibodies, protecting them from infections and diseases. This natural method of feeding is environmentally friendly, reducing waste and the carbon footprint. Moreover, breastfeeding supports maternal health, aiding in recovery and reducing long-term health risks. It fosters strong emotional bonds, offering psychological stability to both mother and child during stressful times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Ali Asgary, Director CIFAL York and Professor, York University, Canada
15:20 - 15:50	<p>Session 4: The role of microbiota in human milk</p> <p>Human milk contains a wide range of microorganisms, collectively known as microbiota, which play a crucial role in infant health and development. This session will explore the composition and diversity of the microbiota present in human breast milk, emphasizing its role in shaping the infant's gut microbiome and modulating immune responses. By increasing awareness of the importance of the microbiota in human breast milk, the importance of breastfeeding in promoting optimal microbial colonization and supporting infant health and nutrition will be highlighted.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Dr. Gabriel Vinderola, Associate Professor of Microbiology, Universidad Nacional del Litoral, Argentina
15:50 - 16:20	<p>Session 5: Respectful birth practices and early initiation of breastfeeding</p> <p>Respectful birth practices include allowing mother and baby to remain together immediately after birth, facilitating skin-to-skin contact, and supporting the initiation of breastfeeding through gentle encouragement and assistance as needed. This session will explore the importance of promoting dignified and compassionate care during childbirth, with a specific focus on facilitating early initiation of breastfeeding. Practical strategies and guidelines will be provided to promote respectful practices and protect maternal autonomy and rights during childbirth. In addition, the presentation will emphasize the critical role of early initiation of breastfeeding in establishing successful breastfeeding relationships and promoting infant health and well-being.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lic. Beti Flores, Homebirth Midwife; Reproductive Health Specialist, Mexico
16:20 - 16:30	<p>Coffee Break</p>

16:30 - 17:15	<p>Panel 2: Breastfeeding and initiatives that support return to work</p> <p>This panel will explore some of the challenges faced by working mothers in maintaining breastfeeding practices after returning to work and provide practical guidance and support for both mothers and employers. The panel will provide experiences that promote a supportive environment that enables breastfeeding mothers to maintain their breastfeeding goals and achieve optimal maternal and infant health outcomes, while meeting the goals of employers.</p> <p>Moderator: Sra. Victoria Colamarco, Representative UNICEF El Salvador</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • El Salvador – Jennifer Girón, Head of the Nutrition, Food Safety and Climate Change Unit, Ministry of Health. • Dominican Republic – Dr. Martha Nina, Coordinator of the National Breastfeeding Program.
17:15 - 17:30	<p>Wrap up & Closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Vicki Blackman, UNITAR
18:00 -20:00	<p>Cultural Programme at the National Theatre and reception</p>

Agenda

Training of Trainers Workshop

Friday, July 19, 2024

Venue: Presidential House of El Salvador

08:00 - 08:30	<p>Arrival Venue: Presidential House of El Salvador Alameda Manuel Enrique Araujo 5500. San Salvador, El Salvador</p>
08:30 - 09:00	<p>Welcome and introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs. Elisa Gamero, Health and Nutrition Projects Coordinator, Office of the First Lady of the Republic of El Salvador, and Director Ad Honorem from “<i>Nacer con Cariño, El Nido</i>” Maternity Centre 2. Honorable Dr, Francisco Alabí, Minister of Health of El Salvador • H.E. Mr. Nikhil Seth, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)
09:00 - 10:00	<p>Session 1: Fundamentals of breastfeeding</p> <p>This session will present Module 1 of UNITAR's training course "The Magic Drop: Supporting Mothers Along the Journey" which provides scientific knowledge about the composition of breast milk and the constant changes that occur in its composition to meet the needs of the infant. This module provides recommendations on the nutritional requirements in the mother's diet as she prepares to breastfeed and emphasizes the benefits of breastfeeding for both mother and baby.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Dr. Gabriel Vinderola, Associate Professor of Microbiology, Universidad Nacional del Litoral, Argentina • Mrs. Vicki Blackman, Midwife; Public Health Specialist, UNITAR

10:00 - 10:30	Coffee Break
10:30 – 11:30	<p>Session 2: Establishing breastfeeding</p> <p>This Session builds on Module 2 of "The Magic Drop" which describes the concept of feeding on demand and details proper latching techniques. This module provides participants with positive breastfeeding practices and their advantages. It also provides information on how partners, friends, family members and others in the community can support the practice of breastfeeding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Alberto Heart, Neonatologist Pediatrician, Panama • Mrs. Vicki Blackman, Midwife; Public Health Specialist, UNITAR
11:30-12:30	<p>Session 3: Maintaining breastfeeding in the community</p> <p>This Session builds on Module 3 of "The Magic Drop", focuses on the challenges women may face during breastfeeding and provides information on how to address those challenges. It gives participants an active role in encouraging and facilitating breastfeeding through key communication skills. This module also focuses on breastfeeding at work and details the importance of workplaces creating a breastfeeding-friendly environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lic. Beti Flores, Homebirth Midwife; Reproductive Health Specialist, Mexico • Dr. Ali Asgary, Director CIFAL York and Professor, York University, Canada
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 - 14:15	<p>Session 4: Practical demonstration</p> <p>This session seeks to equip participants with the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to assist breastfeeding mothers to effectively and comfortably breastfeed their infants. This involves latching techniques and breastfeeding positions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lic. Beti Flores, Homebirth Midwife; Reproductive Health Specialist, Mexico • Ms. Vicki Blackman, Midwife; Public Health Specialist, UNITAR • Dr. Ali Asgary, Director CIFAL York and Professor, York University, Canada
14:15 - 14:45	<p>Session 5: Breastfeeding and skin-to-skin contact</p> <p>This session will address skin-to-skin contact immediately after birth to help initiate breastfeeding and promote early breastfeeding success. The close physical contact and hormonal response that occurs during skin-to-skin contact helps to facilitate breastfeeding and establish a strong bond between mother and baby.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Juan Morales, Director of the Comprehensive Maternal Perinatal and Childhood Directorate, Ministry of Health of El Salvador
14:45 - 15:15	<p>Session 6: Breastfeeding and the Kangaroo Method</p> <p>The kangaroo method is a specific type of skin-to-skin contact that involves continuous and prolonged contact between a newborn and its parents, usually the mother, but also the father or other caregivers. This session will address the benefits of this method in breastfeeding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr. Juan Morales, Director of the Comprehensive Maternal Perinatal and Childhood Directorate, Ministry of Health of El Salvador
15:15 - 15:30	Coffee Break

15:30 - 16:45	<p>Session 7: Peer Discussion</p> <p>This session will use UNITAR's knowledge management methodology called "City Share", which will allow participants to appreciate the experience of their peers and reflect on their own practices to apply them to the specific context of their country. Participants will be grouped into working tables for discussion.</p> <p>4. Claudia Juarez, Project Coordinator, UNITAR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Vicki Blackman, Midwife; Public Health Specialist, UNITAR
16:45- 17:15	Closing and awarding of certificates
17:15 - 17:30	Closing remarks

Experts and Trainers:

- **Dr. Alberto Heart**, Pediatrician Neonatologist, Panama City Clinic
- **Dr. Ali Asgary**, Director CIFAL York and Professor, York University, Canada
- **Dr. Gabriel Vinderola**, Associate Professor of Microbiology, Universidad Nacional del Litoral, Argentina
- **Lic. Beti Flores**, Homebirth Midwife; Reproductive Health Specialist, Mexico
- **Dr. Juan Morales**, Director of the Comprehensive Maternal Perinatal and Childhood Directorate, Ministry of Health El Salvador
- **Mrs. Vicki Blackman**, Midwife; Public Health Specialist, UNITAR
- **Ms. Claudia Juarez**, Project Coordinator, UNITAR

Annex 2. Participants List Training of Trainers

No	Institution	Country	Name	Position
1		Argentina	Gabriel Vinderola	Microbiologist, National University of Litoral, Argentina
2		El Salvador	H.E Gabriela Rodríguez de Bukele	First Lady of El Salvador
3			Alexandra Hill Tinoco	Minister of Foreign Affairs
4			Francisco Alabí	Minister of Health
5			Elisa Gamero	Health and Nutrition Projects Coordinator, Office of the First Lady and Director Ad Honorem from "Nacer con Cariño, El Nido" Maternity Center
6			Juan Morales	Director of the Comprehensive Maternal Perinatal Directorate, Ministry of Health
7			Jennifer Girón	Head of the Nutrition, Food Safety and Climate Change Unit, Ministry of Health.
8			Ríaz Lodhi	Acting Resident Coordinator / Representative World Food Programme (WFP)
9			Giovanni Escalante	Head of the Country Office Representative Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) /World Health Organization (WHO) in El Salvador
10			Victoria Colamarco	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Representative in El Salvador
11			Yesenia Lozano	Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations and Other International

				Organizations in Geneva
12		Canada	Ali Asgary	York University Professor
13		Mexico	Beti Flores	Home birth midwife President of the Midwifery and Natural Health Organization of Mexico
14		Panama	Alberto Heart	Neonatologist Pediatrician, Panama City Clinic
15	Diplomatic Missions in El Salvador	Costa Rica	Lina Eugenia Ajoy Rojas	Ambassador
16		Dominican Republic	Julio César George Encarnación	Ambassador
17			Samadhi Julissa Fernández Guzmán	Minister Counselor
18	International Participants	Costa Rica	Karol María Ruiz Varela Rojas	President of the Breastfeeding Commission
19			Zayra Mendez Pacheco	President of the Obstetric Nursing Association
20			Ivannia Delgado Aguilar	Pediatric nurse. Costa Rica College of Nurses
21		Cuba	Catherine Chibás Pérez	National Director of the Maternal and Child Program
22			Pablo Roque Peña	Member of the National Pediatric Group and President of the Breastfeeding Commission
23		Guatemala	Francisco Chew	Pediatric Physician, Hospital Pediatric Care Unit
24			Evelyn Janina Cotto Menchú	Head of Neonatology Section, San Juan de Dios General Hospital
25		Honduras	Carla Marina Paredes Reyes	Minister of Health

26			Sandra Ramírez	Lactation consultant. Promoter Institution of Maternal Assistance and Support (PAM)
27			Dinora Danibeth Ruiz Hernández	Representative of the College of Nursing Professionals
28		Nicaragua	María Auxiliadora Gadea Mejía	Coordinator of Comprehensive Child Care of the Ministry of Health
29			Ana Carolina Padilla	Neonatologist Pediatrician, Cesar Amador Molina Regional Hospital of Matagalpa
30		Panama	Enrique Lau Cortés	General Director, Social Security Fund
31			Hermes Pimentel	Deputy National Chief of the Maternal and Child Program, Social Security Fund
32			Natividad Mendoza	Maternal and Child Nurse, Social Security Fund, Social Security Fund
33			Esther Toala	Neonatologist / Pediatrician, Social Security Fund
34			Ilinichna Alzamora	Neonatologist / Pediatrician, Punta Pacífica Hospital
35		Dominican Republic		
36			Tamy Santana Monsanto	Director, Maternal and Child Health Program. Ministry of Health
37			Martha Josefina Nina Rivera	National Breastfeeding Coordinator. Ministry of Health
38			Julibel Guerra Mejía	Head of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
39			Mayra Molina	Obstetrician Gynecologist, President of the Society of Perinatal Medicine

40			Andrea Recio	Emergency Supervisor in the Nursing Area. Provincial Hospital Inmaculada Concepción.
41	UN Agencies (No speakers)	UNICEF	Karen Elizabeth Panameño de Alvayero	Health and Nutrition Officer, UNICEF
42		FAO	Reina Osorio	Nutrition manager
43		IFDA	Rosa Amelia Campos	Focal Point
44	Danone		Francine Vroom	Category Senior Compliance Officer
			Anne González	Regional Healthcare Nutrition Solution Manager LATAM
45	UNITAR		Nikhil Seth	Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations and UNITAR Executive Director
46			Estrella Merlos	Associate Director,
47			Vicki Blackman	Senior Breastfeeding Specialist
48			Claudia Juárez	Focal Point, Global Breastfeeding Initiative
49			Gabriela Fuentes	Projects Coordinator, Social Development Program
50	MINSAL	El Salvador	Jennifer Vanessa Giron Santos	Jefa de la Unidad de Nutrición y Seguridad Alimentaria
51			Mario Enrique Gonzalez	Especialista en Lactancia Materna
52			Ana Maria Lima	Especialista en Desarrollo de Programas
53			Lys Granados	Equipo Tecnico Lactancia Materna
54			Karla Patricia Chiquillo Sosa	Coordinadora Oficina de Nutrición
55			Elda Carolina Guerra Agustín	Equipo Tecnico Oficina de Lactancia Materna
56			Gladys Elizabeth Aguilar de Vega	Nutricionista, Región Central
57			Yanira Elizabeth Ayala de Pérez	Nutricionista, Región Paracentral

58			Yris Eugenia Ramos Flores	Nutricionista, Región Metropolitana
59			Marta Cecilia Marroquín	Nutricionista, Región de Occidente
60			Karol Elizabeth Cañas Ramos	Coordinadora de BLH HN de la Mujer
61			Kenia Bethzaida Arriola de García	Tecnica Oficina de Lactancia
62			Claudia Patricia García Campos	Nutricionista, US Panchimalco
63			Virginia González de Vargas	Nutricionista, Región Oriental
64			Sandra Margarita Funes de Argueta	Nutricionista, Nivel Central
65			Griselda Guadalupe Durán de Ayala	Nutricionista SIBASI San Vicente
66			Wendy Vanessa Cruz Alfaro	Oficina de Lactancia Materna
67			Glenda Marielos Valladares de Salazar	Nutricionista SIBASI Centro
68			Eleanor Alma Briseida de Ruíz	Nutricionista, SIBASI Oriente SS
69			Concepción Margarita Flores Dubon	Tecnologo Materno Infantil
70			Norma Andrea Torres Menjivar	Licda. Materno infantil - BLH
71			Mercedes Roxana Recinos Gómez	Nutricionista, SIBASI Chalatenango
72	SIBASI Ahuachapan		Maura Marcela Castro de Rivera	Nutricionista Supervisora Departamental
73	UDS Atiquizaya		Susana Yamileth Ramirez Mejia	Colaborador Tecnico en nutricion
74	SIBASI Santa Ana		Reina Carolina Domínguez Calderón	Nutricionista Supervisora Departamental
75	US-I Chalatenango		Cindy Yasmin Cano Tobar	Colaborador Técnico de Nutrición
76	US-E La Palma		Heidi Raquel Melgar Cardoza	Colaborador Técnico de Nutrición

77	Ciudad Mújer Lourdes Colón		Claudia Yaneth Chávez Jóvel	Colaborador Técnico de Nutrición
78	USE Concepcion Batres		Ivonne Cecilia Hernandez	Colab tecnico en nutricion
79	CEM Botoncillal		Lorena Cecibel Alfaro Canales	Licda. Materno Infantil
80	CEM Ciudad Arce		Sandra Patricia Recinos de Galdamez	Licda. Materno Infantil
81	CEM Pto Libertad		Azucena Evelin Cocar Medrano	Licda. Materno Infantil
82	CEM Botoncillal		Claudia Ines Herrera Chavez	Licda. Materno Infantil
83	UDS Rancho quemado		Victor Lobo Rivas	Licda. Materno Infantil
84	CEM Pto Libertad		Dinora Guadalupe Acosta Quintanilla	Licda. Materno Infantil
85	UDS Rancho quemado		Mauricio Alberto Quintanilla Rodríguez	Licda. Materno Infantil
86	UDS Quezaltepeque		Pedro Antonio Gutierrez Hasbun	Licda. Materno Infantil
87	CEM La Union		Mercedes Catalina Gamero de Melara	Licda. Materno Infantil
88	CEM Guarjila		Mirian del Transito Peña Palacios	Licda. Materno Infantil
89	CEM Ciudad Arce		Jessica Emperatriz Gonzalez Quijano	Licda. Materno Infantil
90	CEM Ciudad Arce		Claudia Patricia López Coto	Licda. Materno Infantil
91	CEM Berlin		Jacqueline Claribel Moreno Romero	Licda. Materno Infantil
92	CEM La Union		Rocio Del Carmen Pineda de Moscoso	Licda. Materno Infantil
93	BRLH		Lorena Carolina Guzman Vasquez	Licda. Materno Infantil
94	HR San Miguel ISSS		Ana Julia Urquiza de Recinos	Pediatra

95	HR San Miguel ISSS		Ana Marisela Benitez Cañas	Prof. Materno-infantil
96	HR Santa Ana ISSS		Luz Angelica Rivas	Pediatra-Neonatologa
97	HR Santa Ana ISSS		Ana Vilma Cabrera Aragon	Enfermera I
98	Hospital Policlinico Zacamil		Veronica Isabel Chiquillo	Enfermera I
99	Hospital Materno Infantil ISSS 1º de Mayo		Sandra Abigail López Rivas	Lic. En Salud Materno Infantil
100	Hospital Materno Infantil ISSS 1º de Mayo		Elisa Beatriz Márquez de Urrutia	Nutricionista, Coordinadora de área de Fórmulas y Lactario
101	Hospital Materno Infantil ISSS 1º de Mayo		Andrea María de Jesús Ayala Chicas	Pediatra Neonatóloga, Coordinadora de Estrategia de Calostroterapia
102	Hospital Regional de Sonsonate		Ada Ester Torres Sibrian	Lic. En Salud Materno Infantil
103	Hospital Amatepec		Wendy Edith Arias Sandoval	Enfermera I
104	ISSS / Programas Especiales		Maria Magdalena Martínez Gómez	Pediatra Neonatóloga/ Supervisora Programas Especiales
105	ISSS / Programas Especiales		Julia Isabel Romero de Hernández	Enfermera Supervisora Programas Especiales Región Occidental
106	Hospital Materno Infantil ISSS 1º de Mayo		Jose Fernando Orellana Mayorga	Pediatra-Neonatologo / Colaborador Coordinación Institucional de Pediatría

107	Hospital Policlínico Zacamil		Isabel Alejandra Gómez Hernández	Pediatra-Neonatologa
108	ISSS/Programas Especiales		Delmy Monjarás	Enfermera Supervisora Programas Especiales Región Oriental
109	US Conchagua		Claudia Sibrian	Colab tecnico en nutricion
110	USE Monseñor Romero		Emperatriz Sanchez de Arabia	Colab tecnico en nutricion
111	USE San Martín		Jasmín Rebeca Cerritos de Henríquez	Colaborador técnico en nutrición
112	USI Zacamil		José David Umanzor	Colaborador técnico en nutrición
113	USE San Antonio Soyapango		Nancy Esmeralda Guzmán	Nutricionista
114	SIBASI La Paz		Dania Guadalupe Dinarte Miranda	Nutricionista Supervisora deptal
115	USE San Pedro Perulapan		Joaquin Rigoberto Blanco	colaborador tecnico de nutrición
116	USI Apastepeque		Mayra Lissette Guzman	colaborador tecnico de nutrición
117	FOSALUD		Evelyn Rivera	
118	ISSS		Gabriela Elizabeth Barahora	Colaborarora tecnica

Annex 3. Survey



Breastfeeding Education Initiative Post-event Evaluation - Participants' Reaction Survey

Introduction

Dear UNITAR Participant,

Your feedback is invaluable to us at UNITAR, and your participation in this brief survey is essential for our ongoing efforts to enhance quality. We kindly ask you to share your thoughts on your learning experience at the Regional Conference on Breastfeeding Education and Training of Trainers (ToT) Workshop, organized by UNITAR and co-hosted by the Government of El Salvador through the Office of the First Lady.

Please rest assured that all responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. The names of individuals and organizations will not be linked to the results, your personal answers will remain private, and the survey findings will be reported only in aggregate form.

The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete. If a question is not relevant, please select "Not applicable." Should you have any questions or require assistance, feel free to contact Ms. Vicki Blackman at vicki.blackman@unitar.org.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!



Breastfeeding Education Initiative Post-event Evaluation - Participants' Reaction Survey

Participant information

* 1. Please, indicate your gender

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Other
- I prefer not to disclose my gender

2. Please, indicate your date of birth

Date / Time

Date

*** 3. Please, indicate your nationality**

4. Do you have any disability?

UNITAR monitors the profile of its beneficiaries from different perspectives, including age grouping, gender (or sex), nationality and professional affiliation. In addition to these factors, UNITAR is also interested in knowing if its beneficiaries may have a disability. The following question is **strictly voluntary**, however. Any information that may be provided by you will be presented in aggregate form and not attributed to you.

UNITAR defines persons with a disability as those "who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others." (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, art. 1)

- Yes
- No
- I prefer not to say

*** 5. Please, tick the sector in which you work**

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Central/national government | <input type="radio"/> Private sector |
| <input type="radio"/> State/provincial government | <input type="radio"/> Academia |
| <input type="radio"/> Local government/authorities | <input type="radio"/> Student |
| <input type="radio"/> International or regional organization | <input type="radio"/> Unemployed |
| <input type="radio"/> NGO or civil society | |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (please specify) | |



Breastfeeding Education Initiative Post-event Evaluation - Participants' Reaction Survey

Reaction to the event

*** 6. Please rate the following statements using the scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
Information presented in the Regional Breastfeeding Conference and ToT Workshop (e.g. knowledge, concepts, awareness, skills, etc.) was new to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The content of the Regional Breastfeeding Conference and ToT Workshop is relevant to my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is likely that I will use the information acquired in this event.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, the Regional Breastfeeding Conference and ToT Workshop was useful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments

*** 7. How important are the knowledge/skills acquired in the Regional Breastfeeding Conference and ToT Workshop to your job success? If you are currently unemployed, please tick "Not applicable".**

- Completely important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Slightly important
- Not at all important
- Not applicable



Breastfeeding Education Initiative Post-event Evaluation - Participants' Reaction Survey

Breastfeeding Education Initiative Post-event Evaluation - Participants' Reaction Survey

Final comments

12. In your view, the overall time frame of the Conference and the ToT Workshop established a path which is:

- Too fast
- Slightly too fast
- Just right
- Slightly too slow
- Too slow

13. What parts of the Conference and the ToT Workshop did you like most or find most useful?

14. What did you find to be least useful about the Conference and the ToT Workshop?

15. Do you foresee any challenges or obstacles in applying knowledge/skills acquired from this event to practice? If so, please describe the challenges.

- No
- Yes, please specify

16. In what ways could UNITAR (and its partners) be of assistance in addressing such challenges?

17. What suggested improvements could you offer to enhance the effectiveness and usefulness of the event?

18. Please share any additional comments or suggestions that you wish to make to improve the event for future audiences

Annex 4. Press releases links

1. [UNITAR and the Government of El Salvador to Host Regional Forum on Breastfeeding Education | UNITAR](#)
2. [UNITAR and the Government of El Salvador Inaugurate the First Regional Breastfeeding Forum “The Best Start for Life” | UNITAR](#)
3. [Training of Trainers on Breastfeeding Education Successfully Kicks-off | UNITAR](#)

Cuenta	Red Social	Link
Francisco Alabí Ministro de Salud	X	<u>https://x.com/FranAlabi/status/1814058200712216733</u>
Casa Presidencial	X	<u>https://x.com/FranAlabi/status/1814032346397786538</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813949886284415343</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813965302603845981</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813966073919615321</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813966280900427892</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813966483745014214</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813966938311209115</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813970887684633019</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813971702310727690</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813973645523562698</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813973355126468672</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813974588788732002</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813979997377286412</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813984951747916072</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813992261572805022</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1813996729949118659</u>
		<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1814029294684848190</u>
<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1814122098853302779</u>		
<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1814357811159036001</u>		
<u>https://x.com/PresidenciaSV/status/1814353178634207526</u>		
Nikhil Seth Executive	X	<u>https://x.com/NikhilSethUN/status/1814003394270646336</u>

Director at @UNITAR		
Diario El Salvador	X	https://x.com/elsalvador/status/1814003828498587861
Gabriela de Bukele	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/v/6UzMGSNAWJ4LEotP//
Gabriela de Bukele	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/4hu61eqiiP7tpvNN/
Beti Flores Partera / Midwife en Casa Colibrí	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/4MVqyGiT4PgANXJ9/
Secretaría de Salud de Honduras	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/Saxkdy1bkMrB9sok/
Unicef El Salvador	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/mmkHzq46i1sBMh8z/
Canal 10	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/v/MbajzhaX53xLxwuS/
Enrique Lau Cortés	General Director, Social Security Fund	https://www.facebook.com/share/v/nXpyXtrVuXc9n1HV/
Francisco Alabí Ministro de Salud	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/jnXBQPGLS7rMZVqA/
El Norteño News	Facebook	https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fennewssv.com%2F2024%2F07%2Frealizan-primer-foro-de-lactancia-materna-en-el-salvador%2F&h=AT05T6NhaO2lWtmO5fjo38AoST6PU6yRXJdF_sEYulaTCTWHa3RzyfLIHoGib_ITVSDPBvqRJPBMngUs1yqcL7m6rQb1O6cC1ND337lanMi91QaeRhhXarUOiEQdBEZNAwSD&s=1
El Informante SV	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/gfrmcMjLtoxchhDo/
Diario El Salvador	Facebook	https://www.facebook.com/share/7KUzEUHjhgAYrJ3o/
		https://www.paho.org/es/noticias/18-7-2024-ops-participa-primer-foro-regional-lactancia-materna
OPS	Web	https://www.paho.org/es/noticias/18-7-2024-ops-participa-primer-foro-regional-lactancia-materna
UNITAR	Web	UNITAR and the Government of El Salvador Inaugurate the First Regional Breastfeeding Forum “The Best Start for Life” UNITAR

		Training of Trainers on Breastfeeding Education Successfully Kicks-off UNITAR
		https://www.unitar.org/about/news-stories/news/unitar-and-government-el-salvador-inaugurate-first-regional-breastfeeding-forum-best-start-life
SWI swissinfo	Web	https://www.swissinfo.ch/spa/el-salvador-acoge-foro-regional-de-lactancia-materna-que-re%C3%BAne-a-m%C3%A1s-de-300-especialistas/84237769
Diario La Página	Web	https://lapagina.com.sv/nacionales/el-salvador-es-sede-de-foro-de-lactancia-materna-organizado-por-la-onu/#google_vignette
Diario El Salvador	Web	https://diarioelsalvador.com/hoy-inicia-el-primer-foro-regional-de-lactancia-materna-el-mejor-comienzo-para-la-vida/533935/#google_vignette
Presidencia SV	Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/presidenciasv/p/C9lpAXIMOBX/?img_index=3
Gobierno SV	Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/reel/C9lujKKM6hj/?igsh=MW9sc2VrYWMOb3hrYQ==
Gabriela de Bukele	Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/reel/C9tLHq1MwaA/?igsh=MXZmdTNzcmp6NDVsbA==
Gabriela de Bukele	Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/p/C9ljek0t3tN/?igsh=MWJ6OXhoNHRyeWlwNA==
Gabriela de Bukele	Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/p/C9ntNMt_g2/?igsh=enptYzl1MWJhNXg2
Gobierno SV	Instagram	https://www.instagram.com/reel/C9nNy7HP0uG/?igsh=MTVqcG5kNDVpdTd6eA==

Annex 5: Official Conference Photos link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/14w8dO_g2E9DKU9Fk13CxEWLygfAcf4Eq

Annex 6. Presentations links

Day 1: [18 julio](#)

Day 2: [19 julio](#)

Day 1& 2: [El Salvador Presentations](#)

Annex 7. Government of El Salvador Planning Committee Members: [UNITAR & GOES Planning Committee Members El Salvador.docx](#)

Annex 8: UNITAR & Danone Planning Committee Members: [UNITAR \u0026 Danone Planning Committee Members El Salvador.docx](#)