

## WORLD BREASTFEEDING TRENDS INITIATIVE TRAINING (WBTi) FIJI, on 6-7 June 2011



Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, and Kiribati participants with Dr.Salanieta Saketa, Secretary MOH , Fiji & Dr.Arun Gupta , Regional coordinator IBFAN Asia, Dr.J.P.Dadhich, National Coordinator BPNI, Marcia Annandale & Team of IBFAN Oceania

On 6-7 June 2011, participants gathered at the Tanoa Plaza Hotel in Suva, Fiji, for the first World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative orientation training workshop in the Oceania region. The meeting was made possible with financial support from the World Health Organisation, Secretariat for the Pacific Community, IBFAN Oceania and IBFAN Asia with technical assistance from UNICEF Pacific.

Two participants each came from Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Kiribati with a further group of thirteen from Fiji, Marcia Annandale from Christchurch New Zealand, representing IFANZ-IBFAN Oceania and two trainers from New Delhi, India – Dr Arun Gupta and Dr JP Dadhich.

The meeting commenced with an Official Opening Address by the Health Ministry Permanent Secretary Dr Sala Saketa in which she explained Fiji has made remarkable strides in supporting exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months followed by continued breastfeeding to two years. It was warming to hear say the Ministry also supports the use of locally prepared complementary foods over pre-packaged commercial baby foods.

As is the aim of the WBTi, Dr Saketa reinforced that participants would gain knowledge and skills to develop appropriate in-country actions by assessing the state of infant and young child feeding practices using the WBTi toolkit.

Ms Seini Kurusiga, UNICEF Pacific, followed with a regional perspective on infant and young child feeding practices. Of note, Fiji leads the Pacific in having all its maternity facilities designated Baby

Friendly and stands along with Palau in having provisions of the International Code of marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and its resolutions covered by national regulations. However, this was not true of all Pacific Island countries and territories so Ms Kurusiga was pleased to have IBFAN Asia and Oceania back on the scene as partners.

Through a series of power point presentations, plenary discussions, interactive discussions, group work, feedback sessions and a live website demonstration the trainers walked and talked participants through the 15 indicators contained in the WBTi assessment toolkit. Time was also given to expose perceived challenges to the process on returning home and to give feedback on whether earlier recorded workshop expectations had been met – the consensus being, yes!

An important point about WBTi is that it is participatory action oriented simple research using existing country data rather than creating new data. Taking this a step further WBTi provides a new and exciting way to move from what ‘we did’ to what ‘we can’ formulate together in the future.

While data on IYCF in the Pacific is routinely collected, it is evident that current indicators are not standardised and country data collection methods vary. WBTi offers a standard set of indicators that will enable useful comparative data analyses that will ultimately benefit all nations.

We are united in our goals to decrease infant and young child morbidity and mortality in Oceania by drastically improving breastfeeding rates and optimal complementary feeding practices. To this end all 22 Pacific nations, Australia and New Zealand are challenged and urged to get on board! To initiate a WBTi orientation training please contact [info@ifanz-ibfan.org.nz](mailto:info@ifanz-ibfan.org.nz) or [arun@ibfanasia.org](mailto:arun@ibfanasia.org)

### PHOTO GALLERY



