

# THE MAGIC DROP

## Supporting mothers along the journey





## About the course

This E-learning course developed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) comes as part of the Global Breastfeeding Education Initiative (GBEI).

UNITAR helps Member States and other United Nations stakeholders implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by providing learning and knowledge services that meet internationally recognized quality standards.

As a practical step towards **protecting the survival and health of babies and women, breastfeeding is a central part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and is linked to many of the Sustainable Development Goals. Breastfeeding is, for example, a critical aspect in achieving **SDG2** and **SDG3** — which include ending hunger, improving nutrition, and promoting health and wellbeing.

Promoting breastfeeding practices such as initiation within one hour of birth and continuing for up to two years of age and beyond is essential for improving child health, preventing malnutrition, and reducing under 5 mortality.

Through this Initiative, UNITAR aims to contribute to facilitating breastfeeding by developing and providing a variety of educational tools that will target diverse audiences at policy, organizational, academic and community levels.

Creating facilitating environments for breastfeeding requires knowledge on the science behind breastfeeding and a critical understanding of social and cultural factors that affect breastfeeding.

Furthermore, the course aims at providing the practical tools for promoting and supporting breastfeeding to a wide audience including women, their partners, community, healthcare professionals and employers.

The content of the course stems from our belief that support needs to be provided to women on all levels starting from the smallest nucleus at home all the way up to policy makers.



**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



# Course objectives

This e-learning course aims at empowering parents to be in control of their own breastfeeding journey and make well-informed choices while ensuring that health care workers, families, communities, and employers have the resources and knowledge they need to effectively support women to breastfeed.

**At the end of the course, participants will be able to:**

- Understand the science behind breastfeeding.
- Describe the impact of breastmilk and breastfeeding on the health of mothers and infants.
- Understand the main structural and individual challenges facing women regarding initiating and continuing breastfeeding.

**The course will enable them to have the necessary skills to:**

- Develop practical tools to support mothers breastfeeding at home, health center, workplace, and society.
- Communicate the importance of breastfeeding to healthcare professionals, mothers, and caregivers/partners.
- Assess the veracity of common beliefs about breastfeeding.
- Support breastfeeding mothers at home, health center, work, and community.



# Course modules and content

**Module 1:** Essentials of breastfeeding

**Module 2:** Establishing breastfeeding

**Module 3:** Maintaining breastfeeding in the community

## Module 1: Essentials of breastfeeding

The first module focuses on the level of the mother expecting to initiate or has started breastfeeding. It offers the latest scientific findings concerning the composition of breast milk and the constant changes that occur to such composition to cater for the needs of the infant.

The module provides recommendations on the nutritional requirements in the mother's diet preparing her before, during and after breastfeeding.

It further develops on the benefits of breastfeeding to both mother and baby.

An important aspect of this module is the demystification on some common beliefs surrounding breastfeeding.

### Learning objectives:

- Identify main components of breastmilk and its adaptability.
- Describe the impact of breastmilk and breastfeeding on the health of mothers and infants.
- Identify dietary and nutritional requirements for mothers pre and postnatal.
- Assess the veracity of common beliefs about breastfeeding.





## Module 2: Establishing breastfeeding

The second module describes the concept of feeding on demand and the frequency of feeding. It tackles milk transfer and the signs of a proper latching compared to poor latching.

Module 2 equips participants with the findings on positive breastfeeding practices and their advantages.

The module reaches the structural determinants and the role of cultural and familial influences on breastfeeding.

### Learning objectives:

- Describe responsive feeding and its importance.
- Assess milk transfer and proper latching.
- Communicate recommended breastfeeding practices and their key advantages.
- Identify cultural determinants to breastfeeding and assess the role of family legacy.

## Module 3: Maintaining breastfeeding in the community

This module tackles the issues that women may face on their breastfeeding journey and provides input on how to deal with such issues. It suggests actions that support mothers' informed choice to prolong breastfeeding in a positive environment.

Furthermore, it gives participants an active role in encouraging and facilitating breastfeeding through key communication skills.

A dedicated section focuses on breastfeeding at work, the importance of a supportive workspace, examples of successful initiatives and the commitment needed from employers to improve towards creating a breastfeeding-friendly environment.

### Learning objectives:

- Determine key physical, psychological, and structural issues facing women regarding breastfeeding.
- Associate key factors contributing to a positive environment with encouraging and facilitating breastfeeding.
- Identify the characteristics of a breastfeeding-friendly workspace.
- Identify and assess key communication approaches to support breastfeeding.

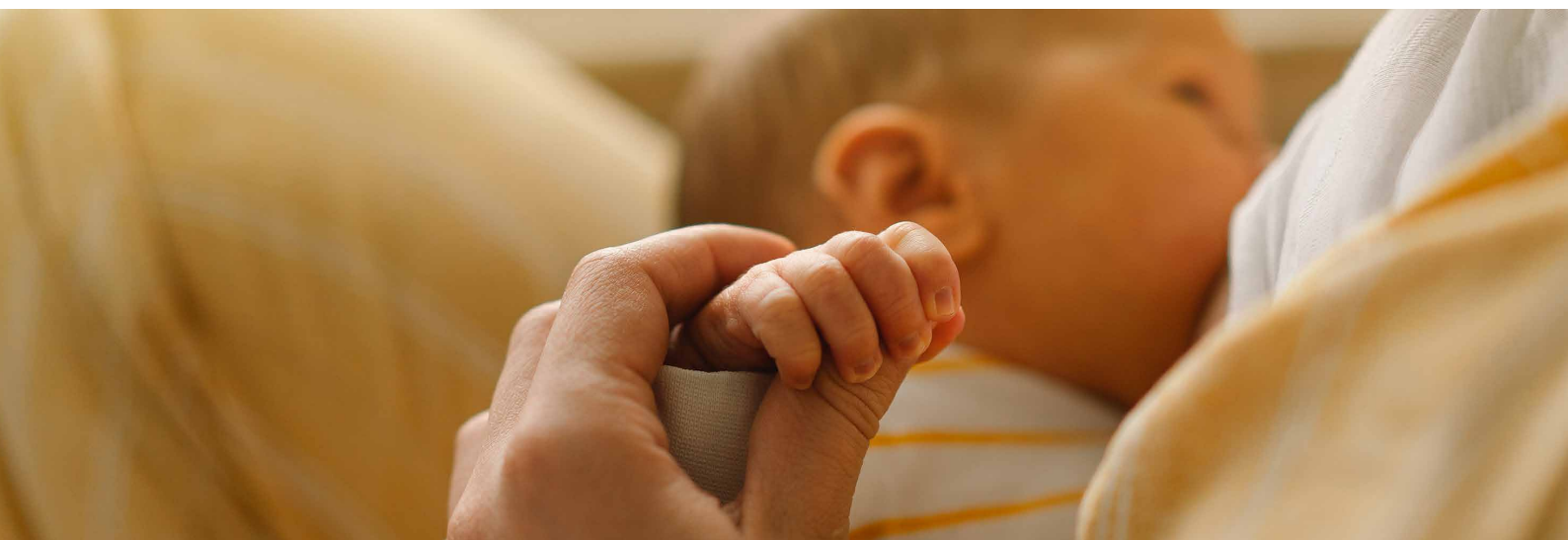
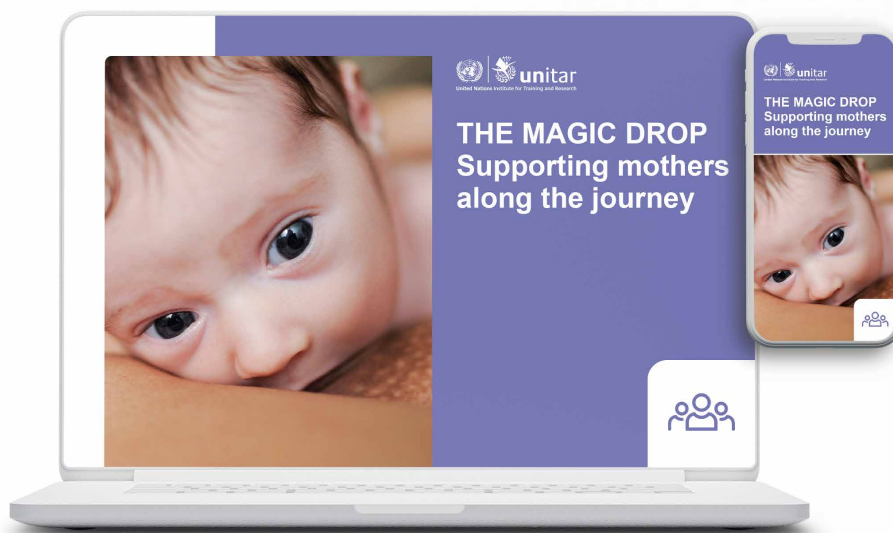
# Methodology

The course is based on UNITAR's sound adult learning pedagogical principles.

It is built around active participation. It follows a sequence of interactive videos, factsheets, readings, self-assessment activities and quizzes, and exercises for each module. The learning activities are distributed in such a way to ensure the achievement of the learning objectives in a flexible manner.

Modules include expert speakers from around the globe, healthcare professionals, in addition to women who share their experiences in breastfeeding.

We actively sought speakers from various academic backgrounds, professions, and geographical locations to capture the diversity surrounding breastfeeding.



## Participant profile

The course is designed for supporting policymakers, practitioners, academia and civil society from both developed and developing countries.



## Certification

A certificate of completion will be issued to participants who achieve a minimum total score of 70% in the average grade. A certificate of participation will be issued to participants who complete all mandatory activities but achieve a final score inferior to 70% in the average grade.

# Conclusion

The course comes within a chain of steps that aim at creating a community of concern for breastfeeding. It emphasizes the collective efforts needed to support women on their journey to initiate, maintain and prolong breastfeeding.

Furthermore, it combines the scientific knowledge with the practical aspects. This combination equips partici-

pants with tools to advocate for change on different levels facilitating the breastfeeding journey.

The course is built as a platform to connect mothers with experts, healthcare professionals and employers which allows to foster a common space for interaction.

