



PR#214-22

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Belize Celebrates World Breastfeeding Week 2022**

*Belmopan, August 3, 2022. 8:00 a.m.*

World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated globally from August 1 to 7, each year. This year's theme, *Step Up for Breastfeeding: Educate and Support*, speaks to strengthening the capacity to protect, promote and support breastfeeding across all levels of society and calls on all to work collectively to protect mothers' and babies' rights to breastfeeding. This shared responsibility means ensuring access to breastfeeding-friendly healthcare facilities, supportive communities and workplaces, and creating evidence-based national policies. These support systems are critical to breastfeeding and must be restored in order to achieve global nutrition targets.

Breastfeeding plays an important role in managing the double burden of malnutrition, providing food security and reducing inequalities. It is notably the best nutrition for babies. For this reason, exclusive breastfeeding is encouraged for the first six months of life and its continuation for up to two years.

Breastmilk provides all the nutrients needed for a baby's proper growth and development and strengthens the immune response, preventing babies from getting sick. Additionally, breastfeeding protects mothers from cancer, reduces the risk of postpartum depression, and promotes the loss of extra baby weight gained during pregnancy.

This year's campaign has four objectives:

1. To **inform** people about the importance of protecting breastfeeding;
2. To **anchor** breastfeeding support as an important public health responsibility;
3. To **engage** with individuals and organizations for greater impact; and

4. To **galvanize** action on protecting breastfeeding in order to improve public health.

The Ministry of Health & Wellness in collaboration with its partners (UNICEF, PAHO and INCAP) will be using the month of August to highlight the importance of breastfeeding and coordinate activities countrywide to support this cause. Some of the key activities include educational sessions within various communities, social media campaigns, breastfeeding training and support for exclusive breastfeeding moms.

The ministry thanks its partners for their continued support and reminds the public that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe and approved for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

## **Ends**

For more information, contact:  
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