



Religious leaders and national child health programme managers of ministries of health convened to discuss their contributing role to breastfeeding promotion in the region. The workshop, organized by the Regional Office, was co-sponsored by the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Culture Organization (ISESCO). It is part of a series of initiatives carried out by the Regional Office to promote optimal child feeding practices, especially breastfeeding, which are seen as a core element of child healthy growth and development. Religious leaders are important partners: they enjoy trust and respect in the community and are among key influential actors on policies and actions on breastfeeding practices. The workshop brought together 78 people, including 27 participants from 14 countries in the region, a seven-member technical committee, 23 observers from the hosting country, 14 representatives of UN and other international and national organizations, and 7 WHO regional and country staff. The workshop scenario was set with a presentation on "Breastfeeding: between religion and science". Next, after briefly reviewing the advantages of breastfeeding, its impact on child health and sub-optimal performance of breastfeeding indicators in the region, active discussions followed on practices and beliefs on breastfeeding, key simple messages to be promoted and actions which could be [pamphle](#) undertaken by religious leaders to encourage and support breastfeeding ("breastfeeding in Islam"). Click on the hyperlinks to see information on the workshop and the

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