



**VITAL  
ANAESTHESIA  
SIMULATION  
TRAINING**

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**VAST Facilitator Course  
Juan Carlos Duarte  
Santa Cruz de la Sierra – Bolivia  
12 – 14 December 2024**

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## Executive summary

### **Situation**

The Facilitator Course was successfully delivered to a 16 people group at the request of Sociedad Boliviana de Anestesiología, Reanimación y Dolor (SBARD), Santa Cruz branch, at the facilities of the Medical College of Santa Cruz.

### **Background**

Very early on September 2024, a group of anesthesiologists belonging to the SBARD, Santa Cruz branch, sent an email to the VAST organization, in which they asked about the possibility of carrying out a course for the training of facilitators in clinical simulation. They were very enthusiastic about the idea of starting their own simulation center but knowing that they should develop and build up the necessary skills to design, implement and execute simulation activities in their city and later in their country. It was then that a meticulous process of organization began between this local group and the VAST Latam team, with the permanent support and advice of the VAST Ltd. Board, to shorten all the times and be able to respond to this requirement on the dates proposed, from December 12 to 15, 2024. We were able to include as well to one Chilean Anesthesiologist, who become very interested, and one third year resident of Anesthesiology from La Paz, who underwent a “express training” in VAST during a rotation in Clinical Simulation at Hospital ABC, México City,

### **Assessment**

Fortunately, each step of the preparation process was able to be executed expeditiously and after 3 months of hard teamwork, the FC was executed successfully and without major setbacks. Participants showed a high commitment level and were able to learn the VAST essentials working as teams, and we were able to use VAST FORM for having learning conversations on facilitations and debriefings. They felt very happy at the end of the training, satisfied what they learnt with, and convinced and committed with the idea to spread this training to their workplaces and other cities of the country.

### **Recommendations**

1. Support the development of the skills of this group of facilitators through the implementation of future VAST courses
2. Promote and support the implementation of other VAST products, as Wellbeing course and Foundational Year in Bolivia
3. After careful assessment, think about training more facilitators in the country, starting with places like Sucre, Beni and Cochabamba, where there is already at least one facilitator

4. Continue to use VAST FORM to gather information on simulation facilitations and debriefings

## Context and background

Interest in simulation-based education is experiencing an exciting boom in Latin America, and teaching in anesthesiology is no stranger to this phenomenon. In Bolivia this is an emergent field, so any effort that can be made will constitute a very important step to pave the way for simulation as a fundamental element of anesthesia education, and in this way to improve patient safety.

After experiencing initial simulation training through the Latin American Federation of Clinical Simulation and Patient Safety (FLASIC), a group of Bolivian anesthesiologists decided to deepen their knowledge of the methodology and the necessary resources to be able to start clinical simulation in their own center. For this reason, they came into contact with the VAST organization and together it was decided to carry out this training in December 2024, in the city of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, taking advantage of the fact that most of them belong to the Santa Cruz branch of the SBARD, but also inviting anesthesiologists from other cities in the country, of which only two accepted, one from Cochabamba and the other from Beni. At the same time, the simulation center of the ABC Hospital in Mexico City and the Latin American Confederation of Anesthesia Societies (CLASA), managed to finalize an agreement to offer residents from Latam countries a two-week rotation in clinical simulation. Rodrigo Rubio, Director of the center and member of the Latam VAST Steering Committee, saw here a good opportunity to introduce VAST in the training of this group, so that in this way these people can gradually join the existing VAST groups, thus strengthening the program in each country, taking into account that the initial group of 9 Latin American residents included residents of Honduras, Guatemala and two Bolivian residents, one from La Paz and the other from Sucre.

After due consultation and approval from the CLASA Board of Directors, Patty Livingston and Adam Mossenson, it was decided to support the introduction of this VAST training on the last two days of this rotation at ABC Hospital and to invite the two Bolivian residents to the Facilitator Course to be held in Santa Cruz. Unfortunately, the resident of La Paz did not get authorization to attend the Santa Cruz course. Additionally, we invited a Chilean anesthesiologist, following the suggestion of Rodrigo López, VAST Instructor. He was able to travel and went to Santa Cruz to participate at FC.

It is also important to note that, at the request of the SBARD's Santa Cruz branch, who are also part of FLASIC, the corresponding endorsement was processed by this organization. After compiling and providing very complete information about the VAST

program and this Facilitator Course in particular, FLASIC granted the respective endorsement, which gives this training the added value of having this support from such an important Latin American organization.

## Funding and supporters

We gratefully acknowledge financial support from

- Laboratorios ABD
- Laboratorio Farmedical
- Laboratorio Cygen
- Empresa Cormesa Ltda.
- Importadora Rey Medical
- Importadora Sicomed
- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada

Their generous support made this Facilitator Course possible.

I would like to say a big thank you to Grendy Hoyos, anesthesiologist from Santa Cruz, who because of academic obligations was not able to attend to the course, BUT she was the person who took the drive from the beginning and made it possible this project started to work. Hopefully, she will be able to join the rest of the group as soon as she returns to Santa Cruz.

## Facilitators and participants

The faculty for this FC was composed by Sandra Leal, Mauricio Vasco and Juan Carlos Duarte as Instructors, and Alejandra Mori as Coordinator. I must acknowledge the role of Nerio Bracho, who decided to get more familiarized and gain experience with the VAST program and attended by his own to this course and was always keen to support to all of us in organizing, facilitating and debriefings the sessions.

The participants and their clinical roles are the following

#	First Name	Last Name	Clinical role
1	Estefany Vanesa	Centellas Gutiérrez	Anesthesiologist
2	Melina Polet	Suárez Mora	Anesthesiologist
3	Carolina	Llanque Ancasi	Anesthesiologist
4	Jacqueline	García Cruz	Anesthesiologist (Cochabamba)
5	Claudio Wuayna	Durán Azurduy	Anesthesiologist (Beni)
6	Vania Edith	Terceros Suárez	Anesthesiologist
7	Ivonne Susana	Araya Caballero	Anesthesiologist
8	Ronald	Villarroel Rojas	Anesthesiologist

9	Román	Aguilera Pizarro	Anesthesiologist
10	Gabriela	Yavari Ribera	Anesthesiologist
11	Gabriela	Rivero Gutiérrez	Anesthesiologist
12	Ñuflo Roy	Mercado Antelo	Anesthesiologist
13	Guely	Chávez Eguivar	Anesthesiologist
14	Claudia	Gamboa Coimbra	Anesthesiologist
15	Dennis Roberth	González Jérez	PGY3 (Sucre)
16	Roberto	Zamorano Wittwer	Anesthesiologist (Chile)
17	Lizzy	Jiménez de Smith	Coordinator
18	Norman Edwin	Smith Romero	Coordinator

## Venue and logistics

This course was held at the facilities of the Medical College of Santa Cruz. Two rooms were used: a small one, with just enough capacity to accommodate all the participants and facilitators, with a rectangular table and very comfortable executive chairs, as well as a large Smart TV to show the slideshows; the other, a large conference room, enough to be divided into two very large areas, and in each of them a space for the simulation scenario was arranged at one end, and at the opposite, the space for the debriefings was organized.

It was possible to have all the necessary materials for this type of course, thanks to the contribution of many of the participants and that of some laboratories and commercial houses that were supporting. The work of the local organizing group was very well complemented by Sandra Leal, who arrived in Santa Cruz 3 days before and was able to work during those days to verify that the list of materials and the necessary printouts were complete, and in a few points, to be able to get them well in advance of the start of the course.

Unfortunately, due to scheduling a few days before the start of course of the judicial branch elections by the government, it was not possible to develop the original planned program, which was 3 days for the FC, followed by a 1-day VAST course. Taking into account this limitation, it was decided to modify the program and then have a two-day FC, followed by the one-day VAST course for 12 people (anesthesiologists and anesthesia residents from Santa Cruz), during which 5 clinical scenarios were performed in each of the two areas of the large room, facilitated by the Facilitators in training, with the respective debriefings also carried out by them, with the guidance of two visiting Instructors in each group. In addition, they were introduced to the concept of non-technical skills with the game "Hand it on", which allowed them as well were also able to experience a simple debriefing of their performance. Participant's list of this third day was:

#	First Name	Last Name	Clinical role
1	Bella Verónica	Panoso Aguilar	Anesthesiologist
2	Gabriela	Casas Bautista	Anesthesiologist
3	Mijail	Maida Rivera	Anesthesiologist
4	Mario Luis	Mostajo López	Anesthesiologist
5	Luis Carlos	Sejas Soliz	Anesthesiologist
6	Renato José	Santillán Aguilar	PGY3
7	Lifferty	Muriel Martínez	PGY1
8	Flor Silvestre	Banegas Justiniano	Anesthesiologist
9	Dally Carol	Paredes Aliaga	Anesthesiologist
10	Mary Catherine	Coarite Mamani	PGY3
11	Diana Stefany	Herrera Castillo	PGY3
12	Leucadia Valeria	Morales Laura	PGY2

## Summary of evaluations

### Facilitator Course

#### Day 1

- **Summary of comments:**
  - **Aspects enjoyed:**
    - Practical exercises on scenarios and debriefing.
    - Organization and group dynamics.
    - Psychological safety during activities.
  - **Aspects to improve:**
    - More time for practice.
    - Better adherence to schedules.
    - Clarity in bibliographic resources.

The participants highlighted the organization, practical approach, and relevance of the concepts. Many comments emphasized collective learning and the supportive environment.

- **Highlighted comments:**
  - "The organization seemed excellent. Systematizing the analysis is key for the scenarios."
  - "Psychological safety enabled active and pressure-free learning."

#### Day 2

- **Summary of comments:**
  - **Aspects enjoyed:**
    - Clarity in scenario preparation and systematization.
    - Increased confidence as facilitators.
  - **Aspects to improve:**
    - Increase practice with scenarios.

- Optimize time management.

Smoother learning and clarity in processes were central themes. Participants also appreciated the personalized approach and practical dynamics.

- **Highlighted comments:**

- "Today it became much clearer how to prepare a scenario and conduct a systematic debriefing. Excellent guide!"
- "Dynamism, patience from the facilitators, and clarity in teaching. I learned so much today."

### Day 3

- **Summary of comments:**

- **Aspects enjoyed:**
  - Practical application of everything learned.
  - Effective feedback during exercises.
- **Aspects to improve:**
  - More supporting materials.
  - Increase the number of practical scenarios.

The final day allowed participants to consolidate their learning. Comments reflect satisfaction in applying the acquired skills.

- **Highlighted comments:**

- "Putting the scenarios into practice was a challenge I enjoyed and allowed me to apply everything I learned."
- "I really liked being a facilitator. It was a challenge, and I feel satisfied with my performance."

### VAST Course

#### Day 3

- **Summary of comments:**

- **Aspects enjoyed:**
  - Teamwork.
  - Dynamic scenarios and judgment-free participation.
- **Aspects to improve:**
  - Use more technology.
  - Provide a comprehensive resolution of clinical cases.

Although the group was small, comments focused on the practical utility of the course and teamwork. Inclusion and collaborative focus stood out as strengths.

- **Highlighted comments:**

- "The resolution of clinical cases was dynamic and enriching. It helped me solve problems creatively."
- "Teamwork and idea-sharing made the experience unique. I feel more prepared to face real cases."

## Action items

- Repeat this kind of training in the respective workplaces
- To promote the use of simulation in the teaching-learning process at postgraduate courses
- Continue to gain tools to be able to provide adequate simulation-based education
- Use debriefing for clinical daily cases to become familiar with the methodology
- Promote the good use of non-technical skills in the workplace through training in multidisciplinary teams
- Supporting each other for the realization of future courses

## Challenges and lessons learnt

A crucial aspect in the organization of a course is the proper planning of each one of the activities that are going to be carried out. VAST has Monday boards that assist the organizer in each of the aspects to be considered in the preparation of the course, from the moment the decision is made, and the dates of the course are set, to 6 months before, 3 months before, 1 month before, 15 days before and immediately before the start of the course. These are the ideal deadlines. For this occasion, the decision was made 3 and a half months before, so the deadlines had to be shortened and work on the fly to obtain all the necessary resources, while being able to adequately and promptly resolve the unforeseen events that always appear in the way of this type of management. Fortunately, the local organizing group in Santa Cruz worked in a very organized way and in permanent communication with the VAST Latam team, with the advice and permanent support of Patty Livingston and Adam Mossenson. In this way it was possible to carry out this course in almost record time, despite the difficulties involved in gathering a group of foreign instructors who could travel and a group of participants who also committed to attend on a somewhat difficult date (mid-December), in addition to managing to obtain all the materials and other resources that are needed for the successful completion of the course.

I would not like to end this point without highlighting the importance of being able to arrive at the place where the course is going to take place well in advance, in case you have not been able to give a previous visit, which is ideal. In this particular case, the contribution of Sandra Leal, who arrived in Santa Cruz 3 days before, was decisive since she was able to correct some logistical details, in addition to being able to execute the preparatory checklist in situ and thus know if the materials and equipment were ready, and if they were not, take the necessary actions together with the local group to be able to obtain them on time. as it finally happened.



## Future directions

The future of VAST in Bolivia will be shaped by what happens in the coming months. Basically, we see two paths to follow, which, although they may run in parallel, must converge at some point in the future. The first of them involves strengthening this initial group of facilitators through the execution of VAST courses in the coming months, either in Santa Cruz or in any of the other cities of Bolivia. This should lead to the strengthening of the skills of the newly trained facilitators, but also to a greater dissemination and knowledge of the program in the country, which will end up increasing the demand for VAST courses and consequently, soon it will be necessary to train more facilitators to be able to meet this demand. The second is the one that will derive from the need to generate more facilitators immediately to make the execution of the course outside of Santa Cruz more quickly and easily viable, such as in Beni, Sucre and Cochabamba, through less demanding logistics and improved economic sustainability.

Whichever of the two alternatives are chosen, or both in the case that they deem it prudent, should have all the support of VAST Latam and the offices of VAST Ltd because, as mentioned above, both options entail the dissemination of VAST in the rest of the country and a greater number of courses taken and people trained. which should result in better clinical outcomes and improved patient safety. Therefore, the next step, whatever path is decided, must be a firm step forward, with the support of all possible instances, but above all, it must be too early so that the effervescence of this first training can be taken advantage of and thus facilitate the process of dissemination of VAST in Bolivia

## Appendix 1 – Course Photos







## Appendix 2 – Detailed evaluations

### VAST Facilitator Course (FC)

#### Day 1:

- **Participants:** 16.
- **Percentage of responses:**
  - "The training was engaging and relevant":
    - "Strongly agree": 68.75%.
    - "Agree": 25%.
    - "Neutral": 6.25%.

- "The skills learned will be useful":
  - "Strongly agree": 62.5%.
  - "Agree": 37.5%.

**Day 2:**

- **Participants:** 14.
- **Percentage of responses:**
  - "The training was engaging and relevant":
    - "Strongly agree": 78.57%.
    - "Agree": 14.29%.
    - "Neutral": 7.14%.
  - "The skills learned will be useful":
    - "Strongly agree": 85.71%.
    - "Agree": 14.29%.

**Day 3:**

- **Participants:** 9.
- **Percentage of responses:**
  - "The training was engaging and relevant": "Strongly agree": 100%.
  - "The skills learned will be useful": "Strongly agree": 100%.

**VAST Course (VC)**

**Day 3:**

- **Participants:** 5.
- **Percentage of responses:**
  - "The training was engaging and relevant":
    - "Agree": 80%.
    - "Strongly agree": 20%.
  - "The skills learned will be useful":
    - "Strongly agree": 80%.
    - "Strongly disagree": 20%.