

The regional materials, developed by the Child and Adolescent Health Programme of the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, were reviewed by a team of experienced Integrated Management of Childhood Health (IMCI) master trainers in Cairo, Egypt, from 3 to 5 July 2010. Reviewers included 19 persons from six countries from ministries of health, academia, UNICEF and WHO offices at different levels. Taking into account whether or not community health workers can dispense medicines and whether there is a malaria risk in countries, three versions of the training materials have been developed: a malaria version for countries with malaria risk in which community health workers can treat sick children, a non-malaria version for countries with no malaria risk in which community health workers can treat sick children, and a non-malaria version for countries such as Egypt in which community health workers are not authorized to dispense medicines. The materials describe action-oriented guidelines on identification of key health problems in children under five years of age, their treatment, and advice on home care, immunization and feeding practices. Each version of the training materials include a facilitator guide, a set of facilitator aids and a participant module with a list of a few bulleted points per topic to act as key reminders. The core of the course is the sick child recording form. The materials and training methodology have been designed to target community health workers with low literacy levels and little or no health background, as requested by countries in the Region. Extensive use is made during training of interactive methods, games, videos and exercises with group and individual feedback requiring very minimal reading or writing skills and making participant learning an enjoyable experience. The materials will soon be revised based on the suggestions made during the review.

This review follows two previous preparatory activities held in Cairo, in November 2009, and Sana’a, in March 2010, respectively.

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