The four-day workshop, the first of its kind to be conducted globally, aimed to orient participants to a new set of training materials and tools for community health workers jointly developed by WHO and UNICEF and develop plans of action to strengthen community IMCI (Integrated Management of Child Health), in order to increase access to quality child care through community health workers. Community approaches are seen to play a significant role in achieving MDG#4 on under-five mortality reduction, especially in countries in which population access to care is limited. It was attended by 21 participants of ministries of health of 4 countries in the Region (Afghanistan, Egypt, Sudan and Yemen), UNICEF country office staff (Egypt) and WHO staff from HQ, the Regional Office and the four country offices. The four countries were selected as they had shown interest in the topic and either had started or were planning to start CHW-based community child care. In the specific case of Egypt, the interest was on promoting newborn and child care in the community rather than case management, which is carried out at health facilities by qualified health providers. The materials subject of the orientation were "Caring for the sick child in the community" and "Caring for the newborn at home". Among the main recommendations were the need to adapt the training materials and methodology for cadres of health providers with low or no literacy and carefully plan and monitor for health system and community support elements, considered essential for any community intervention of this type. Issues included among others policies on which services and medicines CHWs would be allowed to deliver, availability of medicines and supplies (job aids, recording forms, registers, etc.), feedback and motivation schemes by the health system and community.

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