



The Child Health and Development programme of the Regional office for the Eastern Mediterranean has developed Regional Arabic training materials for a course on “Counselling on Infant and Young Child Feeding” to enhance health providers’ counselling skills on breastfeeding and child feeding practices.

Data from countries in the Region—even those characterized by relatively high socio-economic development—show that breastfeeding and complementary feeding indicators are still far away from optimal, acceptable levels.

Any effort to improve child health in the Region should seriously take into consideration promotion of breastfeeding as an essential component of child health.

The Regional office has also conducted regional activities, including training courses on feeding counselling to build a core of trainers in countries and the Region and activities to promote breastfeeding with university staff and religious leaders.

Regional training materials on "Infant and Young Child Feeding Counselling"

[Regional training course on "Infant and Young Child Feeding Counselling"](#)

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Regional training materials on "Infant and Young Child Feeding Counselling"

The Regional Child Health and Development programme has developed this training set as it accords high priority to infant and young child feeding, including breastfeeding, placing it at the core of its child health efforts.

The regional materials on counselling on feeding are meant for physicians, as these health providers are influential and can play a major role in guiding, assisting and supporting mothers and families in child feeding.

They are based on a major adaptation of the original WHO training materials on breastfeeding counselling, which have been expanded in scope to become an integrated package on infant and young child feeding.

This integrated training package includes not only updated information on breastfeeding, but also new chapters on complementary feeding and feeding in special circumstances (such as HIV/AIDS).

In developing the new materials, cultural and social aspects of countries in the Region have been carefully considered.

The training materials were first developed in Arabic as they deal with counselling, which is best practised in the original language and Arabic is the language of most countries in the Region.

Given the importance of counselling techniques, a new training methodology, based on the IMCI training, has been used to enable skill acquisition. In fact, counselling skills can only be effectively acquired through much supervised clinical practice within the context of a training course, while knowledge alone is inadequate to master proper counselling techniques, in order to promote behavioural change.

A technical committee composed of experts from five Arab countries collaborated with the Regional Office in the development of these materials.

This final Arabic version is the result of a series of field tests conducted in three regional training courses with 70 participants representing 11 Arab countries in the Region.

The regional office is considering translating them into English for further use by non-Arabic speaking countries.

The training materials are composed of three manuals:

[Facilitator guide for theoretical sessions](#) ;

[Facilitator guide for clinical sessions](#) ; and

[Participant manual](#) .

The two facilitator guides provide clear guidelines on how to organize and run the training course to ensure the smooth flow of the different sessions. These guides include details on training methodology to assist the facilitators in carrying out their role during the different sessions of the course. They also provide the facilitators with tools to monitor the progress of the course and participant performance.

The third manual—the participant manual—can be used not only during the training course, but also as a technical reference on infant and young child feeding.

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Regional training course on "Infant and Young Child Feeding Counselling"

The objective of this training course is to strengthen the capacity of physicians in the area of infant and young child feeding counselling, aiming at changing their knowledge and improving counselling practices in this area.

The course is designed to be conducted in 7 days with a total of 56 training hours.

It is a competency-based course which makes use of participatory training methodology, such as reading and written exercises with individual or group feedback, demonstrations, role plays, video demonstrations, group discussions and clinical practice.

The cornerstone of this training course is represented by 6 clinical practices, 2 hours each, to allow participants to practise and upgrade their technical and counselling skills in the area of infant and young child feeding in different situations.

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Regional activities on "Infant and Young Child Feeding Counselling"

[Technical consultation on the Arab Regional package on infant and young child feeding component of IMCI](#)

Aswan, Egypt, 11 – 15 March 2012

[Regional workshop for university staff to promote good breastfeeding practices as part of the IMCI community component](#)

Rabat, Morocco, 8 - 9 July 2007

[Regional workshop for religious leaders to promote good breastfeeding practices as part of the IMCI community component](#)

Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic, 2 - 3 June 2007

EMRO infant and young child feeding counselling training course
Cairo, Egypt, August 2006

[Third Regional Infant and Young Child Feeding Counselling Training Course](#)
Aswan, Egypt, 17-22 December 2005

[Second Regional breastfeeding counselling training course](#)
Cairo, Egypt, 6 -11 December 2003

[Regional workshop on infant and young child feeding](#)
Casablanca, Morocco, 28 – 31 July 2003

[First Regional breastfeeding counselling training course](#)
Cairo, Egypt, 15 - 20 and 22 - 27 March 2003

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