

Adapting CHW training packages to integrate actions for HIV and TB

Uptake of community-based child health interventions, including integrated community case management (iCCM) of diarrhoea, pneumonia and malaria, and home visits for newborn care has been remarkable. At the same time, relatively few HIV- and TB-exposed infants are identified early and linked to care, and many more are lost to follow-up along the continuum of care.

CHWs are a vital channel for increasing the access of mothers, children, and women who are pregnant or lactating to HIV- and TB-related interventions

In an important step towards improving the coverage of HIV- and TB-related interventions for mothers and children, WHO, UNICEF and partners chose to capitalize on existing tools and services. A series of inter-partner consultations resulted in an adaptation of the three-part WHO/UNICEF package for community health workers, *Caring for the newborn and child in the community*.

The three-part generic package:



Caring for the newborn at home:

The CHW promotes antenatal care and skilled care at birth; counsels on home care for the newborn in the first week of life; recognizes and refers any newborn with danger signs to a health facility.



Caring for the sick child in the community (2 to 59 months):

The CHW identifies and refers children with danger signs to a health facility; treats pneumonia, diarrhoea and fever; identifies and refers children with severe malnutrition; refers children with other problems; advises on home care and prevention of illness.



Caring for the child's healthy growth and development:

The CHW counsels families on practices that they can carry out at home to promote and support care-giving skills, early child development, infant and young child feeding, family's response to a child's illness, and illness prevention.

Contacts with mothers, pregnant and lactating women, and caregivers of sick children provide the opportunity to provide information and advice on HIV and TB prevention, testing and care

The CHW may or may not know the HIV status of the mother

Adaptations were made to the generic materials in order to:

- increase the uptake of HIV testing and re-testing for pregnant and lactating women, their partners and their children;
- increase ART uptake and adherence for HIV-positive pregnant and lactating women;
- promote TB identification and management;
- promote ARV prophylaxis for the HIV-exposed infant;
- ensure closer follow-up of the HIV-exposed child;
- strengthen the system of referral to health facilities for HIV care and treatment;
- improve early initiation of treatment for HIV-positive infants;
- guide women on options for infant feeding and family planning;
- refer any sick child exposed to HIV and TB.

The adaptations were based on a number of underlying assumptions:

- actions will be delivered by CHWs who are responsible for a range of MNCH interventions;
- actions and information will concern all pregnant women and mothers;
- CHWs will not necessarily know the HIV status of the pregnant women or mothers in their communities; (although some women may choose to disclose voluntarily);
- the way the different packages are implemented determines the type of actions and interventions to be included. A consultation for a sick child assumes a visit by the caregiver to the CHW to seek help, while care for the newborn and care for a child's healthy growth and development are premised on regularly-scheduled visits by the CHW to families.

The adaptations do not include:

- community-based counselling or testing;
- dispensing HIV care such as cotrimoxazole prophylaxis;
- personal counselling on ARV uptake and adherence (doses, adverse events, pill counts);
- clinical assessments for ARV-related side effects;
- dispensing TB prophylaxis.

As of July 2014:

All three packages have been adapted. A field test of one or a combination of the packages is needed, and funds are being solicited. The packages are available on the WHO website.

For more information please contact:



**World Health
Organization**

World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland
Website: http://www.who.int/maternal_child-adolescent/en



United Nations Children's Fund, New York, USA
Website: <http://www.unicef.org>