

In-Depth Qualitative Interview Guide for Lab Technicians Conducting Cholera RDTs in Nepal

Introduction

- Introduce yourself and the purpose of the interview. Make sure to mention that we are focused on the 2024 monsoon season.
- Review the consent form for the interview and obtain a signature.

Icebreaker/Background Information

1. What are your main responsibilities as a lab technician at this facility?
 - a. Probe: How long have you been working as a lab technician?
2. What is your experience with conducting cholera tests?

Section 1: Distribution of RDTs to Laboratories

1. Can you describe how your laboratory received RDTs for cholera testing?
 - a. What challenges did your laboratory encounter in receiving RDTs?
 - b. What factors made the distribution process easier or more efficient?
2. How does your facility manage the RDT stock?
 - a. If you ever ran out of RDTs, can you tell me about what happened? What did you do in that situation?
3. How did you feel about the quantity of RDTs received?
4. How did you feel about the quality of the RDTs?

Section 2: Training on RDTs

1. How did you first hear about rapid diagnostic tests for cholera (called RDTs)?
2. How did you learn about the process for conducting cholera RDTs?
 - b. Probe: What kind of training did you receive? What kind of instructional materials did you receive?
 - c. What topics were covered in the training related to RDT usage?
3. What did you find most helpful about the training/instruction you received?
4. What could have been improved about the training?
5. What additional training/support would have been useful?

Section 3: Adoption and Integration of RDTs in Laboratory Practice

1. What do others do to encourage you to use cholera RDTs? (i.e., laboratory in-charge, EDCD staff, etc.)
 - a. What do you do to encourage doctors to order cholera RDTs?
2. How have cholera RDTs changed the way you process suspected cholera samples?
 - b. Probe: How have RDTs affected the number of cholera cultures that you perform? How have the RDTs affected the number of samples that you ship to other facilities/PPHL/NPHL for testing?
 - c. How have cholera RDTs affected the amount of money your lab spends on cholera testing? (for example, consider the cost of different testing options and the time required to do them)

Section 4: Correct Usage of RDTs

1. Think about the last time you performed a test on a suspect cholera sample. Can you tell me the story about what happened, from the time that you first found out about the patient until the final test for the patient was completed?
 - a. In what ways was that case similar to what normally happens?
 - b. In what ways was that case different from what normally happens?
 - c. Why [did you/didn't you] conduct an RDT for that patient?
2. Can you describe the process that you normally follow when you get a suspect cholera sample?
 Probe if not mentioned:
 - a. Which tests do you perform?
 - b. How do you decide whether to do a cholera RDT?
 - c. What is the process for performing an RDT?
 - d. What do you do if the RDT is negative?
 - e. What do you do if the RDT is positive?
 - f. What do you do with the results?
2. What has helped you to correctly use RDTs?
3. What challenges have you faced related to cholera RDTs?
 - a. Probe if needed: How easy or difficult is it for you to conduct a cholera RDT? How easy or difficult is it to understand how to interpret the result? How easy or difficult is it to know what to do based on the result?
 - b. What do you do if a doctor orders cholera testing on a sample but does not request an RDT?
4. In your experience, in what ways are cholera RDTs sometimes used incorrectly?
5. What kind of support do you receive related to the correct use of cholera RDTs?
 - d. What do you do if you have questions about how to perform a cholera RDT or what to do based on a result?

Section 5: Reporting of Cholera Results

1. How do you share information about cholera cases with the medical recorder (or other person responsible for reporting) in this facility?
 - a. What systems or tools do you use for reporting these results?
2. What challenges did you face in reporting cholera results to the medical recorder?
3. What factors helped you report results to the medical recorder?

Section 6: Effectiveness of RDTs in Improving Cholera Case Detection and Control

1. In your experience, how effective have the RDTs been in improving cholera case detection and control?
2. Can you tell me about a time when cholera RDTs had a positive impact?
 - b. Probe if appropriate: What role did cholera RDTs play in the cholera outbreak this year?
3. In your experience, how do cholera RDTs compare to RDTs used for other diseases?

Conclusion

1. What would you recommend to improve the use of cholera RDTs in Nepal?
2. Do you have any additional comments or insights regarding the use of cholera RDTs in your laboratory?

Thank You

- Thank the interviewee for their time and valuable insights.
- Explain the next steps in the research process and how their input will be used.
- Ask for permission to reach out again for clarification or in case of additional questions.