

## Terms of Reference

### Conducting a cholera laboratory diagnostics training of trainers in Nigeria

#### 1. Context and justification of the project

For many years, cholera surveillance has primarily focused on outbreak response, relying on the reporting of suspected cases without laboratory confirmation. These insufficient data hinder progress towards cholera control and elimination in line with the objectives of the Global Task Force on Cholera Control (GTFCC) for 2030. Today, many cholera-affected countries still lack the necessary capacities for accurate disease diagnosis. The challenge in the coming years is to address this situation by significantly strengthening the laboratory capacities involved in cholera response.

The GTFCC has actively engaged in strengthening cholera surveillance by revising recommendations and guidelines, with particular emphasis on laboratory capacities to facilitate early detection of cases and representative monitoring of resulting epidemics and identification of cholera hotspots, enabling a rapid and targeted response. To further assist countries with their efforts to strengthen laboratory capacities, the GTFCC Laboratory Working Group (LWG) has developed a training course for trainers in cholera laboratory diagnostics and offers to execute the training course in Nigeria.

#### 2. Objectives

The main goal of the project and the mission will be to train laboratory personnel to the level of trainers and provide them with complete training materials to build capacity for cholera diagnostics in country. The newly trained trainers will then be supported in further cascade trainings targeted towards healthcare workers on the topics of sample collection/preparation/transport, use of cholera Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDT) and reporting of results.

Objectives of the project include:

- I. To directly strengthening knowledge and capacity of key laboratory personnel in Nigeria that are involved in performing routine surveillance and diagnostics of cholera,
- II. To provide Nigeria with fully trained diagnosticians/trainers that can expand the testing capacity for cholera to peripheral laboratories,
- III. To further create a pool of skilled health care workers on sample collection/preparation/transport, use of RDT and reporting
- IV. To ultimately enhance cholera surveillance and cholera outbreak response.

#### 3. Organisation of the training

The training course will extend over a period of 12 days and take place in a laboratory of the country's choice. The Central Public Health Laboratory (CPHL) within the Nigeria Center for Disease Control in Lagos appears to be an ideal setting for the training to take place.

Training faculty will include a GTFCC trainer from WHO HQ, Laboratory Focal Points from WHO AFRO and WCO Nigeria who will coordinate and assist with the training.

The project aims to train between 20 and 40 medical laboratory scientists from the cholera laboratory network across the 36 states plus FCT and NCDC laboratories (NRL and CPHL). Additionally, a pool of healthcare workers and frontline responders will be trained on sample collection and transport and proper use of Rapid Diagnostic Tests (RDTs). A list of selected trainees would be drafted and agreed upon by the partners involved: the Nigerian Center for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC), the WHO Country Office (WCO) and the GTFCC.

The project will also cover the costs of necessary supplies for the training. The ordering and shipment of supplies is to take place as soon as possible.

#### 4. Training content

The training of trainers will use the concept of preparing instructors to present information effectively, supervise laboratory diagnostics training on cholera, respond to participant questions, and lead activities that reinforce learning. We will start with a defined goal, to equip trainers with the needed material on cholera diagnostics which will in-turn allow them to propagate this knowledge across other laboratories in the country. In order to ensure the success of the aim of this mission, additionally we plan to follow up with the trainers at a later time when they eventually set out to deliver a secondary training.

The following topics will be covered:

- introduction to cholera
- stool sample collection and sample preparation for transport,
- use of rapid diagnostic tests,
- culture methods for cholera: culture/oxidase/sero-agglutination,
- antimicrobial susceptibility testing,
- discussions on other laboratory techniques for cholera,
- reporting of results,
- strategic testing for cholera,
- key elements of biosafety, quality control and differential diagnostics,
- how to manage and plan a training.

The cascade trainings that will be performed by the trainers will allow the dissemination of knowhow across the country. Mainly the cascade trainings will focus on the following topics:

- introduction to cholera
- stool sample collection and sample preparation for transport,
- use of rapid diagnostic tests,
- strategic testing for cholera

The trainees will undergo both pre-training and post-training assessments to measure the knowledge acquired during the training program.

## **5. Proposed agenda**

The proposed agenda is attached separately. The list of participants is to be further defined in partnership with the Ministry and the WCO.