Clinical and fecal sludge surveillance for *Vibrio cholerae* in Dzaleka Refugee Camp

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Background

Dzaleka refugee camp had a much lower incidence (0.008%) for cholera than the rest of Malawi (0.29%) during the 2023 cholera outbreak, despite inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene conditions.

Methods

For 20 weeks we conducted clinical and fecal sludge surveillance in Dzaleka camp.

We sampled seven high-use pit latrines and one desludging pump truck. We analyzed samples using the same cholera culture methods used for clinical diagnostics. VITEK and API were used for confirming identification.

Findings

No clinical cholera cases were reported by Dzaleka health centre during the study. *Vibrio cholerae* was also not detected using culture methods in fecal samples taken from the pit latrines nor the pump truck.

Clinical culture methods for cholera can be adapted for fecal sludge surveillance in low resource settings such as refugee camps.

None of the patient stool or non-sewered sanitation fecal sludge **samples** analyzed using culture methods **detected cholera**.

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