Author's response to reviews

Title: Field comparison of OraQuick ADVANCE Rapid HIV-1/2 Antibody test and two blood-based rapid HIV antibody tests in Zambia

Authors:

Dalila Zachary (dalila@zambart.org.zm)
Lawrence Mwenge (lawrence@zambart.org.zm)
Monde Muyoyeta (monde@zambart.org.zm)
Kwame Shanaube (kwame@zambart.org.zm)
Albertus Schaap (ab@zambart.org.zm)
Virginia Bond (gbond@zambart.org.zm)
Barry Kosloff (barry@zambart.org.zm)
Petra de Haas (pewdehaas@gmail.com)
Helen Ayles (helen@zambart.org.zm)

Version: 2 Date: 21 June 2012

Author's response to reviews: see over
Response to Decision Letter

“Field comparison of OraQuick ADVANCE Rapid HIV-1/2 Antibody test and two blood-based rapid HIV antibody tests in Zambia”

Thank you for your critique. I think the revised manuscript has improved based on the reviewer comments. We have italicized the reviewer comments.

Robert Colebunders
Minor comment::
The authors should mention that The OraQuick test has the disadvantage that acute HIV infections may be missed because it will only detect antibody
This is a disadvantage in populations with a high incidence of HIV infections

How we addressed this comment: Under the discussion section, 5th paragraph which addresses limitations of the study, we have added the following sentence: “Moreover, antibody based tests like OraQuick®, Determine®, and Uni-Gold™ have the disadvantage of missing acute HIV infection, which is a significant limitation in a high prevalence population.”

Nitika Pant Pai
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data?
6. Yes. I liked the discussion section, well argued and balanced. I am not quite certain that the Oraquick kits require no refrigeration if the temperature exceeds 35C-38C, the performance of the kit is impacted. There are a few studies that have evaluated this issue. So may be we need to tone that fact down a bit.

How we addressed this comment: Under the introduction section, 4th paragraph, the following sentence has been deleted: “Also for field conditions oral fluid based test kits have the advantage that they do not need to be refrigerated, making it a practical alternative in developing countries, where electricity may not available or in settings where power outages are frequent.”

7. Are limitations of the work clearly stated?
Yes. The survey was subject to detection bias. Partial verification bias and Incorporation bias. These could be acknowledged in the write up.

How we addressed this concern: Under the discussion section, 5th paragraph which addresses limitations of the study, we have added the terms verification and incorporation biases.

Thank you again for your thoughtful critique,

Authors of field comparison of OraQuick paper