

Supplementary File 1_ COREQ (Consolidated criteria for Reporting Qualitative research) Checklist

A checklist of items that should be included in reports of qualitative research. You must report the page number in your manuscript where you consider each of the items listed in this checklist. If you have not included this information, either revise your manuscript accordingly before submitting or note N/A.

No.	Topic	Guide Questions/Description	Page No.
Domain 1: RESEARCH TEAM AND REFLEXIVITY			
Personal characteristics			
1	Interviewer/facilitator	5 RAs conducted all interviews and discussions	
2	Credentials	GZ (), GNN (PhD Global Health), GN (), KK (), RT (PhD), JR (PhD), ST (PhD), LD (PhD)	
3	Occupation	GZ (Social Scientist), GNN (Social Scientist), GN (Social Scientist), KK (Director NTD Program, Liberia), RT (Director COUNTDOWN), JR (Reader in Health Systems Research), ST (Professor in Social Science and International Health), LD (Senior Lecturer and Social Scientist)	
4	Gender	Six researchers are females and two are males	NA
5	Experience and training	All authors have extensive experience in conducting and supervising qualitative research studies.	NA
Relationship with participants			
6	Relationship established	No	5
7	Participant knowledge of the interviewers	No	
8	Interviewer characteristics	Yes	5
DOMAIN 2: STUDY DESIGN			
Theoretical framework			

9	Methodological orientation and Theory	Phenomenology and elements of grounded theory	5-6
Participant selection			
10	Sampling	Purposive	5
11	Method of approach	Recruited against criteria in collaboration with in-country research team members, formal letters/emails or phone conversation inviting potential participants to participate in study. RAs approached and explained the purpose of the study to them and followed a rigorous informed consent process with participants receiving an information sheet clearly outlining the purpose of the research prior to the scheduled interview date.	5-5
12	Sample size	67 participants	5
13	Non-participation	No identified participant declined participation	5
Setting			
14	Setting of data collection	Private locations usually identified by the participant(s)	5
15	Presence of non-participants	No	5
16	Description of sample	Table 2. Characteristics of study participants	7 & Table 2
Data collection			
17	Interview guide	We used a topic guide to guide the discussion	5
18	Repeat interviews	No	5
19	Audio/visual recording	All interviews were digitally recorded	5
20	Field notes	No	5
21	Duration	30-65 minutes	5
22	Data saturation	Yes	5-6

23	Transcripts returned	No	5
DOMAIN 3: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS			
Data analysis			
24	Number of data coders	5	7
25	Description of the coding tree	Yes	7
26	Derivation of themes	Themes were pre-identified and evolved from the data	7
27	Software	Nvivo version 11.0 Pro	7
28	Participant checking	No	NA
Reporting			
29	Quotations presented	Due to word count limitations, Table 3 presents quotes extracted from the interview transcripts	8 & Table 3
30	Data and findings consistent	Yes	16-20
31	Clarity of major themes	Yes	8, 13
32	Clarity of minor themes	Yes	8-13, 14-15