

Editorial Decision

Parasitological surveys on malaria in rural Balombo (Angola) in 2007-2008: base line data for a malaria vector control project

Abstract: In the methodology, it is clear that children < 15 years (i.e. 0-14.9 years) were surveyed. In the data analysis authors decided to divide the age group into groups of three: Group 1: <5 years, Group 2: 2-9 years, and Group 3: <15 years.

This grouping is problematic (overlapping of age as well as data) and this issue was raised by one of the reviewers and the authors evade making corrections. For any good epidemiological studies, the presentations of data preferably would include the age group as follow: Group 1: 0-4 years, Group 2: 5-9 years, and Group 3: 10-14 years (i.e. children under 15 years).

Background: Limited and little more literature review would be helpful. Has there been similar work done previously in the country or other countries in Africa? The objective of the study needs clarity – need to state clearly 4 methods of vector control for which the study is designed to evaluate their effectiveness.

Methodology: No description of the study design. In 2.2 protocol of surveys – the authors need to describe clearly the procedures or how the survey was conducted, how cluster sampling was done and how randomized selection was carried out. The authors need to re-write this section – how cluster sampling was done, randomized selection was carried out and what they actually did in collecting data.

There is also no clear description of how data was analyzed. What methods were used to evaluate the 4 different methods of vector control etc.?

Results and discussion: In overall situation the first sentence starts with “4625 thick drops.....” What does this refer to? Is it referring to number of blood films or number of drops” very ambiguous. The Figure 1 needs revision. The horizontal labels need clarification. The graph intends to show effect of season on malaria prevalence but does not show months of wet/dry seasons. What does III 2007, VIII 2007, X2007 etc. represent on the graph. Figure 2 age categories need to be clear as discussed in the abstract.

Conclusion: Too long.

General comment: The objective of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of 4 methods of vector control but there is no discussion - there is lack of data and lack of discussion on this. This should be the essence of the study and the MS but has not been clearly articulated.

Recommendation: The manuscript should not be considered for publication in the IJTDH. But could be considered if major corrections are made.