Reviewer's report

Title: Survival and health status of DOTS tuberculosis patients in rural Lao PDR

Version: 4 Date: 1 June 2010

Reviewer: Asma ElSony

Reviewer's report:

• The authors have answered our previous points sufficiently.

Minor essential revisions:

Abstract:

Background:

Paragraph 1; line2:

Our objective was to assessed the outcome and compliance with DOTS TB patients. Revisit the language; change to (Our objective was to assess the outcome and compliance...).

Main Body:

Background:

Paragraph 4:

The goal of this study was to assessed the physical status, treatment outcome and risk factors for noncompliance......

Revisit the language; change to (The goal of this study was to assess the physical treatment outcome ...).

Hospital records, patient definition and follow up:

Paragraph 1; line 2:

Tuberculosis was defined as having a either positive AFB.......

Revisit, change to (Tuberculosis was defined as having either positive AFB...)

Definition:

Paragraph 1:

A patient was defined as compliant if at the time of the survey if the patient had taken at least 90% of its expected number of tablets days. Revisit the Language. More specification is needed at the area of compliance, defaulter, and noncompliance. (Defaulter has an exact case definition, where a non compliance is the patient not following the treatment recommendation of the physician).

Laboratory and field procedure:
To test the presence of other patients and interest of contact tracing in the patients’ village a parallel survey was performed at the same time.

Revisit the Language/terms: Change to (To detect the active TB cases in the village, and to conduct a contact tracing........)..

From patient with chronic cough.
Revisit the spelling mistake; change to (From patient with chronic cough......).

LANGUAGE REVISION IS NEEDED

Followed points:

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? Yes
2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? Yes
3. Are the data sound? Yes
4. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? Yes
5. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? Yes
6. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes
7. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building, both published and unpublished? Yes
8. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? Yes, abstract needs to be revisited in the conclusion part, to add some words outlining the health status previously mentioned in the title and being availed in the main body of the paper.
9. Is the writing acceptable? Yes, with minor essentials changes.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'