Reviewer's report

Title: Paradoxical risk perception and behaviours related to Avian Flu outbreak and education campaign, Laos

Version: 2 Date: 18 May 2010

Reviewer: Armin Elbers

Reviewer's report:

Reviewer 2

General comment: paper is better, but not good enough to be published yet

Detailed comments:

1. Sample size estimation: in this section, sample size calculation is referred to reference nr. 6. If you look at that reference (a letter to the editor), there is no information about a formal sample size calculation. Given the information they have put in this section (60% perception rate to be estimated, 5% precision, 95% confidence) I come to my own sample size calculation of a maximum of 385 (by using for instance free software Win Episcope to calculate a sample size to estimate a prevalence)

For this you also do not need a power calculation, you only need to include a power requirement if you want to compare treatments. So this section needs much more clarification because now it is not clear at all how you got to a sample size of 988 people.

2. Table 4. in the heading it should be bird flu instead of bird flue

3. In Table 5 (main messages recalled) you introduce the OR (Odds ratio), but there are 2 different categories (trained, not trained) and you do not indicate which of the categories is used as a reference category (the OR is calculated by taking a reference category with OR=1)

In the heading it should be CI 95% instead of IC 95%.

In the Table you could skip the p-value column because you have indicated the 95% CI

Right now the table is a diaster because there is to much information, and several items are now on more than one row.

4. Table 6: in this category we also miss the reference category, the OR is a relative quantity which is expressed against a reference category that has a OR=1

5. Last sentences of the discussion: limitations of this study include recall bias, variability between interviewers etc..
In response to the comments of reviewer 1, the authors have put down in a superficial way, no real discussion on these items is done in detail but just mentioned, but this is not done in a scientific way. Needs much more detail.

6. Last sentence of Discussion: ".... and the possibility that participants did not answer truthfully to sentivie questions, such as reporting dead poultry"

If you look at the results, you can see that all the interviewed persons indicated not to have reported dead poultry. If this is a sensitive question meaning a socially acceptable answer would be that you say that you have reported dead chickens but in reality actually did not report, the authors really do not understand what they are talking about, because everybody answered in the questionnaire that they did not report dead chickens (and this answer is not sensitive !, it actually does take a lot of courage to tell that you have not reported dead chickens).

Conclusion: it is still weak research, but the results are interesting enough to be published, but maybe not in BMC Infectious Diseases

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests