Reviewer’s report

**Title:** Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of grade three primary schoolchildren in relation to schistosomiasis, soil transmitted helminthiasis and malaria in Zimbabwe

**Version:** 2  **Date:** 7 January 2011

**Reviewer:** Berhanue Erko

**Reviewer’s report:**

**Major Compulsory Revisions**

- All the outcomes should be specified and clearly described in this section. The distinction between practice and experience as well as between awareness and knowledge should not be ambiguous. It is not appropriate to present the outcomes in the result section without clear description in the method section. This makes evaluation of the paper difficult.

**Minor Essential Revisions**

**Introduction**

- Pg 3, para 1, last statement: The statement that reads “This is equivalent to 4 – 10 million days per year” should be checked and rephrased for clarity.

- Pg 3, para 2, Ins 4&5: “Chandiwana et al...” should be corrected as Chandiwana and Woolhouse (10)”

- Pg 3, para 2, ln 6: The statement that reads “The prevalence and of infection...” should be corrected as “The prevalence of infection...” or “The prevalence and intensity of infection...”, depending on what the authors want to refer to.

- Pg 4, para 1, ln 4: The statement that reads” It also states that for any baseline survey or community diagnosis: A group of primary...” can be rephrased as” It also states that for any baseline survey or community diagnosis, a group of primary...”

**Method**

- In the method as well as other sections, the term class and grades are used interchangeably. Unless the word class is intended to convey a different meaning, it is preferable to use the term “grade” throughout.

- The description of the study population given under the study area and population on page 5 is highly limited. Hence, the authors need to expand on the study population, also by including age range of the children.

- **Pg 6, Sample size determination:** The authors mentioned that the sample size determination was made for the main study. If they did not use the sample size they described under this section there is no need of having it. They should only
provide description for the sample size drawn for the purpose of this study.

• Pg 7, under the subheading “Causes and preventive measures considered correct for schistosomiasis”: What the authors listed as causes are actually risk factors except worms. Hence, they should be indicated as “causes and risk factors”. How can germs be considered correct cause of schistosomiasis? In this same paragraph, inclusion of cercariae is also inappropriate because children at this level may not be familiar with such technical term.

Result

• Pg 10, Para 1, ln 11: the term “clustering” should be replaced with “nature”

• In the abstract section, the authors mentioned that they used Kato and formol ether concentration techniques. Yet they have not made clear on which method they based parasitological results reported.

• Pg 10, under “prevalence of parasite”: what are presented in text are not clearly seen in Table 3. The values given in the table are also not clear. If “n” stands for the number examined and “%” stands for percentage infected, the values do not agree with the text information.

• Pg 11, under “Sources of water for drinking and washing/bathing”, Table 3 is wrongly referred to. It should be Table 4.

• Pg 13, under “ ”, line 2: For the statement that reads “Of 172 respondents, 98.4 indicated that they ate food with their hands”, Table 7 does not show the data.

Discussion

• Pg 19, para 2: The statement that reads “Chandiwana et al observed that the prevalence and mean intensity of S. haematobium varied with age being highest in the 8-10 year age class (67.6%) and 13.1 eggs/10ml respectively” is vague and needs re-writing for clarity. The phrase “in the 8-10 year age class” in this statement shoud also be corrected as “in the 8-10 year age group”.

• The conclusion in this and abstract section should be in harmony.

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