Reviewer's report

Title: Cross-sectional study of hepatitis B virus in rural communities, Central African Republic

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Reviewer: Cyrille Bisseye

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General comments
Komas and his collaborators have submitted for publication a study on the prevalence of hepatitis B in rural Central African Republic (CAR).
The work has a scientific interest and deserves to be considered for publication in BMC infectious disease. The article is well written and presents recent data on hepatitis B in West and Central Africa.
The authors showed as in previous studies that HBV genotype E is most prevalent in the study area.
The study is interesting even if it has limitations such as the ones noted by the authors themselves especially the sample size.
Therefore the results should be interpreted as being representative of all rural CAR.

Specific Comments
Close contact is listed as the most common route of infection. Sexual transmission which is thought to occur especially in the age group 20-40 is not mentioned. The authors should verify their sources.
The word “Recently” is used to discuss the latest genotypes found; Source 7 is not recent, as it is from 1973.
HBV genotypes E found in CAR were compared to those from west and east Africa; the authors could also align their sequences with those from Cameroon and Gabon two neighboring regional countries.

Conclusion
This article whose findings are important for the CAR and Africa could be accepted after discretionary revisions

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

Quality of written English: Acceptable
**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

none