Reviewer's report

Title: Analysis of risk factors for T. brucei rhodesiense sleeping sickness within villages in SE-Uganda

Version: 2 Date: 27 September 2007

Reviewer: Grébaut Pascal

Reviewer's report:

General

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

The observations that were done in this study are specific to the study area. As it is outlined in this article, HAT transmission patterns are complex, in particular the social organization that modulates the relationship that man can have with his environment, and consequently with the vector and the parasite. For instance, knowing that the relationship of a non-native population with its environment can differ from the natives's one, subsistence agriculture does not necessarily imply the same relationship with the environment than cropping. This was described in the HAT foci in Western Africa (Hervouet & Laveissière, 1987). Conversely, in some situations the familial use of some usual places can prevent HAT from a larger expanding (Grébaut et al., 2001), limiting it to familial aggregation.

Concerning your last sentence, I can not agree with the recommandation of altering the individual behaviour and use of the landscape, if people don't want it will you oblige them? Wouldn't it be easier to disrupt HAT transmission by simple vector control? In fact I do not really understand the operationnal improvement that these informations could bring to classical survey (diagnosis, treatment and vector control), could you be clearer about it?

What next?: Accept 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:
'I declare that I have no competing interests'