Reviewer's report

Title: HIV-associated neurocognitive disorders in sub-Saharan Africa: a pilot study in Cameroon.

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Reviewer: Andrea Kubler

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HIV-associated neurocognitive disorders in sub-Saharan Africa: a pilot study in Cameroon Kanmogne et al

This study examined cognitive function in a sample of Cameroonians diagnosed with HIV/AIDS (N=22 in each group) and compared them to an age, gender, education, and depression matched sample of control subjects (N=44). The aim of the study was to investigate whether the pattern of cognitive deficits in sub-saharan patients, who present with high a diversity of HIV strains, would be the same as in most developed countries in which patients are mostly infected with the HIV-1 subtype B.

The paper is well and concisely written and has the appropriate amount of figures and tables. Results and limitations of the discussion are adequately addressed. I have only minor comments and suggestions:

The authors use many abbreviations and provide a list of abbreviations at the end of the manuscript which is helpful. However, all abbreviations should be explained when first used; namely FACS, JMP, CDC.

Methods

Page 5: The authors state that they adapted the neuropsychological battery. What exactly was done besides the translation? Further it is stated that the back translation of tests were similar to the original. This should be more precise. Who decided that the back translation was similar enough to the original?

Page 6, last line of first paragraph: after “confounding” something is missing. It should be explained in the method section what the different neuropsychological tests are measuring – this is currently in the discussion.

Results

Headlines should indicate the content of the following paragraph not the results (AIDS patients performed worse…; neuropsychological impairment…).

Age and education adjusted values of tests could be reported in Table 1. The authors state that there was no gender effect, which is true for all bar one test (verbal). This should be pointed out. As indicated in Table 4 gender has a significant influence on performance in verbal tests.
Discussion

The authors may wish to discuss that the difference in performance between non-AIDS and AIDS (Figure 1) seems to be purely quantitative not qualitative, meaning the pattern of deficits stays the same over time, e.g. executive functions scores worse than others in non-AIDS and also in AIDS patients.