Reviewer’s report

Title: The effect of Tuberculosis and antiretroviral treatment on CD4+ cell count response in HIV-positive Tuberculosis patients in Mozambique

Version: 1 Date: 22 February 2012

Reviewer: Weerawat Manosuthi

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Major comments:
1. What is the backbone NRTI used in this cohort? This factor has effect on the treatment outcome at least or more, so it should be clarified and included in the univariate and multivariate analysis.

2. How long the patients had received ART prior to ART in 32% of this cohort? Some of these might have developed TB IRIS or even TB after ARV failure for a while. The author had better exclude the patients who initiated ART and subsequently developed TB from the analysis because the magnitude of immunologic response may be less than the patients who were naïve to ART. And this may be the reason why no difference of immunologic response was found, especially during the first few months of study period.

Minor comments:
3. The last paragraph of result section should be clarified in terms of what time point of comparison. In addition, were the absolute CD4 or delta changes from baseline comparing?

4. I don’t think that the conclusion “CD4+ cell counts for patients not on ART at TB treatment start, remained below the cut off for initiating ART during the first three months of TB treatment; therefore some delay in getting the first CD4+ cell count would not lead to missing the opportunity to start ART.” Is rational because 1. No percentile of CD4 was shown at each time point on the figure. Some patient may remain having low CD4 cell count and these patients may be abandoned to starting ART. and 2. The number of patients is too small to conclude. Most of time point had patients of less than 20 participants.

Level of interest: An article of limited interest

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.