Reviewer's report

Title: A Mass Vaccination Campaign Targeting Adults and Children to Prevent Typhoid Fever in Hechi; Expanding the Use of Vi Polysaccharide Vaccine in Southeast China: A Cluster-Randomized Trial

Version: 1 Date: 10 February 2005
Reviewer: John B Robbins

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ABSTRACT

Methods The targeted population was inhabitants that were >5 and <60 years-old.

"...were documented and systematically recorded." is ornate. The authors also had to breathe during this time but they do not have to describe this activity.

Results I do not understand the last sentence. The subject was the identification of adverse events as occurring in 0.07% of the participants and among these fever (how high?) was recorded in 21%, etc.

Conclusions Line 1, delete "logistically" Line 3. Delete "targeting typhoid fever". A "mop-up" strategy was not shown to be specific for typhoid fever vaccines.

Background change "leaded" to "led". Change "Vi polysaccharide (PS) vaccine to "Vi vaccine" - Vi means polysaccharide.

The original studies demonstrating the efficacy of Vi vaccine should be cited:


Remarkably, there is no mention of the specifications published by the WHO for Vi


What is a "local vaccine institute"? Delete "local".

What has been the effect of the use of Vi vaccine in the PRC?

I do not understand this sentence, "Guangxi Province plans to expand the Vi PS vaccine strategy by reaching other age groups affected by the typhoid fever burden". What is "policy-relevant data"? The
paragraph should be rewritten to explain the purpose of this program. Is it related to reference 7?

Methods

Please explain why "Ethical and research clearance" was necessary for 2 licensed vaccines?

I do not understand the sentence "Vaccination coverage by cluster was calculated from the vaccination record books database."

The paragraph starting with "Safety profiles..." must be rewritten to explain what was measured, by who, and how long.

Results

Rewrite the first paragraph to remove the redundancies that are confusing. What is "vaccine-specific coverage"? Delete "specific".

Describe the "Three needle-stick injuries".

Delete "capture". There was no crime. Use "identify".

What was the range of fever? Do the authors have an idea of the background level of fever especially in the children? Was the temperature of the vaccinees taken before the immunization? Were febrile individuals excluded from the vaccination?

Conclusion

The last sentence of the first paragraph is not based upon data from this study.

The fourth paragraph is confusing. Did not cost estimates precede the study? How is the term "affordable" reached? Affordable for who? How much disease was prevented? The last sentence is silly.

The fifth paragraph is "hype". Delete the first sentence and start the second sentence with "A "mop-up" strategy increased the vaccine coverage by 9.6%.

Personally, I would not publish this manuscript without a description of the surveillance for the two diseases covered by the vaccines and the efficacy data.

Lastly, the authors have not mentioned the advances in the field of Vi polysaccharide-based vaccines.