Reviewer's report

Title: The risk of pathogenic intestinal parasites in Kisii Municipality, Kenya: A correlational descriptive research design

Version: 1 Date: 13 February 2008

Reviewer: Ynes Ortega

Reviewer's report:

Major compulsory revisions:
The authors should provide more detailed information as to how the study was designed as well as the procedures used for sample analysis:

1. Why were food handlers selected at the hospital? Why did the authors not look for food handlers at the sample markets studied? Food handlers going to the hospital suggest that they have some discomfort or illness. Food handlers should have been selected from asymptomatic healthy individuals. How were food handlers selected (selection criteria)? What was the association of food handlers with the 2 markets studied?

2. Were food handlers, males, females, children or adults caring for children?

3. Why were the 4 vegetables selected? Are they all eaten raw in Kisii? What part of Solanum migrum is eaten (fruits or leaves)? It would have been nice to examine the hand washes of the vegetable vendors (meat also) as this would determine direct contamination or cross contamination between vegetables. If this was not done, it must be stated.

4. How was food stuffs analyzed? What was used to wash meats and vegetables? Were washes concentrated, etc?

5. How were meats processed? What kind of meats? How about slaughter houses? Were the eggs identified in the meats as Ascaris lumbricoides or other Ascaris sp.

6. The authors conclude that contamination occurred by food handler manipulation and in the farm- more likely true-, but they do not present any evidence that the contamination has occurred in the fields.

7. Is there any information about access to bathroom facilities near the markets and if so, was water and soap available for hand washing?

8. There are two different relevant situations where food contamination could have occurred: in the farm and by food handlers. Since the vendors were contaminated, no conclusion can be drawn as to the sanitation of these products in the fields unless produce is collected and studied in the fields.

9. Did the authors inquire about the washing and watering of the vegetables as they are sold by the distributor and the retailer? Could the water used be contaminated?
10. Finally, when the authors determine a positive sample, what was the density of eggs and cysts? Please provide that information. Would the risk be different if one egg or 1,000 eggs are identified in a particular sample? Probably yes.

**What next?:** Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions

**Level of interest:** An article of importance in its field

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests.