Reviewer’s report

Title: Lessons learned from a demonstration program to sustainably reduce the burden of anaemia and hookworm in women in Yen Bai Province, Viet Nam.

Version: 2 Date: 27 April 2009

Reviewer: Theresa W. Gyorkos

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Major Compulsory Comments:

The Abstract Background should mention the benefits of de-worming in WRA, and in pregnant WRA after the first trimester.

May 2006, the beginning of the intervention, should be mentioned in the Abstract Methods.

Page 9 -- In Deworming: This is be the place to describe how non-pregnant women were identified in the intervention phase.

Page 10 – ‘infestation’ should be ‘infection’.

Page 13 – ‘principals’ should be ‘principles’.

Page 14 – In the last paragraph, sentence 2 should be re-worded as it is not a sentence. This paragraph needs some additional clarification. It is only the inadvertent treatment of pregnant women in their first trimester that is of concern, not pregnant women after their first trimester. Some additional clarification on how to operationalize excluding pregnant women in their first trimester is warranted here, as this is the thorny issue for such mass deworming programs. To my knowledge, the question ‘Are you pregnant’ has not been studied as a screening procedure…and asking women ‘When was your last menstrual period (LMP)?’ demands some follow-up guidelines for program managers. (It should be noted that missing from the Gyapong et al 2003 study populations were pregnant women who did not know they were pregnant and who did not come to the attention of health authorities (because they may have had an early miscarriage, etc.). The WHO 2006 reference mentions the importance of LMP but does not provide advice on how to operationalize this in a large program. A comment on this would be helpful. The authors may wish to declare that research on this issue would be of great benefit.

The numbers in Figure 1 and Table 1 do not match…Please review the numbers again to ensure consistency.

In a legend to Table 1, mention should be made about missing values (ie. not all numbers sum to the same total for each variable).
Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

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.