Reviewer’s report

Title: Rates of coverage and determinants of complete vaccination of children in rural areas of Burkina Faso (1998 - 2003)

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Reviewer: Peter Aaby

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In General: The paper is too long and should be more to the point.

Introduction:
The introduction is much too long due to the long expose of the history of the health care system in BF. The history could be presented as an appendix or a background section under methods and with reference to table 3. To maintain the interest of the reader, the paper should contain a brief background and a statement of the objective of the present study, describing the interplay between individual level and community level variable in the determination of vaccination coverage.

The authors use the abbreviation DTC for d-t-p vaccine – it should be DTP (DTC) is French. They are also using DTCoq for DTP.

Methods:
p. 10: What does “(XXX after weighting)” mean

p12 – unclear whether there is any age restriction on the concept “completely vaccinated”. The official definition is “before 12 months of age”. It is not clear whether that definition has been followed in this study.

Statistical methods
I can not evaluate these

Results
Table 1: sometimes the CI has 1 and sometimes 2 decimals – please be systematic
Page 15 – it should be unnecessary to indicate chi-square and p-value for the comparison of 41.2% and 25.9% -if they like they present a RR with CI.
Strangely there is no discussion of whether coverage and changes in coverage are the same for boys and girls.

Discussion
I though there were interesting bits and pieces in the discussion – but too long. The discussion of the main changes could be more concise.
Postscript
The paper only deals with the official definition of “completely vaccinated”.
The authors should interest themselves more for the quality of vaccinations – i.e.
whether vaccines have been given in the recommended schedule or whether
BCG and DTP have been given together or whether DTP has been given with
MV or after MV. We have shown in several studies that such change in sequence
may have major impact on child survival.