Author’s response to reviews

Title: The positive impact of red palm oil in school meals on vitamin A status: study in Burkina Faso

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
As senior author, it is my pleasure to re-submit for publication the manuscript entitled: *The positive impact of red palm oil in school meals on vitamin A status: study in Burkina Faso* (Zeba AN, Martin-Prével Y, Somé IT, Delisle H).

This paper has not been published elsewhere, nor has it been submitted elsewhere for publication. None of the authors is in conflict of interest.

We thank the reviewer for the useful comments. We revised the discussion accordingly, by modifying what is now the last paragraph on p. 7, and which reads:

*In Kaya and in Bogandé as well, the rate of low serum retinol remained quite high (between 13% and 17%) after the intervention, however. This high residual rate, whether with the VA capsule or RPO “treatment”, again shows that a dosage of approximately 60 mg RAE sustains normal VA status for less than 6 months. Among pre-schoolers of the same Kaya area, Zagré et al (4) had reported that 6 months following a VA capsule distribution among preschoolers with a coverage rate around 90% in Burkina Faso, the rate of low serum retinol was 84.5%. In under-five children of Niger, we showed that three months following VA capsule administration, the rate of low serum retinol was practically back to baseline level of 38% (11). Although this was not the purpose of the present study, we could observe that the benefit of VA capsules was indeed short-lived. In one of the intervention sites (Kaya), 18% of the pupils had received a VA capsule 6 months prior to our baseline survey, but their VA status was not different from that of other pupils. So providing some 60mg of VA either through RPO fortification of school meals or through a single VA capsule over the test year only alleviates the VAD problem in school children. At least two VA capsules per year if not more, or a higher level of RPO fortification of school meals, or a combination of VA supplementation and fortification, would be required.*

We also modified the format to comply with the requirements, and hope that the manuscript is now acceptable.

Sincerely yours,