Reviewer’s report

Title: No evidence of decline in malaria burden from 2006 to 2013 in a rural province of Gabon: implications for public health policy

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Reviewer: LABBO Rabiou

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No evidence of decline in malaria burden from 2006 to 2013 in a rural province of Gabon: implications for public health policy

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Reliable data on the evaluation of malaria burden from 2006 to 2013 in a rural province of Gabon presented here are very valuable, especially in areas that remain underdocumented such as those highly endemic for malaria. This work is so great and important that it needs to be acknowledged. However, I have a number of concerns about it that I would like to express through the following comments: First, Malaria presents a diagnostic challenge to laboratories in most countries. But, the mainstay of malaria diagnosis has been the microscopic examination of blood, using blood smears. For areas where microscopy is not available, or where laboratory staff are not well experienced on malaria diagnosis, there are efficient antigen detection tests that require only a drop of blood. For this reason, it would be interesting if you could state the use of rapid diagnostic test (RDT) in Gabon in general and in regional hospital of Makokou in particular, providing data on the comparison between microscopic and RDT.

Secondly, the fact that the number of cases of step does not regress can be also explained by the number of health staff is in rise and more people have recourse to consultations

1. Is the question posed by the authors well defined? Yes, the problem/objective of this study original is important and well defined
2. Are the methods appropriate and well described? Yes, sufficient details of the methods should be provided to allow peers to replicate the work
3. Are the data sound? Yes
4. Do the figures appear to be genuine i.e. without evidence of manipulation? Yes
5. Does the manuscript adhere to the relevant standards for reporting and data deposition? Yes
6. Are the discussion and conclusions well balanced and adequately supported by the data? Yes,
7. Are limitations of the work clearly stated? Yes
8. Do the authors clearly acknowledge any work upon which they are building both published and unpublished? Yes
9. Do the title and abstract accurately convey what has been found? Yes
10. Is the writing acceptable? Yes