**Reviewer’s report**

**Title:** The challenge of maintaining microscopist capacity at basic levels for malaria elimination in Jiangsu Province, China

**Version: 0 Date:** 23 Sep 2017

**Reviewer:** Maxine Whittaker

**Reviewer's report:**

Thank you for this interesting article on a very important operational issue - maintaining quality surveillance

It would be useful in the background to describe how these health workers at various levels initially received their skills in microscopy, if any regular refresher training or quality assurance method (eg sample test slides sent out and then reviewed) is regularly undertaken, and how the Master microscopists have their capacity maintained.

It would also be useful to understand more on why China has not adopted RDTs more extensively, as this may end up being a barrier to the scale up you suggest.

Would also be useful to understand whether the lower level microscopists are used for their programmes and if they also have either problems with the quality assurance of the diagnosis and/or if they have refresher programmes that could have malaria integrated into them.

Also in the conclusion you discuss perhaps the role of RDTs at local level but earlier you discussed the lack of sensitivity of these at low parasitaemia levels. How would you reconcile this issue?

Edits

Abstract:

Not There were inaccurate rate should be Inaccuracy rate (also line 51)

Suggest adding full stop and a new sentence to start "or villages; the staff at" That is "villages."

The staff

Page 2 Better re-wording of "However, whether the current capacity
41 of microscopists to manage malaria cases in hospitals and public health facilities can meet the surveillance needs to eliminate and prevent the reintroduction of malaria is unknown. " Would be "However, the current capacity of microscopists to manage malaria cases in hospitals and public health facilities to meet the surveillance needs to eliminate and prevent the reintroduction of malaria is unknown".

Line 81-82 scale of their use for malaria detection HAS (not have) increased rapidly

Line 113-115 one microscopist or clinician from each county CDC and county hospital and half of the township hospitals WAS (not were) randomly

Line 201 There WAS A (not were) total of 19 and 168 microscopists

Additional information
Page 2 More information - When was the National Malaria Elimination Action Plan launched in China?
Line 113 What is this "certification from the World Health Organization" and how recent was it?

Are the methods appropriate and well described?
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.
Yes

Does the work include the necessary controls?
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.
Yes

Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.
Yes
Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?

If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**

Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Needs some language corrections before being published

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