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Object: Response to reviewers of the manuscript 65883 (Amadou et al)

Dear Prof. Ma,

We are very grateful to the editor and reviewers for their careful review and valuable comments and advice that have helped to improve our manuscript. Please find herewith our revised manuscript with tracked changes according to the suggestions of the editor and reviewers and a point by point response to the comments.

Hoping that this revised version of our manuscript will reach the stringent standards for publication in World Journal of Hepatology and looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

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Comments of reviewers and editors are in brown

Our response to comments of reviewers and editors are in blue.

**Reviewer #1:**

**Scientific Quality: Grade C [Good]**

**Language Quality: Grade B [Minor language polishing]**

**Conclusion: Major revision**

**Specific Comments to Authors:**

I think if authors added geographic map with different colors to show differences between nations regarding HCC will be better.

We thank the reviewer. We have added a figure (Figure 1) that shows the incidence of liver cancer in the WHO Africa region from the Global Cancer Observatory.

[[Of note, the proportion of patients who received confirmation based on microscopic analysis substantially increased from 5.7% in 1987-1996 to 55.6% in 2007-2015]] page 10, please correct.

We thank the reviewer, this has now been corrected.

Regarding studied population, there are many factors I am looking for in your study but I did not find it like educational level, health care education, availability and quality of health care system, health insurance and health economics. Regarding aflatoxins, what about environmental and storage factors.

We thank the editor for his comment, these points have now been revised accordingly [Page 7, lines 148-156].

**Reviewer #2:**

**Scientific Quality:** Grade B [Very good]

**Language Quality:** Grade B [Minor language polishing]

**Conclusion:** Accept [High priority]

**Specific Comments to Authors:** Very interesting study, though discussion could be improved by further dissecting the potential reasons behind the decrease in the incidence of liver cancers

Following the Reviewer's comment, the potential reasons behind the decrease in the incidence of liver cancers have been described in details in the discussion [Pages 15-16, lines 359-389]

#### **4 LANGUAGE POLISHING REQUIREMENTS FOR REVISED MANUSCRIPTS SUBMITTED BY AUTHORS WHO ARE NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH**

As the revision process results in changes to the content of the manuscript, language problems may exist in the revised manuscript. Thus, it is necessary to perform further language polishing that will ensure all grammatical, syntactical, formatting and other related errors be resolved, so that the revised manuscript will meet the publication requirement (Grade A).

Authors are requested to send their revised manuscript to a professional English language editing company or a native English-speaking expert to polish the manuscript further. When the authors submit the subsequent polished manuscript to us, they must provide a new language certificate along with the manuscript.

Once this step is completed, the manuscript will be quickly accepted and published online. Please visit the following website for the professional English language editing companies we recommend: <https://www.wignet.com/bpg/gerinfo/240>.

As recommended, we have performed further language polishing by an English language native and provided a new language certificate along with the manuscript

Science editor:

The manuscript elaborated the decrease in liver cancer incidence rates in Bamako-Mali over 28 years. The manuscript is well written. Nevertheless, there are a number points that may deserve some revisions. The self-referencing rate should be less than 3%. The authors have synthesized the changes of the incidence rate of liver cancer in the local area, but did not look for the reasons for the change. The biggest problem of this article is that we know this change, but what is the guiding value of this change?

Language Quality: Grade B [Minor language polishing]

Scientific Quality: Grade B [Very good].

We thank the editor for these comments, the manuscript was revised accordingly. We have described different hypotheses that could explain the reason why we observe the decrease in liver cancer incidence in the district of Bamako. However, we would like to underline that those are hypotheses. We believe that further studies of Aflatoxin levels and exposure are needed in Bamako [Mali] to confirm or not our hypotheses. Work previously published by Traoré et al 2015 show a decrease in the level of exposure to Aflatoxin in the population. The changes we have made to respond to the editor can be found on Pages 15-16, lines 359-389].

The guiding value of the work presented in Amadou et al is the need for further studies to uncover the sociocultural and biological changes that have occurred over the study period and might explain the decrease in liver cancer reported in this article. If the decrease in liver incidence in Bamako could be explained, it could be extended to other countries in the region where liver cancer incidence are still very high [change in manuscript Page 16, lines 387-389].