Reviewer’s report

Title: Antenatal counseling in maternal and newborn care: use of job aids to improve health worker performance and maternal understanding in Benin

Version: 1 Date: 25 March 2010

Reviewer: Jacqueline Bell

Reviewer’s report:

Major compulsory revisions

1. There is no mention of the issue of possible contamination between intervention and control sites: the likelihood of it happening; steps that may have been taken to limit it; the potential effect on findings. This requires some discussion; a map would be helpful (but not essential).

2. I’d like to see more information on the development of the job aids: what were they based on? have any studies used similar tools? who was involved in their development? (was there ‘ownership’ by country partners?) were they piloted?

3. There is no mention of the participation rate among women or providers. This is needed to give an indication of the generalisability of the study. If any information is available on those not participating (either because they do not complete, refuse consent or are not asked in ‘systematic sampling’) it would be useful to compare characteristics between the groups.

Minor essential revisions

1. on p9 second para. sentence starting ‘Over half....’ it states that 60% of baseline/intervention women had less than 8 years schooling. This contradicts Table 1 where line for education among this group is 60% received more than 8 years.

2. on p12 second para. you report ‘nearly all providers recommended that the job aids be introduced at other sites....’. This contradicts footnote on Table 5 where it states that all providers answered that aids should be introduced to other sites.

3. Table 1 - change title as not all data reported is demographic

4. Table 3 - change title from ‘receiving’ to ‘provided with’ to match table 2 title (use of ‘receiving’ may lead to contents being confused with maternal knowledge).

Discretionary revisions

1. please report actual p-values unless p<0.001 - the use of categories (<0.05 or >0.05) gives less information on significance level.

2. use of term ‘cohort’ to describe a group of women who are measured once is a little confusing as it usually refers to a group that are measured repeatedly.
**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests